

Women Empowerment and Entrepreneurship Development through Value Addition in Floriculture

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SUMMARY

Women empowerment is the process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation to greater decision making and control and to transformative action. Floriculture is a labor-intensive, wage payment forming roughly one third of cost of production. Large numbers of women are engaged in cultivation, harvesting and post harvest activities including sorting, grading and packing of flower crops and also in ornamental nursery and garden management etc. Floriculture is presently considered as one of the most lucrative horti-enterprise to make profit. The procreative skills like flower arrangements, garlands, venis, bouquets, dry flowers, potpourris, petal embedded craft papers etc. are some of the products that acquired successive positions in global market. It can be concluded there is unlimited scope and prospects in floriculture sector for women empowerment, when they are rightly motivated, trained and financially supported in present scenario and it has huge potential to generate millions of jobs opportunities to young, urban and rural women and unemployed housewives.

INTRODUCTION

Beauty, purity, love, joy, affection and passion etc are some of the emotions symbolized through various flower crops. These emotions can be conveyed effectively with non-speaking beautiful flowers of nature. For example a lotus conveys purity, rose for love, pansy for thoughts and narcissus conveys egotism. Flowers have a definite role to play at almost all occasions of human relationships like birth, naming ceremonies, marriages, worships, adornments and death etc. Besides flowers, other ornamental plants also play an important role in environmental planning of urban and rural areas, from wasteland development to overcoming pollution etc. Traditional growing of flowers is observed in different parts of country; however, states leading in commercial cultivation of flowers are West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

Women empowerment is the process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation to greater decision making and control and to transformative action. Women empowerment is not a sufficient condition; it is still a necessary condition in order to stabilize and in turn to have sustainability of development process. Nations cannot achieve their goals if their women are discriminated. Floriculture is a labor-intensive, wage payment forming roughly one third of cost of production. It indicates that even a modest floriculture program can generate millions of jobs predominately to young and rural women, quiet apart from significantly contributing to nation income. Large numbers of women are engaged in cultivation, harvesting and post harvest activities including sorting, grading and packing of flower crops etc. They are also appointed in work places like nurseries and gardens for maintenance and management of nursery works like irrigation fumigation etc.

Employment generation through value addition

Floriculture is presently considered as one of the most lucrative horti-enterprise to make profit in domestic as well as global market. Recently value addition has become very popular

and important towards the expansion of floricultural trade by the art of preservation of ornamental plants and flowers and creation of novel products that appeal to the tastes and preferences of the consumers. The procreative skills like flower arrangements, garlands, venis, bouquets, dry flowers, potpourris, petal embedded craft papers etc. are some of the products that acquired successive positions in global market. Other value added products are essential oils, fragrances, pharmaceuticals, insecticidal and nematicidal compounds etc. Women can be employed in these activities, which gain them some income and status in society.

Value added products of some flower crops

Crop	Product
Rose	: Rose water, Gulkhand, Pankhuri, Rose oil
Chrysanthemum	: Garlands, Potpourri, Insecticides (pyrethrin)
Tuberose	: Floral ornaments, Essential oils
Jasmines	: Jasmine tea, Jasmine syrup, venis,
Carnation	: Carnation concrete, Dry flowers etc.

Women entrepreneurship through value addition

With minimal investment value added product based entrepreneurship can be started by women by forming small self help groups. This type of enterprises could help them to develop skills in them, and also help them to gain money and status in society, enabling them to break the barriers that keep them away from commercial horticulture. This would also generate employment to uneducated and widowed women to stand on their feet. They should be fully aware of the people and market interests of value added products. Selection of flower crop should be done based on sustainability of the particular crop to climatic conditions, availability of raw material, demand of value added product in local market and transportation facilities etc.

Steps in development of small scale entrepreneurship

- Identification of suitable product of the region and acquirement of the raw material at cheaper prices
- Information on details of production procedure.
- Validation of the proposed product in consultation with field expert from government organization
- Approaching the funding agency for financial support and subsidy etc
- Implementation of the project and production of value added products

For successful entrepreneurship development group members should have following qualities:

- Self confidence and activeness
- Group should have a leader and the members should obey with her throughout project period
- Should be able to take wise decisions during critical conditions
- Members should be ready to take the risk of failure or sudden changes
- There should be transparency in financial transactions
- Regular consultation with experienced entrepreneurs or businessman for better outcomes

Role of government and other organizations in empowering women

Some of the measures taken by Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare to uplift women are as follows by providing different schemes that support women financially to stabilize themselves.

- Under National Horticulture Mission, women are organized into Self Helping Groups and proving them with farm inputs and technological support to make women self- reliant.

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has established a large network of 645 KVKs in country in order to assess and demonstrate new technologies/products and disseminating through various extension programs to update their skill and knowledge.
- Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) provides financial support for women to promote farm activities.
- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (The National Credit Fund for Women) aims to deliver financial support to women from lower income group with access to loans to begin small business.
- Various other NGO`s are devoted to the cause of women welfare and want to make them independent. They are conducting various vocational training and helping them to set up small scale business to empower them.
- Starting women cooperative banks to provide loans and save earned money.
- Mahila-E-Haat is a bilingual online marketing platform that leverages technology to help aspiring women entrepreneurs self helping groups to showcase their products and services.
- Mahila Sakthi Kendra working to empower rural women with opportunities for skill development and employment by providing training for them.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that women can be empowered through many ways, one among them is floriculture. There is unlimited scope and prospects in floriculture for women empowerment, when they are rightly motivated, trained and financially supported in present scenario. Floriculture sector can generate millions of jobs opportunities predominately to young, urban and rural women and unemployed housewives, which in turn significantly contributes to nation income.

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