

Women led Non-Governmental Organizations A Study in Visakhapatnam City of Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract: Women leads all organizations around the world, they have been striving well as women heads for Non-Governmental Organizations for the betterment of all marginalized, who understood the problems in a better manner and providing solutions in unique way. A Study have been conducted to know about the profiles, programmes and problems of women headed NGOs in Visakhapatnam city, Andhra Pradesh. This study reveals about the reasons establishment women headed NGOs, dynamics, nature and management style. It opens what are the programmes that they have been implementing so far, their role in paradigm shift in the nature of programmes. It shows the efforts to keep institutional services and facing problems. This paper also examines about the positives of women as head and their suggestions.

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Introduction

In India, for centuries, women have been pushed aside from the race of development in the name of customs, traditions and religion. In 20th century, the terms ‘women empowerment’, ‘women welfare’, ‘gender justice’ have come in lime light in social, economic and political development analysis of both developed and developing nations. Now the women entered all the sectors and fields, which leaded by the men earlier in fact. They entered in non-profit administration too as chief functionaries, presidents, founders and directors leading challenges successfully. The present study is taken upon the issues and challenges of women headed NGOs in the Visakhapatnam city, Andhra Pradesh.

Women and their Empowerment

Women are passive powerless victims of patriarchal structure. Perception and the role of women in present India are formed by traditions. The devotion towards the superior also towards the family and the willingness to sacrifice, in the sense of abstinence to the extent of self-sacrifice, forms the existence of women in India on all societal levels in all periods. The economic change implicates societal alteration, which determines in conflicts (India-women society, 2010). The nature and role of women in the society is presented by great heterogeneity, divergence and multiple paradoxical appearing phenomena as India itself. In order to remedy those conflicts, women are also requested to participate (Nagindrappa, 2013). The social reform movements of the 19th and 20th centuries witnessed the emergence of women’s organization in India. In initial stages, the male social reformers had women’s wings in their organizations or included women also as members. The Brahma Samaj had a wing exclusively for women. The Arya Samaj organized separate programmes like the Dayanand Anglo School, Arya Kanya Patasala and Kanya Ashram for women. The organizations which were established by men reformers were followed by organizations formed by women themselves. The idea that women could be placed better in the society if they were educated and that the widows needed help and protection prompted the formation of women’s organizations.

Empowerment for women is more than them gaining the ability to undertake activities; it is also the capacity to set their own agendas and change events. Empowerment involves women in an active role, not only in decision-making, but also an understanding of the factors that shape a situation and the nature of oppression itself. Empowerment entails a transformation

of social relations, particularly gender relations and processes; and goes beyond choices to obtaining access to new spaces, and social transformation.

NGOs in India

In India there is a rich tradition of voluntary action and the roots of the voluntary initiatives can be traced back to spiritual movements, reform and freedom movements that shaped the destiny of the over the ages (Devi prasad, 2014). Voluntarism has long been an integral part of the Indian Society, dating back to 1500 BC when it was mentioned in the 'Rig Vedas'. Voluntarism was the main source of welfare and development except for those few empires with a well-developed public welfare system. The first voluntary efforts in social development were initiated by Christian missionaries in the early 1810s, Parallel to their efforts in the urban areas; Christian missionaries formed rural colonies from 1860s until the 1940s with an emphasis on modernization efforts focused on self- help, and the establishment of co-operative credit societies, health care, and training facilities, whereas the empowerment component consisted of adult literacy classes and the establishment of Panchayats to solve local problems while dealing with a chain of events during this era culminating into the contemporary voluntary action,

The emergence of a large number of NGOs is perhaps, attributable to the initiative taken by the newly independent Indian state in promoting NGOs in development work. the Government took the initiative to form the central social welfare Board (CSWB) in 1953 to promote and fund to NGOs (Paul Chowdhury, 1987). In 1980, with the Sixth Five Year Plan (1980–1985), the Government identified new areas in which NGOs as new actors could participate in development (Patric, 2011). The CAPART (Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology) emerged in 1987 as a new agency with largest amount for funding to NGOs. Gradually the number of NGOs has increased. According to Mathew and Verghese (2011) India is estimated to have around 3.3 millions NGOs in year 2009.

Women Headed NGOs

It is not uncommon in India for educated and well-to-do women to shrug off the limitations of domestic roles as a wife or mother and take part in the broader society. In addition, if she is a self-proclaimed feminist this ideology pushes her to fight for women who are subject to the abuses of deep rooted patriarchy in India. In doing so she often finds herself using her

leadership and entrepreneur skills outside of the accepted mode of pursuing monetary profits through the aegis.

Women's NGOs have long played an important role in the lives of women in many parts of the world. In India, well educated and affluent women have traditionally found socially sanctioned work outside the home in the voluntary sector. In 1917 Annie Besant, Margaret Cousins and Dorothy Jinarajadasa formed Women's India Association, the first organization to create an overall awakening among women and to train them to shoulder their responsibility in public services and bind them together for mutual service and the good of the country. Later the Women's Indian Association, turned as the formation of All India Women's Conference in 1927. Government policy on women's suffrage and issues related to educational and social reforms. Indian Ladies Samaj was established in 1923 under the Initiation of Dr. Muthu lakshmi Reddy and Lady Siva swami Iyer who headed many social reforms.

Structure and Management Women Headed NGOs

Behavioural studies show that woman; in general have more EQ (Emotional Quotient) which is all about social and self-management skills. These skills come to a women from training – the nurturing role she plays in a family, balancing conflicting behaviour and expectations from various members; they develop patience and empathy and ability to bounce back from a difficult patch (Lawani, 2009). Organization structures are not carved in stone. They depend on many factors. The environment in which the organization functions, why it was founded what it does, what the organization goals are, and who are the people who make the organization function.

Women typically have caring and participatory management styles. Women are less hierarchical, may take more time when making decisions, seek more information and are more likely to draw upon input from others, including fellow business owners, employees, and subject matter experts. The women heads show greater concern for others, consider for how others feel managerial decisions, and were more likely than men. Women tend to use more socially-facilitative behaviours to lead while men use a more task-focused style. Interdependence, cooperation, receptivity, merging and acceptance characterize women's management values (Femida, 2006). The management of feminist organizations in general and women volunteers and activists in particular, differs from that concerning other organizations. They are examples of alternative organizations that are driven by commitment to ideology and an egalitarian structure. In feminist organizations managers are expected to

form a non hierarchical, community-like environment in which volunteers, activists and paid staff are equal.

Proponents of feminist organizations argue that these organizations are highly democratic in their daily operations. Moreover, the relationships among members should be personal, friendly and of value in themselves. Staff and volunteers should be recruited on the basis of personal contacts and commitment to the organization's mission, rather than professional experience or educational qualifications, so as to establish a homogenous organization (Adithi, 2005).

Nature of working

Women's NGOs can act as independent social service agencies, interest and self-help groups designed to pressure the Government to change laws or implement existing laws for the development and empowerment of women; thereby, creating a parallel power structure in the public sphere. It has been generally observed that participation of women in community activism or volunteer work, especially through NGOs, far outnumber participation of men. There are, of course, several reasons that can be put forth to understand this gender dynamic in the NGO sector, albeit with several inherent dichotomies. To start with, engaging in social developmental work and community activism through NGOs has had several positive implications for women.

Objectives of the Present study:

1. To study the Profiles of the women headed Non-Governmental Organizations in the Visakhapatnam city, Andhra Pradesh.
2. To observe the Programmes and activities of the women headed Non-Governmental Organizations.
3. To elicit the Problems of the women headed Non-Governmental Organizations.
4. To draw the suggestions from the women headed organizations to women organizers.

Methodology

This Study of 'Women headed non-governmental organizations' have taking consider the organizations leading by women as head of the organizations of non-profit base who have been working with the downtrodden and marginalized communities and rendering services to them in the Visakhapatnam city till today. There was no authenticated source that how many women headed NGOs were full-time active working in the Visakhapatnam city of Andhra

Pradesh state. Through different sources it was identified 15 NGOs of women headed were full-time active working in the Visakhapatnam city. Among that 10 Non-Governmental Organizations of women headed were accepted to provide information for this present study. So those were taken as sample to study the profiles, programmes, problems and situational analysis of women headed NGOs in Visakhapatnam city. An interview schedule is used to collect data from the women heads of Non-Governmental Organizations. Regarding study area - Visakhapatnam city is the headquarters of Visakhapatnam district, also major largest and fastest development city of the Andhra Pradesh after bifurcation. Visakhapatnam district was one of the North Eastern Coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh with a land area of 515 sq km is among the five major harbors in the state. The population of Visakhapatnam Urban Agglomeration is 17,30,320 (Census 2011). The city enjoys presence of all business sectors, Tourism spots etc.

This selected non-governmental organizations had multiple objectives but majority commonly having women development and empowerment. These NGOs have been working for welfare and development of various communities like elderly, children, farmers, youth, mentally retarded, drug addicted, urban, rural and tribal communities, PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS) etc. Health, Literacy, Natural Resource Management, Watersheds, Sustainable agricultural, Alternative energy, Climate change are some of the areas that NGOs have been working (Mutluri, 2018).

Reasons behind establishing women headed NGOs

There was a reason behind for initiation of every organization of women headed. It has been observed that most of the women headed NGOs (70%) have strong impact of their parents, their grown life, inspiring incidents, their family's traditional services, values and beliefs were the major causes of establishing NGOs and rest women heads did Masters in Social work, were worked for some time prior to the establishing their own NGOs. They worked as programmes coordinators and faculty for some period. With those experiences they establish NGOs and made running better way. All the women head NGOs completed under graduation in different streams, among those 50% completed their Masters. Husbands of 20% women headed organizations belongs to the NGOs field itself. Rest of them are pertaining to the different fields and proving space to partner's activities and encouraging well.

Profile of the Women headed NGOs

It was observed that except 20% NGOs rest of all women headed organizations constituted their NGOs names or Acronyms as women related. The age group of the women heads existed between 39-70 years. Regarding registration of the NGOs 80% were registered under Societies registration Act, 1860 and Andhra Pradesh Societies Registration Act, 2001 and only 20% registered under the Trust Act. Interestingly 20% women heads not aware of knowledge on 'General body' in the Societies registration act.

While observing the objectives, vision and mission of women headed NGOs 70% organizations were related to the women's welfare and development. Rest of the NGOs consider women is a cross cutting issue in their activities like Tribal women, Mentally retarded and challenged women and Women with HIV/AIDS likewise.

While coming to the organization's legal provisions, 40% women headed NGOs are not registered under 80G and 12A of Income Tax Act, 1961 and FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act), 1976 and similar number of women headed NGOs registered both. Only 20% of NGOs register only under Income Tax Act. It is observed that the women headed NGOs who are having own sufficient funds are not interested in getting register for tax benefits and foreign funds.

Regarding employees 70% NGOs have female leading employees in the women headed organizations. Among that 40% NGOs have few employees who were completed Masters in Social Work at post-graduation level.

Activities and Programmes

Organizing programmes and activities are the major part of NGOs. Here 50% of women headed NGOs provided institutional services to the beneficiaries to the people like mentally challenged, mentally retarded, drug addicted, old age people, destitute and children. Among those 30% NGOs have been continuing those institutional services with the funding of central Government Grant-in-aid schemes and Non-Governmental funding agencies.

Regarding the pattern of the programmes 30% of the women headed NGOs going with welfare and development programmes, 60% with organizing development and empowerment related programmes and 50% of the total women headed NGOs were going with rights based activities along with other programmes.

About 40% women headed organizations were the members of the various legal cells and bodies of the Visakhapatnam city. These cells have been resolving cases pertaining to the

Domestic violence, trafficking, child marriages, juvenile delinquency, sexual abuse at work places bonded labor etc and many of the cases are coming from the urban slums of the Visakhapatnam city. Money, alcohol and sex were main causes women related problems here. While disputes are in the process of resolving, sometimes the women heads have severe political pressures, threats from informal groups. Even though they strongly commit for the justice, they provide support from their help lines and make the victims to solve the issues in the judicial way by their legitimate rights. Rarely few problematic issues were ended up by the counseling and negotiations by women headed NGOs.

Also about 70% women headed NGOs providing programmes on 'gender sensitization'. Under this they were giving awareness on women rights, trainings, SHGs and CBOs formation and promotion, income generation activities. Thousands of SHGs were formed and promoted by the women headed NGOs. They trained with collaboration of Government, on leadership skills, maintaining records, operating accounts, passing resolutions and other technical aspects.

It is observed that 30% women headed NGOs formed and promoted micro finance institutions under the MACS (Mutually Aided Cooperative Societies) Act. They provided trainings on how to provide financial services such as loans, money transfers, insurance and savings. Later two NGOs withdraw their leadership in the administration of MACS and handover to the women community. Now they are not involving in the internal affairs of the MACS and allowing them to take own decisions as an independent body.

Some NGOs have been providing employment to women by giving skill development classes and trainings on respective fields like Embroidery works, fabric and pot paintings in Fashion technology, beautician courses, driving (for women), women security guards (for women), handicrafts, manufacturing of food items, groceries, farming organic vegetables, millets, grains and fruits, etc. Thousands of women especially single women, widows and their families were benefited.

Coming to the political empowerment 30% women heads were active in political participation in the leading political parties. They were influenced particularly by their husbands. They participate through women wings of the on behalf of the respective parties. They claimed that women's political empowerment could help the run NGO effectively.

Opinions on shift of nature of programmes

About 50% of the women headed NGOs shifted their nature of programmes of earlier when compared to present. Diverse views are shared who were shifted their approach. Some claimed that the NGO's exposure was low in the initial days when the NGO was established, later when the NGO got experience, the ideology may change due to contemporary issues and available energies. Some stated that NGOs shift on their approach means it does not totally changing the approach or focus. For instance an NGO which was worked in women's perspective at initial days, later it shifted to the 'health' and 'agriculture'. Surely NGO not miss or neglect the component of 'role of *women* in health and agriculture'. When the women have the conscious on health and agriculture obviously family and society benefits, in this way these were internally linked. Contrary to this views some women headed organization said that NGO should not take up one issue or problem for the many years, surely withdraw it by bringing it to certain positive level or stage later it will be handover to the community. NGO make the community to own and handle in dealing the issue effectively by providing timely assistance to the community. NGO take-up the next priority of the issues of the community to work.

Positives as a Women head

Women handling and dealing of issues were seen different when comparative with men. Sensitivity is high when it was seen through eye of women. Women have more patience than male. She carefully watches and observes in the futuristic aspect. When any organization has been running over by women, surely it was supported by family. She will be respected everywhere and her positive efforts towards society will be appreciated and encouraged at maximum places. Women victims approaches fast to women headed NGOs and also easily builds rapport. Women have more commitment, having concern and care about staff. She is sensible and serious simultaneously.

Efforts for keeping institutional services

Setting institutional services is a challenging activity. It is observed that 50% of the women headed organizations severely tried to keep institutional services in the Visakhapatnam city for the benefit of elderly, women and children, destitute, mentally retarded and challenged. They repeatedly pleaded to state and central Governments to get land and infrastructural support. Only 10% women head NGO succeeded in getting support for the mentally retarded and challenged children by the GVMC (Greater Visakha Municipal Corporation) authorities.

Rest of the NGOs tried to get at least waste land in the Visakhapatnam rural areas but those efforts were in vain. Some NGOs started institutional services with their own funding at private places, but due to vast expenses those services were saturated. Still women head NGOs keeping their efforts to obtain Government support.

Problems of women headed NGOs

It is identified that 30% women headed NGOs facing problems during mobilizing community and lack of transport while organizing programmes. Some of community people felt that NGOs have benefit in organizing programmes and meetings in the name of community. Coming to the ground realities 10% of women headed NGOs claimed that lack of statistics is the serious problem at field level. Regarding staff related problem its have common aspect that in every NGO to have less salaries, so staff prefers alternatives where the availability of employment chances are more due to urbanization of Visakhapatnam city. Experienced staff always jumps for higher pays, so quality and permanent staff is also a problem during execution of the project. Regarding area of working 20% organizations told that staff was not interested to work in the tribal areas. It is observed that 30% of women headed NGOs claimed that lack of permanent office and lack of advanced, technological tools and equipment are serious problems at administration level. About funding 70% women headed NGOs have scarcity of funds which impacts the continuity and sustainability of the organizations. Documentation is the herculean task to the women headed NGOs. There is need to make document of programmes like yearly reports, financial reports, evaluation reports and many other things. Sometimes NGOs hiring professionals for effective documentation. NGOs have to pretend to be competent in a wide area of development activities in order to fit into any profile a donor might be looking for. Thus, it is more difficult for NGOs to act in a long-term perspective and to specialize. In addition, NGOs cannot offer long-term perspectives to their personnel which results in high fluctuation among the NGO staff. This again prevents NGO specialization and hampers service quality improvement.

Funds

It is identified that 50% of the women headed NGOs have been continuing their activities with the Government funding. Earlier 70% NGOs got Government funds. About 30% of women headed NGOs are not depending upon any type of external funding. They mobilize

funds their own and rendering services and programmes. Foreign funds were granted to 20% of women headed NGOs, among that only 10% NGOs have been still going with foreign funding. It is seen 50% of the NGOs have been getting funding from Non-Government funding agencies.

Problems with funding agencies

The priorities of the Government funding agencies are different. The NGOs who are running Government projects commonly claimed that the grants are not releasing in the stipulated time. The bills have been pending for years. When women heads of NGOs applied for the new projects the files were not move properly to respective helm of affairs. There must be needed catalysts to forward those files, to clear pending bills and grants. Till that NGOs run the project with debts.

While coming to the Non-Government funding agencies, majority of the women heads opined that funding agencies issues and concerns are different, they don't know the exact ground realities and they go with their pre-conceived notions and earlier evaluations. Also donor agency will scrutinize, evaluate more and more with considering quality and quantity of NGO's energy. They ask well experienced staff and bargains for their payments. Also NGOs have less role in the designing of the project, it have only permitted liberty at execution of the project. Sometimes there is need to spend more expenditure on some heads but NGO have no power to alternate the heads to meet those expenses, this shows severe impact on the execution of the project.

About CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) funds some women heads claimed that, now a days the CSR funds to the NGO became a contract programme. The corporate company expects back by granting funds. They want to NGO should would work in their respective areas and fields, or should train to their bureaucrats. NGOs have no freedom to work with it priorities.

Suggestions by the women headed NGOs to the NGO's functionaries

- Many women headed NGOs opined that during execution of the project the approach and treatment of an NGO was in NGO mode but during administration of an NGO, also as a responsible to the donor agency NGO should be like enterprise for better functioning.

- While executing activities and programmes of an NGO it should not deviate the criteria of the programme's objective, goal and target. If it performs improper way the results must in another way.
- NGO should not run behind the funding agency to nod their priorities by altering the NGO's values and objectives.
- Many women oriented NGOs go for SHGs and microenterprises activities rapidly but it would be sensible to organize empowerment and rights based programmes related to the women which have make them decision makers in most aspects.
- Both women heads and staff of the organizations update themselves with the contemporary issues of the society. Women head should not depend on others and try to defend in all odd events.
- All the women head's should improve managerial skills to deal with authorities, bureaucratic, staff and beneficiaries. Family support must be needed to get success.

Limitations of the study: There is non-availability of literature of pertain to women headed NGOs. There is no proper statistics of total existing NGOs in the Visakhapatnam city, particularly women headed NGOs. Women headed NGOs staff and their beneficiaries are not included in this study, data was collected only from the organizational heads.

Conclusion: As a house hold head women lighten lakhs of families, she succeeded in political, entrepreneur, government and other many fields. As a head of the NGO she is making others independent and self-sufficient, removing the clutches of pulling factors. She is with better leadership qualities, understanding capabilities and commanding ground realities of her fields. Funding agencies, Government and donors recognize her leading capacities and make her in the part of their development and empowerment works.

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