



# WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ENTERPRENEURSHIP: A CASE STUDY OF HIV INFECTED WOMENFOLK

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## ABSTRACT

*This paper examines the relationship between Entrepreneurship and Empowerment. A case study is analyzed by the Researcher to understand the various factors responsible for women empowerment through entrepreneurship. An NGO based at Mysore City acts as a Catalyst in socially transforming many of the women plights. Researcher conducted study using Descriptive cum Diagnostic design to explain and analyze the hurdles of those HIV infected women folk. This paper also wants to study the efficacy of the Social Work methods in understanding the problems of those women and how these methods extends helping hand through various professional Social Work skills. This paper analyzes how a Social Work intervention counteracts the Psycho-social problems of their routine life and tries to conceive a practical model/ methodology to lead their individual as well as societal sustainable life.*

**KEYWORDS:** *HIV/AIDS, Entrepreneurship, Women, Social Work*

## INTRODUCTION

Human Immuno Virus is an autoimmune disease that weakens the immune system of the person against all diseases irrespective of gender which affect the whole humanity at large. In Recent studies it was found that more than 30-50% of the population from African countries, but most prominently are the sub-Saharan African nations. It is also found that in these regions young women are three times more vulnerable in getting infected with HIV/AIDS compared to men, which is far less than in nations like Zambia, Zimbabwe which is four and five times high respectively.

The reason for women posing high risk in acquiring HIV/AIDS infection in this region of the world is due to the various socio-politico-economic inequalities that women undergo more than men. This is compounded with rise of sexual violence, domestic violence and discriminatory access to preventive measures against HIV/AIDS. The preventive measure includes education, contraceptives and lack of maternal health knowledge. The neglect of political will in framing legislation and laws against women violence encourages crime against women. Due to these inequalities young girls and women at early age become more prone to HIV/AIDS infection. Thus vulnerability and risk of getting HIV/AIDS infections increases exponentially with violence, poor and weak legislation with social beliefs and customs prevailing in these region that inhibits growth of intellect in girls and women. It is been observed that where women and girls have low socio-politico-economic status they have lowdignity and respect compared to men and it is where

women is just seen as an object of sexual pleasure and medium to serve men .From this thought process arises act of violence against females.

Due to the lack of education, poverty and low expectations of families from girls in increasing the wealth of family they are seen as burden and hence low attention is paid to their education and health. Early death due to birth complications and rape is seen normal and part of life being a woman. This gap in socio-politico-economic sphere increases death rate among women in increase poverty in women.

Thus, the men in the society also should be educated regarding gender equality in access to health, education and political area. There by reducing the cases of HIV/AIDS infection. Empowering of women through education, skill development and self-employment and encouraging the dignity of women which will help in bridging the gap in socio-politico-economic sphere of household, local, regional, national level which is a need of an hour to control HIV/AIDS infection.

2.11 million people are suffering from this disease in our country according to the estimation and statistics of National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) (2015)and British Medical Journal(2010). The estimated number of human immuno deficiency virus (HIV) infections in India has drastically declined from 5.5 million in 2005 to below 2.5 million in 2007. UN AIDS report supported the scenario of AIDS in India and said that 50% decline in the number of new HIV infections in the last 10 years. Above consequences of AIDS motivate the researcher to understand the problems of HIV infected women further.

## STATUS OF WOMEN IN CURRENT SCENARIO

The status of Indian women has rapidly changed since independence. Both the structural and cultural changes provided equality of opportunity to women in education, employment and political participation, with the help of these changes exploitation of women, to some extent was reduced. Several commissions were appointed by the central and state governments to study the causes of low status of women and to protect their right and to protect their rights in various fields.

The improvement in the status of Indian women especially after independence can be analyzed in the light of the major changes that have taken place in areas such as legislation, education, economic and employment sector, political participation and awareness of their rights on the part of women.

From the above explanation, we can clearly understand that women are not given suitable place in the process of development. So the term Social transformation plays an important role in making women stronger than men in the society. In spite of these women is making sincere effort to achieve better status in the society. NGOs have adopted some of the programmes to improve the status of women through Social Transformation to get equal status as par with men in the society. .

## FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

Women should not be discriminated in the society. She must be treated on par with the men. The world conference for women's empowerment (1990) and Beijing Platform for Action (BPA) (1995) strongly recommend protecting women from all sorts of discrimination, exploitation and providing all opportunities for the empowerment of women at local, national and international levels. Researcher is interested to study the conditions of women after providing all the necessary facilities for the empowerment.

Keeping all in mind Researcher wants to study how effective is the Women Empowerment through Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of HIV infected Women Folk based on the Social Work Research Methodology.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To explore and understand the background of HIV infected women.
2. To understand the various medico-social problems of HIV infected women.
3. To know how HIV infected women socially transformed and empowered by becoming entrepreneurs.

Questionnaire on empowerment of HIV infected women folk consists of the following components

Sl. No.	Components	No. of statements
1	Human Rights and Development	5
2	Gender related Development	3
3	Land Rights	2
4	Economic Empowerment	10
5	Political participation	5
6	Domestic participation	6
7	Positive Thinking	6
8	Learns and access skills for improving personal life	5
9	Ability to decide whether it is Right or Wrong	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

## HYPOTHESES

1. Socio-economic status of HIV infected women folk is low.
2. Social Discrimination of HIV infected women folk is very high.
3. Entrepreneurial and empowered life of HIV infected women folk is good.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

Descriptive cum Diagnostic Research Design has been adopted for this study. This design suits for this study because Researcher wants to describe the things in a natural way in their setting. Descriptive research studies are those studies which are concerned with describing the characteristics of a particular individual, or of a group, whereas diagnostic research studies determine the frequency with which something occur or its association with something else

## UNIVERSE AND SAMPLING

HIV infected women folk those who wants to live and earn their bread and butter through the process of empowerment to become entrepreneurs with the intervention of CBO based in Mysore city will constitute the universe for this study. Researcher selected 25 respondents as samples from the universe of the study.

## TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY

An interview schedule was prepared to gather the general information from the respondents of the study. A modified questionnaire was prepared to collect the data to assess the effectiveness of Social Transformation of HIV infected women folk through the process of empowerment. This questionnaire comprises of 40 questions and they are classified into two parts. First part of the questionnaire investigates performance of HIV infected women folk about the process of their empowerment. The second part assesses how well the HIV infected women folk empowered and leading their life in the post intervention of CBO. This questionnaire aims to assess the different aspects of empowerment of women such as their Human Rights, Gender related Development, ability to learn interpersonal skills for improvement of their personal life, positive thinking and ability to decide whether it is wrong or right? Further it aims to assess the entrepreneurial aspects such as Team work, understanding of their responsibilities, making profit and its utility.

Questionnaire on Entrepreneurship of HIV infected women folk consists of the following components

Sl. No.	Components	No. of statements
1	Inherently keen business sense	2
2	What factor responsible for thinking to setup hotel	5
3	Team work	8
4	Identification of training and development Needs	6
5	Communication between customer and staff	4
6	Hotel setup and its profitability	3
7	Utilization of hotel profit	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>30</b>

## DATA COLLECTION

Primary data required for the study has been collected directly from the respondents with the help of Interview and observation. Informed consent was received by the researcher before the collection of data. Secondary information was collected from the files maintained by CBO working for the rehabilitation of the HIV infected women folk. The collected data is utilized for the academic purpose after the permission sought from both the respondents and the CBO.

## ANALYSIS OF DATA

The collected data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (20.0) version. Simple tests like percentage and Chi-square test was employed to find out the relationship between variables. A non-significant difference was observed between various frequencies of statement on entrepreneurship is shown under.

Sl.No	Frequency	Percent	Chi-Square	df	Asymp.sig
1	2	6.7	<b>6.867</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.333</b>
2	5	16.7			
3	8	26.7			
4	6	20			
5	4	13.3			
6	3	10			
7	2	6.7			
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>			

A non-significant difference was observed for various frequencies of statements on empowerment is shown under

Sl. No	Frequency	Percent	Chi-Square	df	Asymp.sig
1	5	10	<b>8.320</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0.403</b>
2	3	6			
3	2	4			
4	10	20			
5	5	10			
6	6	12			
7	8	16			
8	5	10			
9	6	12			
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>			

## Findings and Discussion

The main findings of the present study are on the whole Researcher found that the Socio-economic status of HIV infected women folk is very low in the pre-initiatives of CBO. The Researcher firstly worked on the objective is to explore and understand the background of HIV infected women. Age group of women is the independent variable of the study. 20 respondents of the study belongs to 20-25years of age while five Respondents were belongs to 30-35years of age. The Researcher found that early adulthood, curiosity and lack of parental advice are the reasons for their sexual exploitation. Infatuation, Pleasure and more sexual drives are also the reasons behind this problem.

20 Respondents have not completed even SSLC while four respondents have studied PUC and one respondent has completed her Degree. We can conclude that education is an

important criteria for the overall development of human beings. Education provides the knowledge to the people to take better decisions in their life.

20 Respondents have comes under the Below Poverty Line (BPL) and five Respondents comes under the group Above Poverty Line (APL). Therefore Poverty is one of the major social evil leads to this socio-medical problem.

20 Respondents families are living in the urban slums while 5 respondents are from the rural background. So we can arrive at the conclusion that back ground of the environment and family also contributes the good or bad characteristics for the people.

Researcher also found that social discrimination against HIV infected women is very high before the intervention of CBO. Discrimination of HIV infected women will starts from her family and it makes huge impact on her societal life. They

were treated as under privileged section and leads to the Isolation. They were suppressed even about their Rights, Duties and obligations also. Society wore a different look and segregated as untouchables.

The life of the HIV infected women is in a state of transition. Researcher found that CBO based in Mysore acts as a catalyst for the upliftment of their social life. The purpose of the CBO is to organize peer solidarity and creates a platform to ventilate their feelings. Further CBO is trying to educate, train and motivate these kinds of people for the removal of their Stigma. They also provided sufficient training to become entrepreneurs to lead their sustainable life in the amidst of discriminating world.

### CONCLUSION

Researcher employed the methods of Social Work namely Social Case Work, Social Group Work and Community Organization to understand and assess the problems encountered by the HIV infected Women folk. These methods of social work help the Researcher to analyze the various facets of social discriminations facing in this society. Researcher evolved a consensus between the experts working for the Rehabilitation of these women folk with Psychologist, Psychiatrist, Medical Practitioner, Medical Nurse and the member of NGO having experience of working with these respondents as the members of team. Finally with great deliberations the members of the team find out a new model called Social Reliability Model. Researcher elicited all the information from the respondents using this model as tool to build rapport with these women folk.

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