

## Study on men's perception on gender issues, self-help groups and empowerment of women

S.V. HALAKATTI, VIJAYLAXMI KAMARADDI AND S.M. HIREMATH

### ABSTRACT

Many institutions have organized marginalized women into Sanghas with a view to empower them. The empowerment approach initiated processes that resulted in the restoration of women's self image and confidence. The present investigation was undertaken with an objective to ascertain men's perceptions about various issues of women empowerment and self-help groups (SHG's). The study was conducted in Haveri district of Karnataka involving husbands of both SHG and non-SHG members. The results revealed that among the husbands of SHG members, 70% no longer borrowed loans from money lenders, all of them have saved money, only 11% migrated in search of employment, 89% purchased assets, 62% of them were well off, 93% of them started recognizing their wives roles in the family, only 16% were having bad habits and 80% have favourable opinion on women participating in SHG's. Whereas among the husbands of non-SHG members, 85% took loan from money lenders and not saved any money, 63% still migrated to seek employment, 61% lived in economically poor conditions, 59% were drunkards and majority denied their wives participation in SHG's. It is evident from the study that the process of empowerment of women resulted in significant changes in men's attitude towards women.

**KEY WORDS** : Empowerment of women, Self-help groups, Gender issues

Halakatti, S.V., Kamaraddi, Vijaylaxmi and Hiremath, S.M. (2011). A study on men's perception on gender issues, self-help groups and empowerment of women, *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 2 (1) : 91-95.

### INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is a state of being that reflects a certain level of critical consciousness about external realities and an awareness about their internal thought construction and belief systems that affect their well being in terms of gender justice and social justice; as well as the determination to use their physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual resources to protect, nurture and sustain values that guarantee gender equity at personal, familial, social, political and institutional levels (Overholt and Catherine, 1985). Since last decade, NGO's, development departments, financial Institutions, Krishi Vigyan Kendras started operating in their respective areas by organizing marginalised women into Sanghas with a view to empower them socially, economically, politically and at the personal level. Over these years, the Sanghas have passed through various stages, faced many problems both from within and outside, grown with experience and

progressed tremendously. The process of identifying issues (problems) and initiating action towards resolving them has instilled in the members the confidence and courage to fight for their rights. The empowerment approach in essence initiated processes that result in the restoration of women's self image and their confidence. To provide them with space to come together as a group, give them access to credit and markets, build their confidence in handling finances, to own productive assets, to resist exploitation and bargain for gender equity. Women are motivated to take up issues relating to basic amenities for meeting their practical needs as well as entitlement rights and in the process acquire skills to analyse and reconstruct their realities and learn survival strategies to protect themselves as individuals and as women (Ahooja and Patel, 1993).

The process of women's empowerment will also liberate men. They will be free from the roles of oppressor

#### Correspondence to:

S.V. HALAKATTI, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, College of Agriculture, University of Agricultural Sciences, DHARWAD (KARNATAKA) INDIA

#### Authors' affiliations:

VIJAYLAXMI KAMARADDI, Krishi Vignana Kendra, MUDIGERE (KARNATAKA) INDIA

S.M. HIREMATH, Krishi Vignana Kendra, DHARWAD (KARNATAKA) INDIA