



Impact of Training Programme on SHG Members – With Special Reference to Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT

Poverty and unemployment are the twin evils of India. To eradicate poverty by the way of providing employment opportunities to all, the new concept Self Help Group emerged. Self Help Group is a homogenous group of not more than 20 people who join on a voluntary basis. They are getting loan from banks and investing this amount to produce a product (or) service. So they are facing lot of problems from point of purchase of raw materials to produce a product to getting feedback from consumers those who are using the SHG product due to lack of education and lack of knowledge about latest marketing strategies. So they are in need of some sort of training to upgrade their skills and knowledge related to various management functions like marketing, HRM, accounting and system etc. This paper deals with what will be the impact of training programmes in agriculture and agriculture allied activities on knowledge level of self help group.

1. Introduction

A Self Help Group (SHG) is a registered or unregistered group of micro entrepreneurs having homogenous social and economic back grounds, voluntarily coming together to save regular small sum of money, mutually agreeing to contribute to a common fund and to meet their emergency needs on the basis of mutual help. Also it is a group of people who pool in their resources to become financially stable by taking loans from the money collected by that group and by making everybody of that group self employed. The group members use collective wisdom and peer pressure to ensure proper end use of credit and timely repayment. This system eliminates the need for collateral and is closely related to that of solidarity lending, widely used by micro finance institutions. To make the book keeping simple enough to be handled by the members, flat interest rates are used for most of the loan calculation. Self Help Group is a method of organizing the poor people and the marginalized to come together to solve their individual problem. The SHG method is used by the government, NGOs and others worldwide. The poor collect their savings and save it in banks. In return they receive easy access to loans with a small rate interest to start their micro unit enterprise. In this context, the phenomenon of development oriented SHGs in the Indian context is an interesting issue to investigate various experts on developmental issues (poverty, inequality, hunger) have argued that employment opportunities and enhanced income from both farming and non – farming activities are essential for rural economic development and the reduction of rural poverty. The employment of SHG programs has emerged as a popular strategy for the facilitation of micro-enterprise development by government, non-government organizations and educational institutes in rural areas in India. These initiatives are not simply the expressions of a neo-liberal, politics that favours entrepreneurship and markets as the key for development, they are also the expressions of rural people's needs and interest in their own participation and empowerment.

Review of Literature:

Another crucial aspect for micro-enterprise development is capacity buildings, the process by which individuals,

group, institutions, organizations and societies enhance their abilities to identify and meet development challenges in a sustainable manner (CIDA 1996; Murgan and Qualman 1996), Haggmann (2000) describes how a effective vehicle for capacity building development has proven to be the joint development of technical and social innovations by local people with external agents, based on a synthesis of indigenous and scientific knowledge capacity in terms of micro entrepreneurship depends on community, social economic environment, the nature of business, market and entrepreneurial skill.

It is not clear what proportion of SHG members in India have benefited from such training and what proportion of trainees has been able to make use of this training by starting a micro enterprise. Moreover training alone is not enough to ensure that group members taken up micro enterprise their success depends also on markets for the services and goods produced (Adolph 2003).

Indian SHGs are generally found to be very effective in organizing the informal education and training (for example, entrepreneurial and technical training) programs for the exchange and sharing of knowledge and skills of the rural folk. Many NGO's, government programs and micro finance institutions organize training programs for SHG members and leaders. Training and technologies development centre (TTDC) are one of the examples of a body aiming to introduce innovative technologies for the qualitative improvement of the products made by the SHGs. Other example includes the sree shakti programme in the dairy co-operative sector in Madhya Pradesh, the training – cum – employment programme for women the women's economic programme, the Siva Shakthi Project, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh and others (Sardana 2002, Adulph 2003).

Miller and Grace (1990) argued for the creation of a systematic learning approach to micro – enterprise development. They believe that learning is not the simple acquiring of skills in order to achieve objectives, but a process of fulfilling the needs for self improvement. Further, they suggest a micro enterprise learning system should include experiences which (1) focus on problem oriented issues

(2) Have a direct relationship to need and use (3) stress measurable performance that can be positively reinforced (4) Emphasize experimental activities. Assuming a SHG approach, these involve the representation of local people, thereby building participatory oriented organization contributing to the development of micro enterprise and enhancing its effectiveness in rural areas. Moreover SHG intrinsically involve participation and decision making processes that faster local development.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study about constraints faced by the SHG members.
2. To study the impact of training on knowledge level of SHG members in agricultural and allied activities.
3. To study the suggestions given by the SHG members.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Nillacottai Taluk of Dindigul District in Tamil Nadu. To meet the above said objectives the list of SHG members were prepared with the help of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Gandhigram. The training was carried out by subject matter specialists of Gandhigram KVK. The simple random sampling method was used in selecting the respondents in the study. The mean scores percent, standard deviation and 't' values worked out to draw inferences.

Table – 1
Impact of training programme on knowledge level of SHG members

S. No.	Particular	Before training		After training	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1.	Silkworm rearing	50	50.00	75	75.00
2.	Cutflower cultivation	3	3.00	30	30.00
3.	Mushroom cultivation	20	20.00	25	25.00
4.	Nursery preparation	48	48.00	55	55.00
5.	Jam & Jelly preparation	31	31.00	60	60.00
6.	Biogas production	3	3.00	20	20.00
7.	Organic cultivation	1	1.00	32	32.00
8.	Fruit preservation	0	0.00	10	10.00
9.	Apiculture	0	0.00	8	8.00
10.	Seed treatment	25	25.00	35	35.00
11.	Vermi compost preparation	11	11.00	28	28.00
12.	Poultry rearing	59	59.00	70	70.00
13.	Integrated pest management	2	2.00	12	12.00
14.	Propagation methods of fruit trees	51	51.00	60	60.00
15.	Value added products	4	4.00	10	10.00

Knowledge level of the SHG members before and after training:

The data in the table-1 reveals knowledge level of the SHG members regarding individual agricultural and allied activity practices before and after training. The data in the table-1 before training reveals that more than 50 per cent of the respondents were having knowledge level about silkworm rearing (50%), poultry rearing (59%) and propagation methods of fruit trees (51%). 48% of the respondents are having knowledge about nursery preparation. Twenty percent, thirty one percent, and twenty five percent of the

respondents are having knowledge about mushroom cultivation, Jam & Jelly preparation and seed treatment respectively. Less than ten per cent of the respondents are having knowledge about cut flower cultivation (3%), biogas production (3%), organic cultivation (1%) integrated pest management (2%) and value added products (4%). None of the respondents had knowledge about fruit preservation and agriculture.

Further after training, the data in Table.1 revealed that majority of the respondents possessed knowledge about silkworm rearing (75%). Around 60 per cent of the respondents are having knowledge about Jam & Jelly preparation and propagation methods of fruit trees (60%) seventy percent of the respondents are having knowledge about poultry rearing. Ten percent of the respondents are having the knowledge about fruit preservation methods and value added products. Very less percentage of the respondents are having knowledge about apiculture (8%), fruit preservation (10%) and integrated pest management (12%). In general the trained SHG members had correct knowledge of almost all the practices than untrained members. This indicates that training has an impact on respondents. The reason for this type of behaviour might be that the trained farmers had a unique opportunity of contrived as well as direct purposeful experience during the training session. The other reason might be that the interaction with other farmers during training situation might have influenced the increased knowledge. Another reason might be that the increased exposure to training situation leads to increased knowledge.

Problems of SHG members

Table-2 clearly says that twenty percent of the respondents perceived as dual role of women is the major constraints to them, followed by fifteen per cent of the people says lack of education is the main hindrance to their development.

Then 12 per cent of the respondents perceived as lack of advertisement for their product and service is one of the main bottleneck for improvement of their product sales. Lack of knowledge about marketing strategies, lack of training, lack of support from family, sole depends upon (or) two products and non availability of raw materials are the main constraints of 5 per cent, 5 per cent, 5 per cent, 2 per cent and 3 per cent respectively.

Table – 2 Problems of SHG members

S.No.	Particular	Frequency	Percent
1.	Dual role of women	20	20
2.	Cultural hinderence	7	7
3.	Non-availability of raw materials	3	3
4.	Lack of advertisements	12	12
5.	Lack of leadership	8	8
6.	Less product variety	8	8
7.	Sole depends upon one (or) two products	2	2
8.	Lack of government support	3	3
9.	Stiff competition from MNC	7	7
10.	Lack of education	15	15
11.	Lack of knowledge about marketing strategies	5	5
12.	Lack of training	5	5
13.	Lack of support from family	5	5

Table – 3 Suggestions made by SHG members

S. No.	Particular	Fre-quency	Percent-age
1	Quality of the training materials should be improved	15	15
2	To arrange on-form training method	13	13
3	Successful farmers in that line will be the speaker in the training programme	20	20
4	Field visit will be arranged	17	17
5	Training cost will be bear by sponsor	5	5
6	Training agenda should focus on marketing strategies	20	20
7	Training spot itself they should arrange for loan	15	15
8	Feedback about training programme is not proper	5	5

Table:3 clearly revealed that most of the self help group members suggested that (20 per cent respectively) the successful person in that project will be called as guest speaker for the training programme, by that way we can easily clarify our practical doubts, and training agenda should focus on various marketing strategies to sell their product and to tackle the stiff competition, from multi national companies. Why because most of the training programme mainly focus only on practical aspects of production methodology, so there is gap in training module. The quality of the training materials should be enhanced and training spot itself the banks should give loan to the trainees are the major suggestiosn spell out by 15 per cent respectively. Then 13 per cent of the respondents suggestions is the sponsor should arrange training programme in on the farm itself instead of giving class room training programme. So these are all the various suggestion recommended by the self help group members.

Overall knowledge level of SHG members before and after training

The results in table:2 and table:3 revealed the knowledge level of respondents and difference between knowledge level of SHG members before and after training.

The overall knowledge level of SHG members before training revealed that majority of the respondents belongs to medium level of knowledge (50%) followed by high level of knowledge (30%) then low level of knowledge (20%) respectively.

Table – 2 Overall knowledge level of SHG members before and after training

S. No.	Knowledge Level	Before training		After training	
		Fre-quency	Per cent	Fre-quency	Percent
1.	Low	20	20	8	8
2.	Medium	50	50	30	30
3.	High	30	30	62	62
Mean		3.16		7.35	
S.D.		2.566		2.737	

Table – 3 Difference between knowledge level of SHG members before and after training

S. No.	Knowledge level		Mean differ-ence	't' value
	Before training	After train-ing		
1.	3.16	7.35	4.24	5.345

The overall knowledge level of respondents after training revealed that 62 per cent of the SHG members belongs to high level of knowledge followed by medium level of knowledge (30%) and low level of knowledge (8%) respectively.

The mean knowledge score for respondents before and after training was 3.16 and 7.35 respectively. This establishes that after training the members have to got better knowledge compared to before training of the members. So the knowledge level of trained respondents was significantly higher than that of the untrained farmers. So the findings of this study, indicated that training had a definite impact of the knowledge level of the respondents.

Conclusion

It is concluded that majority of the self help group members are in low level of knowledge in most of these aspects. But after attending training programme their knowledge level have improved considerably. So all the krishi vighan kandra should arrange frequent training programme exclusively for women self help group members about recent development in agriculture and its allied activities like forestry, agriculture, sericulture, fruit preservation, organic manure and horticulture. So it will be useful to them to produce better products with low cost along with environment friendly manner. Then their training programme apart from focusing the production side and they should concentrate on marketing strategies to market the agriculture commodities.

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