

Performance of Men Self Help Groups in Tamil Nadu



Commerce

KEYWORDS: Men SHGs, Employment, Well-being and Socio- Economic Development.

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ABSTRACT

The socio economic development of men is one of the central issues in the process of development of countries all over the world. The concept of Self Help Groups has helped the unemployed men in Tamil Nadu to attain employment generation, improvement of business, self-confidence, improvement of family welfare, increasing purchase power and socio economic development. Farm and non-farm activities have been identified as suitable economic activities for SHGs in the state. The study is to reveal the present status of employment generation and performance of men through Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu.

Introduction

In traditional society, family and friends provided social support. In modern industrial society, however, family and community ties are often disrupted due to mobility and other social changes. Thus, people often choose to join with others who share mutual interests and concerns. In 1992, almost one in three Americans reported involvement in a support group; more than half of these were Bible study groups ("According to a Gallup Poll" 1992). Of those not involved in a Self Help Group at the time, more than 10 percent reported past involvement, while another 10 percent desired future involvement. It has been estimated that there are at least 500,000 to 750,000 groups with 10 million to 15 million participants in the United States (Katz 1993) and that more than thirty Self Help Centers and Information Clearinghouses have been established (Borman 1992).

Self-Help Groups

Self Help Groups, also known as mutual help, mutual aid, or support groups, or groups of people provide mutual support for each other. Their mutual goal is to help each other to deal with, if possible to heal or to recover from, this problem. An SHG is a small group of about 20 persons from a homogeneous class, who come together voluntarily to attain certain collective goals, social or economic. The group is democratically formed and elects its own leaders. Their aims should include economic welfare of all members. The non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have traditionally had a history of promoting SHGs. However, over time, SHGs have come to be promoted by Government agencies, banks and also by federations of SHGs themselves.

Formation of Men Self-Help Groups

Women Self Help Groups were formed originally for social empowerment. Men/Youth Self Help Groups will have economic empowerment as the primary focus. Therefore, the focus will be on skill training for increasing their employability and promotion of economic activities. In addition, Men/Youth Self Help Groups will be trained in SHG concept, savings, etc like Women Self Help Groups.

The ideal size of SHG is 10-20 members. A smaller size is preferred because in a big group, members cannot participate actively. The group may or may not be registered. Only one person from one family can become a member of a SHG. A group of either men or women is formed. A mixed group is generally not preferred. It is important that the members have a common social and financial background. For example, the group may be of farmers, artisans, craftsmen, housemaids, mill workers etc.

The Salient features of Men/Youth SHGs will be:

- Groups will be formed based on economic activities.
- Skill training will be imparted to increase employability and to promote self-employment.
- Exposure visits will be arranged to expose youth to various

opportunities available in today's society.

- Empowering Men through Self Help Groups

The theme of the study "Empowering men through Self Help Groups" suggests employment generation through SHGs. It is to generate employment opportunities for men to undertake initiatives to do particularly economic activities and social upgrading. Its aims are enhancement of their skills, capacity building, gaining self-confidence and participating in decision-making activities after joining SHGs. There is necessity to understand and analysis the status of employment for men. Their employment generation activity through SHGs had added new dimensions and was hoped that they had been contributing positively in the national economy.

The study of poor people's status and performance would reveal how to develop them. The study will reveal the self-confidence amongst men, their positive image of contribution to society, policy and economy, their ability to think critically, decision-making abilities, equal participation in development process. Employment generation of men is a process that addresses all sources and structures of power. Men in rural areas require not only education but also access to the labour market to create employment and their economic transformation. But education including literacy and attitude development had great role in employment generation of men for developing their socio-economic well-beings. Self-Help Group creates social awareness regarding economic development, social well-beings and health measures. The need for well being of men was specially drawn attention as their literacy per cent was merely 71.40 per cent in rural areas and 86.70 per cent in urban areas as compared to the women literacy of 46.70 per cent and 73.20 per cent respectively in 2001 in India. They were required to be active enough to undertake economic activities for their development. Government programmes for empowering the weaker sections were more concerned with financial targets than physical achievement.

Statement of the Problem

The research has studied the performance of men and it has given more emphasis on employment generation for men through Men SHGs. Their role in society was much more significant than women. They are highly motivational for development and can motivate parents, wife, child and society in a more effective manner. Men may develop leadership qualities, initiatives, innovation and creativity, international skills and so on through education and Self Development after joining SHGs. As of the 2001, Indian census, in Tamil Nadu male constitutes 51 percent of the population and most of them less access to education, jobs, income and poor. To ensure that the poor rural men in this state really got socio economic development to some extent or not through the employment generation with the help of SHGs is more important and should be measurable. Hence in this context the impact of SHGs and performance of male members in the SHGs in Tamil Nadu is meaningful, justifiable and has result-

ed in a significantly greater side of SHGs beyond expectations.

Scope of the Study

The study is to reveal the present status of employment generation and performance of men through Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu. The study focuses on the socio-economic structure, social development, economic development and entrepreneurial development. An environment was created for the development of Self-Help Group by establishing self-reliance groups of men, building capacity of new and existing groups, formation of new group with the help of matured SHG, promotion of Self-Help Group's clusters and associates and strengthening employment generation programmes for men through Self-Help Group.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the importance of Men Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu.
- To evaluate the significance of Men Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu.
- To assess the employment generation and achievement and well-being of the Men members in the Self-Help Groups.
- To understand the improvement of socio-economic status and well-being of Men who were members of Self-Help Groups.

Methodology

The study follows descriptive in nature. The study aims to discover the relationship between the member's employment generation, importance of Men Self Help Groups and impact of Men Self Help Groups.

Data Sources

The secondary data relevant to Men Self-Help Groups were collected from Tamil Nadu Vazhndhu Kaattuvom Project (VKP) in Chennai. The period of study was four years from 2007-2008 to 2010-2011.

Limitation of the Study

The study focused only on employment achievement and well-being of the Men members in the Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu.

Status of Men SHGs in Tamil Nadu

The socio economic development of men is one of the central issues in the process of development of countries all over the world. Tamil Nadu has a glorious tradition of recognizing the importance of empowering poor men over several centuries. A scheme for supporting establishment of Training for Rural Youth and Self Employment (TRYSEM) was introduced by Central Government in 1979. The men Self Help Groups in Tamil Nadu have been maintaining very successful records, helping their members to earn reasonable income which helps their families to give decent education and good medical facilities to children and other members of the family in recent years.

NABARD, being the pioneer of Micro-credit, had taken a lead role in providing policy framework and other support like Fixation of norms for assessing/Grading SHGs for financing, Provision for Grant of assistance to Self Help Promoting Institutions [SHPI] for formation, capacity building, credit linkage and other initiatives, Formulation of a scheme for Promotion of SHGs through Farmers Clubs, Provided for Bulk lending to NGOs/MFIs on lending to SHGs, Issuance of guidelines on formulation of joint Liability Groups, Provision of RFA/Equity Support to MFIs from MFDEF, Provision of RFA through Post Office (Pilot Project in 5 districts in Tamil Nadu viz., Sivagangai, Pudukottai, Tiruvannamalai, Thanjavur and Tiruvarur) and Provision of Soft Loan Assistance to SHG Federations.

Status of Men SHG – Bank linkages Programme- Progress

The SHG Bank Linkage Programme of NABARD has emerged as the primary model for providing Micro Finance (MF) services in the country. Tamil Nadu being the second largest contributor after Andhrapradesh, credit linked 1,31,796 SHGs during 2007-08 and the cumulative number of SHGs credit linked stood at 4,77,612. The cumulative bank loans aggregated Rs. 4,87,813 lakhs.

Table – 1 Men SHG – Bank linkages Programme (Revolving Fund) Progress in Tamil Nadu

Year	Number of new Men SHGs credit linked during the year		Amount of Revolving Fund distributed during the year (Rs.)		Cumulative number of Men SHGs credit linked at end of the year		Cumulative amount of Revolving Fund distributed at the end of the year (Rs.)	
	First Rating	Second Rating	First Rating	Second Rating	First Rating	Second Rating	First Rating	Second Rating
2006-07	3	-	1,80,000	-	3	-	1,80,000	-
2007-08	2	-	1,20,000	-	5	-	3,00,000	-
2008-09	131	4	77,90,000	2,40,000	136	4	80,90,000	2,40,000
2009-10	371	15	2,02,60,000	9,00,000	507	19	2,83,50,000	11,40,000
2010-11	703	74	4,40,90,000	44,40,000	1,210	93	7,24,40,000	55,80,000

Source: Tamil Nadu VKP- MIS Report, Chennai.

Table 1 shows the progress of Men SHG- Bank Linkage Programme (Revolving Fund) in Tamil Nadu under Vazhndhu Katuvom Project over the last 5 years. Overall 1,210 and 74 groups have benefited in first rating and second rating respectively.

Table - 2 Men SHG – Bank linkages Programme (Direct Linkage) Progress in Tamil Nadu

Year	Number of new Men SHGs credit linked during the year		Amount of Revolving Fund distributed during the year (Rs.)		Cumulative number of Men SHGs credit linked at end of the year		Cumulative amount of Revolving Fund distributed at the end of the year (Rs.)	
	First Rating	Second Rating	First Rating	Second Rating	First Rating	Second Rating	First Rating	Second Rating
2006-07	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2007-08	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2008-09	2	2	1,50,000	2,60,000	2	2	1,50,000	2,60,000
2009-10	4	12	4,90,000	11,60,000	6	14	6,40,000	14,20,000
2010-11	29	83	29,00,000	1,00,00,000	35	97	35,40,000	1,14,20,000

Source: Tamil Nadu VKP- MIS Report, Chennai.

Table 2 indicates the progress of Men SHG- Bank Linkage Programme (Direct Linkage) in Tamil Nadu under Vazhndhu Kattuvom Project over the last 5 years. Overall 35 and 97 groups have been benefited in first rating and second rating respectively.

Financial Support to Men Self Help Groups in Tamil Nadu

World Bank continues to extend financial support to Government of Tamil Nadu, Village communities for the promotion and nurturing of poor people through SHGs. Grant assistance for promotion and linkage of SHGs (as on 31-03-2010) shows in the table 3:

Table – 3 Sources of Financial Assistance to SHGs

Source	Amount Sanctioned (Rs. in Million)
World Bank (IDA)	5412.00
Government of Tamil Nadu	1218.00
Village Communities	541.00
Total	7171.00

Source: Tamil Nadu VKP Project report

Performance of Men Self Help Groups in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women had to form 10,000 Men/Youth Self Help Groups in 2006-07. Most of the men groups are not functioning well after 2006-07, because they are not aware about the groups and they didn't get the necessary training, loan assistance from the bank, etc., but some of the groups are well developed with the help of the Non Government Organizations support and the members' involvement.

The Vazhndhu Kattuvom Project is a Government of Tamil Nadu initiative aiming to reducing rural poverty and empowering the poorest of the poor. The project aims to set up micro enterprises amongst matured SHGs. This is a 6 year project, being implemented at a cost of Rs. 716 crore in 70 blocks, 2480 Panchayats spread over in 15 districts of Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu government's poverty reduction scheme Vazhndhu Kaattuvom Project (VKP) got an additional funding of Rs.950 crore from the World Bank on 23rd December, 2010. An agreement to this effect was signed by the state government, the central government and the World Bank at the state secretariat. With this fund, the state government has decided to expand the project to 120 backward blocks in 26 districts to benefit 960,000 households. The project, which began in 2006, is being implemented in 70 backward blocks in 15 districts in Tamil Nadu with a World Bank assistance of Rs.717 crore.

Table – 4 No. of Men Self Help Groups in Tamil Nadu

Name of the District	2006-2007	2007-2008	Increase or Decrease %	2008-2009	Increase or Decrease %	2009-10	Increase or Decrease %	2010-11	Increase or Decrease %
Coimbatore	-	22	-	54	145.45	86	59.26	97	12.79
Cuddalore	-	11	-	47	327.27	133	182.98	156	17.29
Kancheepuram	-	5	-	26	420	32	23.08	32	-
Nagapattinam	-	-	-	10	-	78	680	107	37.18
Namakkal	-	-	-	35	-	139	297.14	188	35.25
Ramanathapuram	-	-	-	7	-	105	1400	134	27.62
Salem	-	31	-	132	325.81	246	86.36	310	26.02
Theni	-	7	-	10	42.86	80	700	106	32.50
Thiruvallur	-	24	-	61	154.17	104	70.49	119	14.42

Thiruvannamalai	2	26	1200	57	119.23	85	49.12	130	52.94
Thiruvarur	-	-	-	5	-	19	280	19	-
Tirunelveli	-	3	-	11	266.67	33	200	52	57.56
Tuticorin	-	-	-	18	-	125	594.44	150	20
Vellore	-	29	-	83	186.21	121	45.78	177	46.28
Villupuram	-	20	-	52	160	85	63.46	111	30.59
State Total	2	178	8800	608	241.57	1471	141.94	1888	28.34

Source: Tamil Nadu VKP- MIS Report, Chennai.

Table 4 indicates, during 2006-07, only 2 groups were formed in Tiruvannamalai district. During 2007-08, the number of groups has increased to 178. The percentage of increase was 8800.00. During the period, the maximum number of groups in Salem District was 31 and the least number of 3 groups, 5 groups and 7 groups were in Tirunelveli, Kancheepuram and Theni districts respectively. During 2008-09, the increased numbers of groups were 608 (241.57%) compared to previous year. In Salem district a maximum number of 132 groups were formed with 325.81 percent increase. The lowest numbers of groups 5 were formed in Thiruvarur district. During 2009-10, the number of groups increased to 1471. The percentage of increase was 141.94. Again, the groups (246) in Salem district formed the maximum with 86.36 percent. During 2010-11, the numbers of groups have increased to 1888 with 28.34 percent compared to previous year. Again, the Salem district has the maximum number of 310 groups. No groups were formed in Kancheepuram and Thiruvarur districts during the year.

Activities of Men SHGs in Tamil Nadu

In Tamil Nadu, NABARD gives cent percent refinance for loans to SHGs. Many commercial banks, Regional Rural Banks and Cooperative Banks give loans to SHGs fulfill social commitment of banks. Among the various potential activities, the following farm and non-farm activities have been identified as suitable economic activities for SHGs in the state. *Farm activities:* Dairy, Poultry, Stall fed goat rearing, Mushroom culture, Sericulture etc. *Non-farm activities:* Bakery products, Ready mix items, Eatables, Masala powder, knitting, Embroidery, Readymade garments, Paper plates and cups, Cleaning powder, nail polish, Kumkum, Plastic bags, Agarbathi making, Scented candle, Pot painting, Aesthetic articles for show-case etc.

Conclusion

The Men Self Help Groups are fully covered in all small villages in Tamil Nadu. This concept is not only utilized especially for the poor section of community belonging to lower income group of women and also men. The concept of Self Help Groups has helped the unemployed men in Tamil Nadu to attain employment generation, improvement of business, self confidence, improvement of family welfare, increasing purchase power and socio economic development as reflected by the indicators considered in this research study. It is a positive and significant development indeed.

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