

Empowerment of rural women through vocational trainings conducted by Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Punjab

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Empowerment is a process that makes women understand her unique potential and enables her to break barriers to make her realize that she has the capacity to utilize her full potential. But it is unfortunate that because of centuries of inertia, ignorance and conservatism, the actual and potential role of women in the society has been ignored. Study was conducted to measure empowerment of rural women in terms of socio-psychological and economic empowerment after getting training from selected Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Punjab namely Bathinda, Ferozpur, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and Saheed Bhagat Singh (SBS) Nagar. All long duration vocational training courses conducted by these Krishi Vigyan Kendras for women from year 2009-2013 were included in the study. A sample of 140 trainees was drawn by applying probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling method and data were collected personally from the selected trainees by using an interview schedule. The findings of the study revealed that even after getting training from Krishi Vigyan Kendras the socio-psychological and economic empowerment level of majority of the trainees was low. Age, social participation and mass media exposure of trainees had positively and significant relationship with the level of empowerment while education had negative but significant relationship with the level of empowerment. So there is a need to impart socio-psychological and economic empowerment aspect to women trainees during the training programme through different strategies.

■ **KEY WORDS**: Empowerment, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Vocational Trainings, Rural women

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The word women empowerment essentially means that the women have the power or capacity to regulate their day-to-day life *i.e.* socially, politically and economically. It is a power which enables them to move from the periphery to the centre stage (Dasarathi, 2006). Empowerment is a multi-faceted, multi-dimensional and multi-layered concept. Women's empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control

over resources like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources *i.e.* money and access to money and control over decision making in the home, community, society and nation to gain 'power'. For women empowerment, it is essential to provide them access to information, knowledge, resources and power to make decisions (Kiran *et al.*, 2012). But in rural areas, along with the hectic schedule of women at home they have to

do a plenty of work concerning agriculture and livestock. Although the input of women in such activities is greatly significant, it has never been rewarded. It is preventing them from their well earned participation to social advancement (Chaudhry, 2005). In various policies and developmental programmes, emphasis has been given to empower women in all spheres of life (Swaminathan, 2007). For the upliftment of women various vocational training courses (VTCs) has been conducted by different government, non- government and other welfare organizations, such as IARI, ICAR, State Agricultural Universities (SAU), Home Science institutions and social welfare societies. Through these vocational training courses different agencies create awareness, educate and motivate rural women to adopt new ways and technologies at their homes as well as at their homes fields.

Vocational training helps rural women to sustain themselves through self-employment and to make them self-reliant economically. Therefore, ICAR launched Krishi Vigyan Kendras in the country which impart vocational trainings to farmers, farm women, rural youth and school drop outs to increase their knowledge and enhance their skill and change their attitude in their work area. The Krishi Vigyan Kendras are grass root level institutions and working on the principle of “Learning by Doing” and “Seeing is Believing” to serve the rural community by imparting need based and skill oriented vocational training courses (Khan *et al.*, 2005). Hence, keeping the above aspect and the importance of training courses in mind, the study was planned to measure the empowerment of rural women through vocational trainings conducted by Krishi Vigyan Kendras in Punjab with the following objectives:

- To assess the impact of vocational trainings on empowerment of women trainees.
- To find out the relationship between profile of the trainees and level of empowerment.

RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted in five Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Punjab state namely Bathinda, Ferozpur, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and SBS Nagar. These Krishi Vigyan Kendras were purposively selected for the study. It represents the different Agro-climatic zones and Socio Cultural divisions of Punjab state. All long duration vocational training courses conducted by the selected

Krishi Vigyan Kendras from year 2009-2013 were purposively selected to assess the impact of training courses.

Session	Total no. of VTCs conducted	Total no. of KVKs under PAU in Punjab	Selected KVKs	Total no. of trainees	Selected trainees (25%)
2009-13	30	18	5	556	140

The list of women trainees who had attended the vocational training courses was procured from selected Krishi Vigyan Kendras. Twenty five per cent of trainees were proportionately selected from each vocational training course (VTC), representing the year and all selected training courses. A sample of 140 out of 556 trainees was drawn by applying probability proportional to size (PPS) sampling technique and data were collected personally from the respondents (women trainees) by using interview schedule. Empowerment refers to improvement in socio-psychological well being and increase in the income of the trainees after getting training from Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads :

Socio- economic profile of the trainees :

The personal profile of the trainees in respect of their age, educational qualification, family background, annual income, land holding, organizational membership status and mass media exposure was analysed as shown in Table 1. The findings have been described and discussed as following:

The data exhibited in Table 1 revealed that 59 per cent of trainees were found in the age group of 18-28 and having educational qualification upto senior secondary level (60.71%). Eighty per cent trainees were belonged to rural background and it was surprising that a large majority of the trainees (60.71%) had no income of their own as most of them were either students or home makers. Family income of the maximum respondents (36.43%) was ranging from 50001-150000. Further it was observed that a large majority of the trainees (73.57%) had no land of their own. Social participation of the respondents were very low as only 7.86 per cent trainees had the membership of one organisation while a

Socio-personal characteristics	Krishi Vigyan Kendras					Total f (%)
	Hoshiarpur (n ₁ =50) f (%)	SBS Nagar (n ₂ =36) f (%)	Gurdaspur (n ₃ =21) f (%)	Ferozpur (n ₄ =17) f (%)	Bathinda (n ₅ =16) f (%)	
Age (years)						
18-28	36 (72.00)	24 (66.67)	10 (47.62)	7 (41.18)	6 (37.50)	83 (59.29)
29-38	13 (26.00)	9 (25.00)	7 (33.33)	9 (52.94)	3 (18.75)	41 (29.29)
39-48	1 (2.00)	1 (2.78)	2 (9.52)	1 (5.88)	7 (43.75)	12 (8.57)
49- 58	-	2 (5.56)	1 (4.76)	-	-	3 (2.14)
59 – 68	-	-	1(4.76)	-	-	1 (0.71)
Educational qualification						
Primary	-	-	-	-	1 (6.25)	1 (0.71)
Middle	-	6 (16.67)	1 (4.76)	1 (5.88)	4 (25.00)	12 (8.57)
Matric	3 (6.00)	4 (11.11)	3 (14.29)	7 (41.18)	3 (18.75)	20 (14.29)
Senior secondary	39 (78.00)	18 (50.00)	15 (71.43)	7 (41.18)	6 (37.50)	85 (60.71)
Graduate	6 (12.00)	-	2 (9.52)	1 (5.88)	1 (6.25)	10 (7.14)
Post graduate	2 (4.00)	8 (22.22)	-	1 (5.88)	1 (6.25)	12 (8.57)
Annual income of the respondent (Rs.)						
Nil	33 (66.00)	20 (55.56)	10 (47.62)	14 (82.35)	8 (50.00)	85(60.71)
Less than 10,000	4 (8.00)	-	1 (4.76)	-	-	5 (3.57)
10,001-50,000	3 (6.00)	8 (22.22)	1 (4.76)	2 (11.76)	2 (12.5)	16(11.43)
50,001-1,00,000	9 (18.00)	1 (2.78)	5 (23.81)	1 (5.88)	2 (12.5)	18(12.86)
More than 1,00,000	1 (2.00)	7 (19.44)	4 (19.05)	-	4 (25.00)	16(11.43)
Annual income of the family (Rs.)						
Less than 50,000	2 (4.00)	-	2 (9.52)	-	-	4 (2.86)
50,001-1,50,000	24 (48.00)	13 (36.11)	3 (14.29)	8 (47.06)	3 (18.75)	51(36.43)
1,50,001-2,50,000	13 (26.00)	8 (22.22)	7 (33.33)	3 (17.65)	6 (37.5)	37(26.43)
2,50,001-3,50,000	6 (12.00)	4 (11.11)	4 (19.05)	4 (23.53)	2 (12.5)	20(14.29)
3,50,001 – 4,50,000	1 (2.00)	4 (11.11)	1 (4.76)	2 (11.76)	-	8 (5.71)
More than 4,50,000	4 (8.00)	7 (19.44)	4 (19.05)	-	5 (31.25)	20 (14.29)
Land holding (Acre) owned						
No Land	32 (64.00)	35 (97.22)	16 (76.19)	9 (52.94)	11 (68.75)	103(73.57)
1-10	12 (24.00)	1 (2.78)	4 (19.05)	5 (29.41)	5 (31.25)	27 (19.29)
11-20	4 (8.00)	-	1 (4.76)	3 (17.65)	-	8 (5.71)
21 and above	2 (4.00)	-	-	-	-	2 (1.43)
Social participation						
As a member:						
Member of one organization	-	3 (8.33)	6 (28.57)	2 (11.76)	-	11 (7.86)
Member of two organizations	-	2 (5.56)	-	-	-	2 (1.43)
As office bearer:						
Office bearer of one organization	1(2.00)	6 (16.67)	2 (9.52)	-	-	9 (6.43)
Office bearer of two organization	-	-	-	-	-	-
Type of mass media						
Print media						
Low (0-5)	39 (78.00)	18 (50.00)	11 (52.38)	11 (64.71)	11 (68.75)	90 (64.29)
Medium (6-10)	10 (20.00)	14 (38.89)	7 (33.33)	3 (17.65)	3 (18.75)	37 (26.43)
High (11-16)	1 (2.00)	4 (11.11)	3 (14.29)	3 (17.65)	2 (12.5)	13 (9.29)
Electronic media						
Low (0-5)	19 (38.00)	21 (58.33)	11 (52.38)	4 (23.53)	6 (37.5)	61 (43.57)
Medium (6-10)	29 (58.00)	15 (41.67)	10 (47.62)	12 (70.59)	8 (50.00)	74 (52.86)
High (11-16)	2 (4.00)	-	-	1 (5.88)	2 (12.5)	5 (3.57)
Social media						
Low (0-3)	35 (70.00)	31 (86.11)	15 (71.43)	17 (100)	11 (68.75)	109 (77.86)
Medium (4-6)	13 (26.00)	5 (13.89)	6 (28.57)	-	4(25.00)	28 (20.00)
High(7-9)	2(4.00)	-	-	-	1 (6.25)	3 (2.14)

negligible percentage of the trainees (1.43%) had the membership of two organizations. In case of office bearer of an organization only 6.43 per cent had a membership of one organization while none of the respondent was the office bearer of two or more organizations. It was found that majority of the respondents had low level exposure of each social media (77.86%) and print media (64.29), respectively while nearly half of the respondents had Medium level exposure of electronic media.

Empowerment of trainees:

Empowerment of the trainees was measured in terms of socio-psychological and economic empowerment. To measure empowerment, a list of different items related to parameters of socio-psychological and economic empowerment was prepared. The responses from the trainees were recorded through three point continuum *i.e.* strongly agree, agree and disagree. A score of 3, 2, 1 was assigned to the strongly agree, agree and disagree response categories, respectively. Level of empowerment was divided into low, medium and high categories.

Socio-psychological empowerment:

The perusal of data presented in Table 2 depicts the improvement in the socio-psychological well being of the trainees after receiving training from Krishi Vigyan Kendras. Highest percentage *i.e.* 62.14 was disagreed with the statement that they got freedom to travel freely anywhere followed by equal percentage of the trainees (52.14%) had disagreed that they had gained confidence in decision making and got freedom to visit their friends and family independently.

Only 35-38 per cent trainees were strongly agreed with the statement that their confidence and communication skills were improved, they developed better relationship with their family members and got freedom to visit friends and family.

It can be concluded from above findings that socio-psychological empowerment of trainees was not improved after receiving training from Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

Economic empowerment:

The data exhibited in Table 2 revealed that majority of the trainees (65.00%) were disagreed that they had

gained confidence to sell and buy products in the market followed by 62.86 per cent of trainees who didn't contribute to family income and equal per cent of the trainees (61.43%) were disagreed with the statements that their decision making skills on spending income and control over income was improved after receiving training.

Only 30-32 per cent of trainees were strongly agreed with all the statements related to economic empowerment.

It can be concluded that most of the trainees were disagreed with statements that they had contributed to family income and control over the income. The reason may be that majority of the trainees were home makers. As they were bounded to four walls of the home and they had very less exposure to the market and world outside the home. So, they had low decision making power and confidence to sell and buy products from market.

Level of empowerment:

The perusal of data in Table 3 revealed that highest percentage of the trainees had low level of socio-psychological (50.00%) and economic empowerment (63.57%). Further it was found that 36.43 per cent of trainees who had high socio-psychological level of empowerment followed by high level of economic empowerment (30.71).

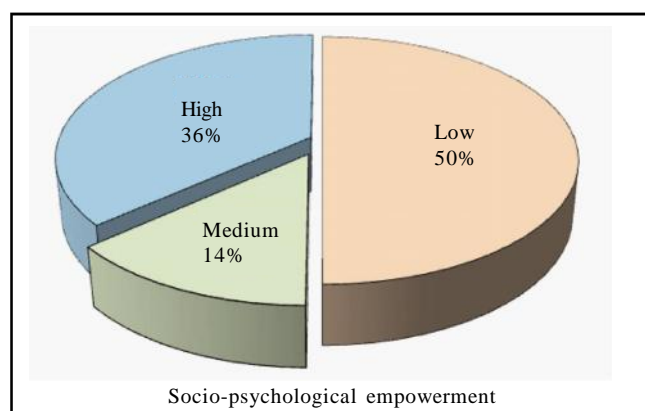


Fig. 1 : Figure in parentheses shows the level of socio-psychological empowerment of trainees

Nearly fourteen per cent of the trainees were having medium level of socio-psychological empowerment while, lowest per cent of the trainees (5.71%) had

Table 3 : Level of empowerment of the trainees (n=140)

Level of empowerment	Krishi Vigyan Kendras					Total f (%)
	Hoshiarpur n ₁ =50 f (%)	SBS Nagar n ₂ =36 f (%)	Gurdaspur n ₃ =21 f (%)	Ferozpur n ₄ =17 f (%)	Bathinda n ₅ =16 f (%)	
Socio-psychological empowerment						
Low (6 - 9)	31(62.00)	17 (47.22)	8 (38.10)	8 (47.06)	6 (37.5)	70 (50.00)
Medium (10 -13)	7 (14.00)	5 (13.89)	3(14.28)	2 (11.76)	2 (12.5)	19 (13.57)
High (14 - 18)	12 (24.00)	14 (38.89)	10 (47.62)	7 (41.18)	8 (50.00)	51(36.43)
Mean (1-3)	1.59	1.90	2.05	1.84	2.18	1.84
Economic empowerment						
Low (5-8)	34 (68.00)	23 (63.89)	11(52.38)	13 (76.47)	8 (50.00)	89 (63.57)
Medium (9-12)	5(10.00)	1(2.78)	1(4.76)	1 (5.88)	-	8 (5.71)
High (13-15)	11(22.00)	12 (33.33)	9 (42.86)	3 (17.65)	8 (50.00)	43 (30.71)
Mean (1-3)	1.54	1.71	1.97	1.43	2.04	1.69

medium level of economic empowerment.

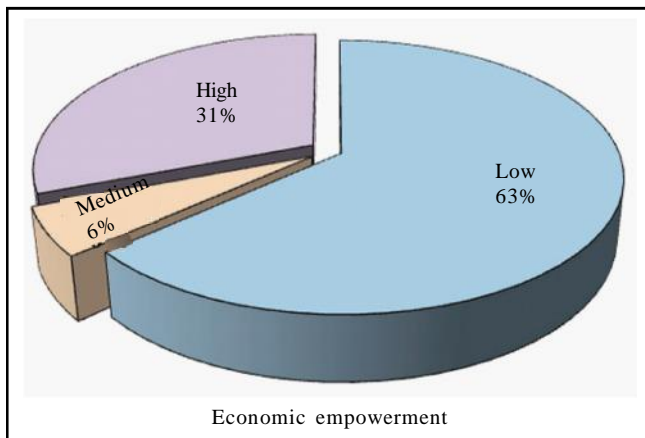


Fig. 2 : Figure in parentheses shows the level of economic empowerment of trainees

Relationship of socio personal profile of trainees with their level of empowerment:

To find out the relationship between socio-personal profile and level of empowerment, correlation co-

efficient of women trainees was calculated and results are presented in Table 4.

The data indicated that age, social participation and mass media exposure had positive and significant relation with the level of empowerment of the women. This shows that these variables are closely associated with the level of empowerment of the women, whereas, education had negative and significantly related to level of empowerment. The reason for negative correlation between education and level of empowerment may be that with high level of education women were already empowered. So there may be no change in level of empowerment in trainees who have higher level of education.

In order to predict the effect of selected variables, step wise multiple regressions analysis was calculated and the results are presented in Table 5. The data revealed that intercept value is non-significant whereas, age, social participation and mass media exposure was significant with the parameter estimated value of 0.27, 1.34 and 0.16, respectively.

The regression co-efficient between the variables

Table 4 : Correlation between selected independent variables and level of empowerment of the trainees

Variables	Pearson correlation co-efficients 'r' value		
	Socio-psychological empowerment	Economic empowerment	Overall empowerment
Age	0.51135**	0.56007**	0.54365**
Education	-0.21784**	-0.24593**	-0.23504**
Family income	0.08874 ^{NS}	0.09257 ^{NS}	0.09217 ^{NS}
Land holding	-0.02365 ^{NS}	-0.00942 ^{NS}	-0.01744 ^{NS}
Social participation	0.38252**	0.43263**	0.41309**
Mass media exposure	0.34283**	0.34571**	0.35052**

** indicates significance of value at P=0.01 level

NS=Non- significant

Table 5 : Multiple regression analysis between independent variables and level of empowerment of trainees

Variable	Parameter estimate	Standard Error	Pr > F	Per cent contribution
Intercept value	-1.96038	1.32947	0.1427	-
Age	0.26788	0.04280	<.0001**	0.3120
Social Participation	1.33564	0.47919	0.0061**	0.0811
Mass media exposure	0.16443	0.04083	<.0001**	0.0270
R ² = 0.4431				
C(p) = 2.7074**				

** indicates significance of value at P=0.01 level

and level of empowerment indicated that the value of co-efficient of step wise multiple determination (R²) with selected variables is 0.44. The p value is 2.71 and it is significant at 1 per cent level of significance. This revealed that when the selected variables put together, they contributed a significant amount of variation to a proportion of 44.31 per cent in the overall empowerment of the respondents. Hence, it can be inferred from these results that selected variables are important determinants of empowerment of women. Age had a significant contribution of variation to a proportion of 0.31 per cent in the overall empowerment of women.

Conclusion :

Majority of the trainees had low level of socio-psychological and economic empowerment even after receiving trainings from Krishi Vigyan Kendras. So, there is a need to impart socio-psychological and economic empowerment aspects during the training programme through different strategies for improving the livelihood and quality of life of the rural women. Social participation and mass media exposure of trainees had positive and significant relationship with level of empowerment. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen mass media exposure to rural women. Women should also be encouraged to participate in social activities.

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