

Empowerment of Farm women through SHGs in Sundargarh District of Odisha

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Paper Received on August 18, 2015, Accepted on October 23, 2015 and Published Online on October 20, 2015

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Bonaigarh and Subdega block of Sundargarh district. The process of social engineering initiated by the Self Help Groups has generated wider interest in the society and SHGs have been upheld as new paradigm of societal transformation. The study revealed that the personal and socio-economic character of the respondent showed positive and highly significant association with their economic activities. The members of SHGs had the more interest and aspiration towards training aspect like value added products, procurement and marketing of the produce and toy making etc. The chit funds, credit institution, non banking, financial institution and international funding agencies were higher extent of linkages established by SHG member with different organization. The Co-operative department, educational department and health department were higher on the extent of linkages established with sectoral aspects. Most of the SHG member belonged to financial arrangement of activities of SHG were co-operative society, SHG and NGOs etc.

Key words: Empowerment, Economic activities;

Empowerment of women has now become a key issue in the Government's Five-Year Plans-by organizing women in to Self Help Groups to make the beginning of a major process of empowering women. Three hundred twenty million people, out of our 1.1 billion, are steeped in abject poverty and due to their assetlessness, it is difficult for them to access any kind of aid from banking /financial institutions and this state of hopelessness and the constraints of an ineffective credit delivery system can be transcended by enhancing the self esteem and raising the feeling of human self worth. The SHG approach is a reshaping initiative that enhances livelihoods and ensures sustainability by enabling poor families to access effective economical and social development leading to empowerment. Women folk belonging to different size of holding perform different roles in Agriculture and allied activities. In addition to helping their male counterpart in different Agricultural activities .They try to utilize their leisure time to organize themselves into small groups called SHGs in pursue in different economic activities or vocational such as seed production of rice, vegetable production ,procurement

and marketing of Agricultural produce, mushroom cultivation, apiculture, lac culture, preservation of fruits and vegetables through value added products, dairy, poultry, goatery, piggery, nursery raising, sericulture, tailoring, brick making, and making different handy crafts items etc. Thus economically empower themselves and helping their family for a sustainable and reasonable way of living. SHGs perform well in empowering the farm women, socially economically, politically and aesthetically with access to resources earning and inputs institutional personnel, health care knowledge and involve in enterprises programs, role in family decisions making, marketing of produce, and creation of assets.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Odisha state, on the SHGs promoted under 'Misan Shakti' project. All the 17 blocks in Sundargarh district have the practice of SHGs. Out of these seventeen, two blocks viz Bonaigarh and Subdega blocks were selected randomly. A list of SHGs farm women was obtained from the Mission Shakti (State Govt. Project) and by using simple random

sampling technique villages were selected, so that the total sample size should be one hundred twenty.

The interviewer first of all introduced himself and gave a clear picture of the subject and purpose of survey. The data collected for the study was tabulated, processed and analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The other statistical techniques applied were frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, coefficient of correlation etc

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To get an overview of the farm women regarding their empowerment and involving in SHGs. The major findings revealed during the interaction :

Table 1: Activities undertaken by SHGs (N=120)

Activities undertaken	Self		Group	
	No.	%	No.	%
Rice cultivation	47	39.16	21	17.50
Vegetable cultivation	63	52.50	25	20.83
Procurement and marketing	43	35.83	61	50.83
Diary	49	40.83	31	25.83
Pigery	31	25.83	34	28.33
Goatry	39	32.50	21	17.50
Poultry	61	50.83	29	24.16
Fishery	78	65.00	41	34.16
Tasar cultivation	12	10.00	19	15.83
Tailoring	19	15.83	28	23.33
Toy making	21	17.50	35	29.16
Brick making	32	26.66	47	39.16
Mushroom cultivation	51	42.50	39	32.50
Honey bee cultivation	16	13.33	26	21.66
Value added	24	20.00	32	26.66

The Table 1 revealed that among the different activities taken up by the SHGs in self, poultry fishery, vegetable cultivation, mushroom cultivation, diary rice cultivation, procurement and marketing of product, goatery, brick making and piggery were the practices taken up by WSHGs to the extent of 65.52%, 50.83%, 42.50%, 40.83%, 39.16%, 35.83%, 32.50%, 26.66%, 25.83% respectively. The SHGs preferred the activities in self like poultry, diary, rice cultivation and tailoring activities.

The Table 1 also revealed that among the different activities taken up by the SHGs in group, procurement and marketing of produced, vegetable cultivation were the practices taken up by SHGs groups to the extent 50.83, 39.16, 34.16, 32.50, 25.83 and 20.83 percent respectively.

Co-relation Co-efficient between socio-economic characteristic of the respondent and economic activities

was worked out. The results pertaining to this aspect were presented in the following table

Table 2. Relationship between socio-economic characteristics of the respondents with their economic empowerment activities (N=120)

Categories	SE profile		Eco. activities	
	No.	%	No.	%
Low (<X-1SD)	18	15.00	38	31.66
Medium (X + 1SD)	83	69.16	61	50.84
High (> X + 1SD)	19	15.84	21	17.50
Total	120	100	120	100
Mean	26.00		2.28	
SD	10.00		1.20	
r =.409**				

** significant 1 percent level.

The socio-economic status score and the economic empowerment activities score were calculated based upon the economic activities taken up by the SHGs farm women. The respondents were classified into high medium and low socio-economic group as well as economic activities group. The socio-economic status score were co-related with economic activities score to reveals the following results. The data presented in Table -2 indicated that Socio-economic character of the respondent showed positive and highly significant association with economic activities. It can be conclude that these variables are highly inspired to motivate the respondent for better economic activities

Table 3. Relationship of socioeconomic status and economic empowerment activities (N=120)

Association	Regression equation	R ² value	R ² × 100
Socio eco. status Vs. Eco. activities	Y=2.740+31.960	0.847	84.7%

The Table 4.3.3 reveals that majority i.e. 69.16% of the SHGs farm women, below get to medium socio-economic status group as well as socio-economic empowerment group (50.84%). The high socio-economic status group respondents belonging to high empowerment group were relatively less as compared to low socio-economic status group. The correlation coefficient value which revealed that the association between socio-economic status group and economic empowerment of value (R=0.409**) is highly significant indicating that higher the socio-economic status, higher the economic empowerment so far as SHG form women are concerned the WSHGs member involved in many member of economic activities are many socially higher up.

Table 4. Training of WSHGs members in different vocations/ activities (N=120)

Vocation/ Activities	Sufficient (>5)		Optimum(3-5)		Once(1-2)		Mean	Rank
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Score	order
Rice cultivation	45	37.50	38	31.67	37	30.83	2.06	X
Vegetable cultivation	61	50.83	27	22.50	32	26.67	2.24	VI
Procurement and marketing of product	76	63.33	31	25.83	13	10.84	2.52	II
Diary	40	33.33	56	46.67	24	20	2.13	IX
Piggery	46	38.33	34	28.33	40	33.34	2.05	XI
Goatery	56	46.67	63	44.17	11	9.16	2.37	IV
Poultry	39	32.50	62	51.67	19	15.83	2.16	VII
Fishery	41	34.17	55	45.83	24	20.00	2.14	VIII
Toy making	63	52.50	49	40.83	08	6.67	2.45	III
Value added product	78	65.00	38	31.67	04	3.33	2.61	I
Honey bee keeping	54	45.00	42	35.00	24	20.00	2.25	V

Table 5. Extent of linkage established by SHG member with different organization (N=120)

Organization	Regularly		Occasionally		Never		Mean	Rank
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Score	
Credit institution	48	40	52	43.33	20	16.67	1.23	II
Nonbanking/ financial institution	44	36.67	60	50	16	13.33	1.23	II
Chit funds	57	47.50	49	40.83	14	1.17	1.35	I
International funding agencies	46	38.33	47	39.17	27	22.50	1.15	III

Table 6. Linkages established with sectoral department (N=120)

Organization	Regularly		Occasionally		Never		Mean	Rank
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Score	
Health department	39	32.50	64	53.33	17	14.17	1.18	III
Agricultural department	43	35.83	56	46.67	21	17.50	1.18	III
Animal husbandry department\	44	36.67	49	40.83	27	22.50	1.10	VI
Educational department	43	35.83	57	47.50	20	16.67	1.19	II
Social welfare Department	43	35.83	54	45	23	19.17	1.16	V
Cooperation Department	42	35	60	50	18	15	1.20	I
Forestry department	46	38.33	49	40.83	25	20.83	1.17	IV
CD department	41	34.16	58	48.33	21	17.5	1.16	V
NGOs	46	38.33	48	40.00	26	21.67	1.16	V

Table 7. Financial arrangement for different WSHGs activities (N= 120)

Financing Agency	Regularly		Occasionally		Never		Mean	Rank
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	Score	
SHGs	49	40.83	50	41.67	21	17.50	1.23	II
Nationalised Bank	38	31.67	67	55.83	15	12.5	1.19	VI
NGOs	43	35.83	60	50	17	14.17	1.22	III
Cooperative society	51	42.5	49	40.83	20	16.67	1.25	I
DRDA	38	31.67	69	57.5	13	10.83	1.21	IV
Private money lender	39	32.5	66	55	15	12.5	1.20	V

The regression co-efficient indicate the association of socio-economic status and economic empowerment activities $Y = (2.740x + 31.960)$ indicate significant relationship and higher R^2 value contribute 84.7% towards the economic empowerment i.e. all the factors of socio-economic status contributes 84.7% towards economic

empowerment. The result leads to infer that menu no. of economic activities need to be taken up by the SHGs farm women for higher economic empowerment leading to higher socio-economic status.

The Table No.-4 reveals that maximum member

of women belonging to SHGs had undertaken training programmers were value added product (rank-I), procurement and marketing of the product (rank-II) and toy making (rank-III), goatery (rank-IV), honey bee keeping(rank-V), vegetable cultivation(rank-VI), poultry(rank-VII), fishery(rank-VIII), diary(rank-IX), rice cultivation(rank-X)and piggery(rank-XI) in order.

The Table 5 and 6. reveals that linkages of SHGs member with the credit agency and other services have been studied, the mean score analysis reveals that chit funds(rank-I) followed by credit institutions , her banking financial institutions, intentional funding agencies health and Agricultural department Animal husbandry department, NGOS,social welfare and forest department are in order of merits. As regurals frequency of linkages are concerned regularly contact with chit fund, credit institution, international funding agency etc. forest department and NGOS have regular linkages, while occasionally linkage is also found with health department men-banking financial institution, cooperation department and other departments.

Financial assistance in functioning of SHGs have been studies as presented in the Table No-7. reveals that cooperative society(rank-I), followed by SHGs (rank-II), DRDA(rank-III), private money lenders (rank-IV) and nationalized banks (rank-V) are in order of preference for providing financial assistance in functionary of SHG. The frequency of financial assistance indicates mostly all the agency providing financial assistance either regularly, occasionally.

It is evident that from the Table No-8 majority of respondent undertaking investment in the enterprises were vegetable farming (77.5%) followed by fruit tree plantation (76.67%), purchasing. Cycle and others for transportations (75.83%) giving loan to others (75.83%), purchasing goats/pig/poultry rearing (75%), housing for the animals and goat (74.17%),purchasing milch animals (67.5%) respectively. The findings were confirmative

Table 8: Investment pattern of WSHGs Members (N=120)

Enterprise	No.	%
Purchasing milch animals	81	67.50
Purchasing goats/pig/poultry rearing	90	75.50
Fodder cultivation	87	72.50
Vegetable farming	93	77.50
Fruit tree plantations	92	6.67
Housing for the animals and goat	89	74.17
Purchasing raw materials and inputs	86	71.67
Purchasing cycle & others for transport	91	75.83
Giving loan to other	91	75.83

with the findings of *Hemalatha et al. (1997)*, *Prasad, C. H. (1998 & 2000)* and *Swati (2001)*.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study reveals that 65.62 per cent of the SHGs had under taken fish cultivation in individually followed by vegetable cultivation, poultry, rice cultivating etc. Where as more than 50 per cent of the SHGs had under taken procurement and marketing of the product collectively followed by fishery and mushroom cultivation. The personal and socio-economic character of the respondent showed positive and highly significant association with economic activities. These variable are highly inspired to motivate the respondent for better economic activities. The members of SHGs had the more interest and aspiration towards training aspect like value added products, procurement and marketing of the produce and toy making etc. The chit funds, credit institution, non banking, financial institution and international funding agencies were higher extent of linkages establish by SHG member with different organization. The Co-operative department, educational department and health department were higher on the extent of linkages established with sect oral aspects. Most of the SHG member belonged to financial arrangement of activities of SHG were co-operative society, SHG and NGOs etc.

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