

# Income generating activities of women in Aligarh District, Uttar Pradesh

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## Abstract

**Objectives/Methods:** To analyze the income generating activities of women living in rural areas of Aligarh district, Uttar Pradesh in India.

**Findings:** Women play significant role in uplifting socio-economic condition of their family by engaging themselves in Income Generating Activities in rural areas of Aligarh District, Uttar Pradesh. Dairy farming, weaving, embroidery work, cultivation and shop-keeping are the main activities of women workers through which they earn their livelihood. Most of them raised their family welfare by reducing the level of poverty. But the methods and techniques used to carry out these activities is obsolete.

**Suggestion:** Majority of women workers are illiterate. So steps should be taken by government organizations, ministries and official agencies to impart technical education and vocational training to them.

**Keywords:** Women, Income generating activities, working women, economic development, poverty reduction

## 1. Introduction

It is widely accepted that the uplift of unprivileged women is a multi-dimensional process which will lead to overall wellbeing of the society. A society can never develop without the involvement of women in the development process. The status of women has always been degraded. Their potential and self-confidence to do any economic activity outside the boundaries of household has given no recognition. The patriarchal thinking of society pulls down the footsteps of women from going outside the four walls of house. Their only world is confined to performing household activities [1-3].

As rightly said that, "You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women"(Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru). Although every year the world celebrates International women Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March with an objective to give equal status to women at par with men in the society. But the question arises that what difference it has made to the position of women in the society? Are women strong enough and their long term struggle ended? Are they given equal rights as compared to men? All such questions call for an answer.

Nowadays, with the increasing cost of living, it becomes essential for the society to allow women to work outside the boundaries of household. The family cannot always depend on the earnings of the male member in the household. Women need to get engaged in income generating activities. They need to know about the technical know-how, government schemes initiated for women, organizational management, knowledge of finance and entrepreneurship. The status of women cannot be raised without the opening up of opportunity of independent employment and income generating activities. Now, the image of women is changing very fast. Women are entering into labour force to a large extent [4-6].

## 2. Literature survey

In [7] conducted a study on "Management of Economic Activity in Women Self-Help Groups". The study focuses on the process of management of Income Generating Activities among SHGs women. The data collection was carried at individual as well as group level using well designed questionnaire, focused group discussions and group's records. Post joining SHGs, it was found that around 37% of the members have either started new economic activities or expanded on-going economic projects. 59% started new economic activities in agriculture and allied sector. 87% face financial difficulty, seeks assistance from group savings for taking loans.

With the support of Krishi Vigyan Kendra/ Agricultural University, the group members are able to manage technical problems in carrying out economic activities. In [8-11] carried out study on “Socio Economic Profile of Rural Women and the Role of Animal Husbandry Intervention in a Suicide Affected District of Kerala”. A sample of 103 women from SHGs (Wayanad district, Kerala) working under government sponsored poverty eradication scheme were selected at random. Around one-third of the respondent’s main occupation was agriculture with some animal husbandry component. The study indicated three variables in order to determine the quality of life such as availability of latrine, type of roof and walls of home and domestic source of water. The study focuses on the importance of exploring alternate employment and income generating activities such as animal husbandry in order to improve the socio-economic conditions of these women.

In [12] conducted “A study on use of the Income Generating Activities Grant: Perception of Beneficiaries in the Kavango Region of Namibia”. The study addresses unclear view of beneficiaries regarding Income Generating Activities. This was reflected through the use of grants by the beneficiaries. They don’t have a strong motivation for engaging themselves in income generating activities rather they are engaging themselves for the sake of reducing poverty in their families, to take adequate care of their children, to address unemployment and household income. Employment creation, nature conservation and increase in food production were the income generating activities used in the study. Beneficiaries face challenges due to lack of adequate income generating grants. This results in collapse of most of the projects.

In [13] conducted a study on “Income Generating Activities of Rural Kenyan Women”. This article seeks to answer two questions regarding factors influencing women’s livelihoods and livelihood-related choices. The factors include prioritizing relationships over occupation, identifying positive factors about their current income generating activities (i.e. comfort, extra food, flexible schedule), and planning for dependents rather than themselves. Also the level of education and the number of income generating activities determines the total income.

“Women’s involvement in Income Generating Activities and their opinion about its contribution: A Study of Gazipur District, Bangladesh”. In the study, out of sample of 125 women, majority of them belonged to young and middle aged group ( 84%) and are literate (86.7%). Most of 9 them having small and medium family size (90.6%). Majority of them (78.7%) have an annual income up to Tk 200000, average knowledge of agriculture (60%) and positive opinion towards participation in IGAs (78.7%). All these three characteristics were found to have significant relationship with the respondents’ opinion on poverty alleviation through IGAs [14].

### 3. Objectives

1. To identify the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To identify income generating activities of women workers in rural areas of Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh.
3. To provide necessary suggestions for improving the situation.

### 4. Research methodology

Source of data- the present study is normative in nature and is based on primary as well as secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected from a field survey in the Aligarh District while the secondary data was collected from journals, research articles, working papers, reports, etc.

Sampling Area- The study was conducted in the rural areas of Aligarh district through a field survey in order to get an insight of the income generating activities of working women.

Sample size of the study- A total sample of 150 women was selected for the study which includes both literate and illiterate women in the study area.

Data collection method- Stratified random sampling technique has been used to collect sampling data. A well-designed questionnaire was developed and used for collecting data regarding income generating activities of the 150 women and their monthly income in the study region. Statistical tool- Simple percentage analysis was used for the analysis of the data.

## 5. Analysis and interpretation of the data

### 1. Age-wise analysis of the working women

The above table shows that out of the total 150 women respondents, majority of them i.e. 56 (37.33%) belong to the age group of 30-39 years. While 14.67% of the respondents belong to the age-group of 20-29 years, 26% are in the age-group of 40-49 years and 18% are in age-group 50-59 years. The number of women respondents in the age-group of 60 and above are the least i.e., 4% only.

### 2. Educational qualifications of the working women

From the above table it has been found that out of the total 150 women respondents, majority of them i.e., 58 (38.67%) are illiterate. While the least number of respondents i.e., 6 (4%) has completed their Under Graduation. 8% women had acquired only elementary education, 18% had done primary education and 10% had done Intermediate. It has been found that 21.33% (32) of the women respondents has completed their secondary education.

### 3. Occupation of women

The above table shows the main occupation of the women workers in Aligarh District, UP. From the table it has been found that majority of the women are engaged in embroidery work as their main source of earning. Out of the total 150 respondents, 47 (31.33%) of them are earning through Embroidery Work, 35 (23.33%) women are engaged in Weaving, 30 (20%) are cultivators. While 26 (17.33%) of them are earning through Dairy Farming and only 8% are doing Shop-keeper work.

### 4. Age-wise analysis of occupations of working women

From the above table it has been found that, out of the total 22 women in the age-group of 20-29 years, 8 women are engaged in weaving, 11 are earning through embroidery work, and 3 of them neither are shop-keepers while none of them are cultivators nor engaged in dairy farming. In the age-group 30-39 years, out of 56 women workers, 2 are doing dairy farming, 11 are weavers, 8 are cultivators, 5 are shop-keepers while the majority of them i.e., 30 are engaged in embroidery work. Among 39 women in the age-group 40-49 years, 8 are engaged in dairy farming, 10 are doing weaving, 4 are earning through embroidery, 14 are cultivators and only 3 are shop-keepers. In the age –group 50-59 years, majority of them i.e., 12 are engaged in Dairy farming, while 8 are cultivators, 4 are engaged in weaving, 2 are earning through embroidery and only 1 is doing shop-keeper work. In the age group 60 and above, the only source of earning is Dairy farming and weaving i.e., 4 are engaged in dairy farming and 2 are earning through weaving while none of them are involved in other occupations.

### 5. Monthly income of the working women

The above table shows the monthly income of working women in the study area. It can be seen from the table that majority of the women workers earns a monthly income of ₹ 4000-5000. Out of total sample of 150 women, 58 women are earning an income of ₹ 4000-5000 per month, while 42 of them are earning ₹ 5000 and above per month. Only 13% (20) and 20% (30) of women, out of the total sample size, are earning ₹2000-3000 and ₹ 3000-4000 per month respectively.

### 6. Reduction in poverty

The bar, out of the total 150 women workers, 85(56.67%) women accepts that their level of poverty has been reduced to a great extent. While only 4(2.67%) of them could not much reduced their poverty level.

## 6. Findings of the study

1. The maximum number of women workers in Aligarh district belongs to the age-group of 30-39 years while the minimum is in the age-group of 60 and above.
2. The maximum number of women workers in the study region are illiterate while only few of them i.e, 4% has completed their Graduation.

3. The maximum number of women is engaged in Embroidery work as the main source of earning while only few of them are earning through shop-keeper activity.
4. The women workers in the age group 20-29 years and 30-39 years, embroidery work are their main source of income generation activity. And in the age group 40-49 years their main income generation activity is cultivation. While the women in the age group 50-59 years and 60 & above, their main income generating activity is dairy farming.
5. It has been found that, out of the total selected sample size, majority of the working women in Aligarh District have been earning a monthly income of ₹ 5000 and above. While the minimum number of them have a monthly income of ₹ 2000-3000 only.
6. It has been found that, through Income Generating Activities (IGAs) majority of the working women in Aligarh District (more than 50%) has reduced their level of poverty to a greater extent while only few of them i.e., around 3% are not able to come out of poverty.

## 7. Conclusion

Women play a pivotal role in the process of development of the society and a nation as a whole. They deserve equal status as that of men in a society. A woman is mainly responsible for the uplift of their family. She has the right to take decisions about their family, children education, etc. A family cannot entirely run on the earning of a male member. A woman should come out and share the responsibilities of her husband. Women plays significant role in uplifting socio-economic condition of their family by engaging themselves in Income Generating Activities in rural areas of Aligarh District, Uttar Pradesh. Dairy farming, weaving, embroidery work, cultivation and shop-keeping are the main activities of women workers through which they earn their livelihood. Most of them raised their family welfare by reducing the level of poverty. But the methods and techniques used to carry out these activities are obsolete.

It has also found that, majority of women workers are illiterate. So steps should be taken by government organizations, ministries and official agencies to impart technical education and vocational training to them. It will help them to acquire knowledge regarding techniques; increase their efficiency, confidence and skill development

## 8. Suggestions

1. Better provision of vocational training and skill development in order to boost their self-confidence as well as competency level.
2. They should be encouraged to work collectively just like self-help Group members and pool their resources in a group in order to help each other as well as promote small savings among the members.
3. The government organizations and Social Welfare Departments should organize training programs as well as provide necessary assistance to them in terms of social welfare schemes, loans and other awareness schemes.
4. Regular monthly or weekly meetings, group discussions or any informative speech should be organized for them in their locality.
5. The village Panchayat should guide those regarding women schemes and policies undertaken by the Central as well as State Government.

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**The Publication fee is defrayed by Indian Society for Education and Environment ([www.iseeadyar.org](http://www.iseeadyar.org))**

**Cite this article as:**

Mehvish Mehmood. Income generating activities of women in Aligarh District, Uttar Pradesh. *Indian Journal of Economics and Development*. December 2019, Vol 7 (12), 1-5.

Received on: 16/10/2019

Accepted on: 07/12/2019