Training need analysis for capacitating women SHGs

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ABSTRACT :   Women, the key agents of sustainable development have multiple family and domestic responsibilities which solely rest on their shoulders. But many times due to lack of scientific know how and technical skills, women fail to perform to their optimal capacity and fear to venture into new areas. Hence, an attempt to identify needs of rural women of different SHGs promoted in Hoshiarpur district of Punjab. A sample of 100 women was selected for collection of data to identify the perceived training needs of respondents in different areas of Home Science. The respondents indicated their training needs in terms of most needed, needed and not needed categories. The data was then analyzed by summing up the frequencies of respondents in these categories. Further, training need index and training need scores were also worked out. The results were very encouraging as most of the women appear to be sensitive towards contemporary issues such as energy saving devices, drudgery reducing technologies and income generating technologies. Stitching and embroidery emerged to be the most needed training area. The generated data will have direct utility in organising need based training programmes for potential women entrepreneurs in rural areas. It will also serve as a bench mark to design appropriate training modules for empowerment of rural women in Punjab.

KEY WORDS : Training needs, Self-help groups, Training areas, Home science

INTRODUCTION

Women who comprise half of the human resources have been identified as key agents of sustainable development as their role is central to more holistic approach towards establishing new patterns and processes of development. Their role, position and status in any society is an index of its civilization. They play multiple roles that of a producer, a consumer, a caretaker and a home maker. As a home maker she performs most household chores like cooking, washing, cleaning and looking after children and elderly people. Besides, moral values among children are a reflection of what they learn from their mothers. Hence, her role is crucial in shaping up future India for sustainable development. Besides, entrepreneurial talents and capabilities are latent in women but their translation to innovative actions depends upon appropriate stimuli and environment which can be generated by providing appropriate training.

Training results in a systematic improvement in

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knowledge and skills which in turn help the women to perform her tasks effectively and efficiently. Trainer should never lose the sight of the fact that systematic procedure for planning and implementing training programmes starts with identification of training needs and training is effective provided it is based on systematic assessment of training needs (Singh, 2000). Further training efforts should be devoted to produce qualitative results for sustainable development through need based training.

Consistent to this thinking, the present attempt has been made to study the socio-economic profile and identify training needs of rural women in Kandi area of Hoshiarpur district of Punjab.

METHODOLOGY

From Punjab state, Hoshiarpur district was selected purposively because it is the only district which was declared one of the country's 250 most backward districts by Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2006. Eight exclusive self-help groups (SHGs) of women were formulated in the four selected blocks of *Bhunga, Dasuya, Talwara* and *Hazipur* in Hoshiarpur district for field interventions and entrepreneurial trainings. The self-help group members were first acquainted with project plan through a number of meetings and thereafter need based quantitative and qualitative analysis were performed to identify the needs of the members. Each group had 12-15 members, thus, a sample of 100 women was selected for collection of data through interview schedule followed by group discussions and observation techniques.

Based on the premise that majority of women face household drudgery on account of cooking, washing, cleaning and multiple other household chores/ tasks, the data were collected to identify their training needs in the areas of Home Science such as Food and Nutrition, Family Resource Management, Clothing and Textiles, Child Development and Home Science Extension and Communication Management. The respondents were asked to indicate their training needs related to these dimensions in terms of 'most needed', 'needed' and 'not needed' categories. The data was then analyzed by summing up the frequencies of respondents in these categories. Further, training need score and training need index were worked out by using the following formulas :

Training needs score for a training theme

$$= (FM \times 2) < (FN \times 1) < (FNN \times 0)$$

Training needs index for a training theme

$$= \frac{FM \times 2 < FN}{\text{Total no. of respondents} \times 2}$$

where, FM is the frequency of respondents in 'most needed' category, FN is the frequency of respondents in 'needed' category and FNN is the frequency for 'not needed'. The components for which training need score was same, were given mean ranking. Weighted scores for all components were then ranked together and first fifteen rankings were identified as training needs of the women.

OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

The results obtained from the present investigation are summarized below :

Socio- economic profile of the respondents :

An attempt was made in this study to describe the respondents in terms of their socio- personal attributes such as age, caste, occupation, educational level and family income. This analysis was carried out to know profile of SHG members. The details of distribution of respondents based on the said attributes are presented in Table 1. The results revealed that maximum (35%) of the respondents were educated up to primary level while none was educated more than high school. Majority of the women were from Backward or Scheduled caste families (82%) and 58 per cent had an annual income in the range of Rs. 15,000-30,000. Further, majority (54%) was found to be engaged in farming whereas, 34 per cent had labour as the source of their livelihood. Only 2 per cent respondents had service as their occupation. On the whole it can be concluded that respondents were very less educated and were from very low economic status Ekale *et al.* (2011) ; Jadhav *et al.* (2013) and Jadhav and Tambat (2010).

Training needs of self-help groups :
Food and nutrition :

It is very encouraging to observe from Table 2 that 'deficiency diseases' emerged to be the most preferred theme for undergoing training by respondents as evidenced by highest training need score of 146 and highest training need index of 0.73. This may be owing to the reason that these days, people are suffering from many deficiency related diseases and need knowledge to avoid them by making right choices of the foods they eat. It was followed by 'therapeutic diets' with training

need score of 138 and training need index of 0 .69. This finding is understandable as people now a day's are becoming more health conscious and realize the importance of diet in staying healthy. This was followed by 'Preservation of fruits and vegetables' (.675). This may be owing to the reason that pickles, jams chutneys are needed at household level also and skill in making these products has the potential advantage in starting

Table 1 : Socio-economic profile of respondents				(n=100)
Sr. No.	Socio-economic characteristics	category	frequency	Percentage
1.	Age	20-30 years	12	12%
		31-40 years	71	71%
		41-50 years	17	17%
2.	Caste	Schedule caste/ tribe	37	37%
		BC	45	45%
		General	18	18%
3.	Educational level	Illiterate	10	10%
		Can read and write	15	15%
		Primary school	35	35%
		Middle school	17	17%
		High school	23	23%
4.	Occupation	Farming	54	54%
		Service	2	2%
		Labour	34	34%
5.	Family income(Rs./annum)	Below 15000	18	18%
		15,000-30,000	58	58%
		30,000-45,000	24	24%
		Above 45000	-	-

Table 2 : Training needs in thematic categories of food and nutrition					(n=100)	
Sr. No.	Thematic category/ content area	Most needed (f)	Needed (f)	Not needed (f)	Training need score	Training need index
1.	Preservation of fruits and vegetables	35	65	0	135	.675
2.	Dietary requirements during different age groups	13	87	0	113	.565
3.	Storage of cereals and pulses	22	76	2	120	.600
4.	Deficiency diseases	46	54	0	146	.730
5.	Therapeutic diet during diseases	38	62	0	138	.690
6.	Health hazards of eating junk foods	23	77	0	123	.615
7 .	Saving of nutrients during washing/ cutting/cooking	15	78	7	108	.540
8.	Hygienic practices for preparation/serving of food	12	73	15	97	.485
9.	Supplementary/ weaning food	35	63	2	133	.665
10.	Causes and effects of food poisoning	25	75	0	125	.625

enterprise without much initial investment. It may also be noted that majority of the respondents perceived training need in all the food and nutrition related training areas (Thakor and Ahir, 2012; Antwal *et al.*, 2015) and Shinogi *et al.*, 2013).

Family resource management :

It is clear from Table 3 that 'Drudgery reducing activities and equipments' had the highest training need index of 0.78, followed by 'Time and energy saving devices' with training need index of 0.76. It is probably owing to the fact that rural women are getting more conscious about the need to save energy and the importance of time management. It is evident from Table 3 that all of the women indicated that the training in above areas is either 'most needed' or 'needed'. Besides, all of the rural women also showed interest for training in 'Food adulteration' (0.685), 'Work simplification' (0.670) and 'Care and maintenance of household equipments' (0.640). None of the women was of the view that such

trainings are not required (Mohanty and Mohanty, 2010; Khippal and Sharma, 2010 and Das and Puzari, 2010).

Human development :

Among all the content areas of Human Development, 'Breast feeding vs. bottle feeding' emerged to be the most preferred training area with training need index of 0.65 and training need score of 130 as shown in Table 4. It was followed by 'vaccination' having training need index of 0.61. Training in other areas like 'Family planning', 'Information regarding care of infants/ pregnant' and 'Importance of toys and games' were also preferred by majority of the rural women. This may be attributed to the fact that majority of women belonged to fertile age group and some were on the threshold of marriage so felt the need to have knowledge in these domains.

Clothing and textiles :

Table 5 shows that 'Stitching and Embroidery'

Table 3 : Training needs in thematic categories of Family resource management (n=100)

Sr. No.	Thematic category/ content area	Most needed	Needed	Not needed	Training need score	Training need index
1.	Care and maintenance of household equipments	30	68	2	128	.64
2.	Time and energy saving devices	52	48	0	152	.76
3.	Work simplification	35	65	0	135	.67
4.	Awareness about consumer rights	27	73	0	127	.635
5.	Food adulteration	37	63	0	137	.685
6.	Lighting, ventilation and sanitation	17	62	21	96	.48
7.	Drudgery reducing activities and equipments	56	44	0	156	.78

Table 4 : Training needs in thematic categories of human development (n=100)

Sr. No.	Thematic category/ content area	Most needed	Needed	Not needed	Training need score	Training need index
1.	Information regarding care of infants/ pregnant	32	51	17	115	.575
2.	Vaccination/immunization	24	74	2	122	.61
3.	Family planning	15	78	7	108	.54
4.	Breast feeding vs bottle feeding	33	64	3	130	.65
5.	Importance of toys and games	28	62	10	118	.59

Table 5 : Training needs in thematic categories of clothing and textiles (n=100)

Sr. No.	Thematic category/ content area	Most needed	needed	Not needed	Training need score	Training need index
1	Washing and care of fabrics	-	21	79	21	0.105
2	Stain removal	-	72	28	72	0.36
3	Tie and dye	37	63	0	147	0.68
4	Stitching and embroidery	83	17	0	183	0.915
5	Preparation of soaps and detergents	35	65	0	135	0.675

emerged to be the most preferred training area as it had training need index of 0.915. It is worthwhile to mention here that area wise the training score and index for Stitching and Embroidery came out to be the highest as compared to all other subject matter areas of Home Science. It implies that it is the most felt need of the rural women. This can be attributed to the fact that stitching and embroidery is the most dynamic area that serves both the basic well as vocational needs of the women. The other high priority area emerged to be 'Tie and dye' (0.68), 'preparation of soap and detergent' (0.675). However, information and skill training needs in the areas of 'stain removal' and 'washing and care of fabrics' were found to be quite low among rural women having training need index of 0.36 and 0.105, respectively. It could be probably due to the fact that they have sufficient indigenous knowledge in these thematic areas.

Home Science Extension and Communication Management :

It is very encouraging to observe from Table 6 that

'Income generating activities' emerged to be the most preferred training area as evidenced by highest training need score of 156 and training need index of 0.78. In fact, this theme offers a comprehensive coverage of the entire range of topics of other disciplines of Home Science. Hence, it might have attracted the attention of majority of the rural women to undergo training. The other preferred areas of training were 'Safe use of insecticides/pesticides' and knowledge about 'Government sponsored development programmes and schemes'. However, the training needs have also been perceived for other thematic areas as well such as 'Kitchen Gardening' (.605), 'Women Rights and Empowerment' (.550) and 'Management of SHGs and Group Enterprises' (.485) in that order (Kumari, 2010 and Acharya and Samantray, 2013).

Comparison of some most preferred training areas of Home Science :

Further a comparison of response pattern of respondents for all the disciplines of Home Science is

Table 6 : Training needs in thematic categories of home science extension and communication management					(n= 100)
Sr. No.	Thematic category/ content area	Most needed	Needed	Not needed	Training need score	Training need index
1.	Management of SHGs and group enterprises	15	67	18	97	.485
2.	Safe use of pesticides/ insecticides	54	43	3	151	.755
3.	Women rights and empowerment	24	62	14	110	.550
4.	Govt. sponsored development schemes	45	52	3	142	.71
5.	Kitchen gardening	32	57	11	121	.605
6.	Income generating activities	56	44	0	156	.78

Table 7 : Ranking based on self- perceived training needs in different areas of home science			(n=100)
Thematic category/ content area	Training need score	Training need index	Ranking
Stitching and embroidery	183	.915	1
Drudgery reducing activities and equipments	156	.780	2.5
Income generating activities	156	.780	2.5
Time and energy saving devices	152	.760	4
Safe use of insecticide/ pesticides	151	.755	5
Deficiency diseases	146	.730	6
Govt. sponsored development schemes	142	.710	7
Therapeutic diet during diseases	138	.690	8
Food adulteration	137	.685	9
Tie and dye	147	.680	10
Preservation of fruits and vegetables	135	.675	12
Causes and effects of food poisoning	135	.675	12
Preparation of soaps and detergents	135	.675	12
Work simplification	135	.670	14
Supplementary diets/ weaning	133	.665	15

shown in Table 7. In this table, only 15 most perceived training need areas were identified for comparative analysis. The table shows that 'Stitching and embroidery' emerged to be the most preferred area of training as it had highest training need index of 0.915 amongst all thematic categories of different disciplines of Home Science. It may be attributed to the fact that rural women still have little access and affordability to readymade garments and need technical knowledge to hone their skills through formal training exposure. Expertise in this domain can help generate income directly as entrepreneur, as well as indirectly if the skill is used in preparing family garments. Interestingly, next most preferred perceived training need happened to be income generating activities and Drudgery reducing activities. Both of these got equal training need score of 0.78. High priority for the need of 'Income generating activities' is very encouraging as it will serve the dual purpose of fulfilling their entrepreneurial as well as domestic needs. Moreover, some of the thematic areas of all other Home Science areas are automatically covered under income generating activities which is a broader term. High training score of 0.78 for 'Drudgery reducing activities' is indicative of their self-realization among rural women that their work is drudgery prone and needs to be simplified through the use of scientifically oriented technologies. The results are in line with Sanjeev and Singha (2010); Sanjeev *et al.* (2012) who concluded that income generating activities and drudgery reducing techniques are the major sought need of rural women. The other high ranked perceived training needs included 'Harmful effects of pesticides' (.755), 'Deficiency diseases' (.730), 'Government run schemes' (.710) and therapeutic diets (.690). It is again very encouraging that most of the rural women feel the need to know about the harmful effects of pesticides. The results are in line with Sanjeev and Singha (2010) who concluded that health care of women and children are needed to be imparted in rural areas. Interest in 'Deficiency diseases' and 'Therapeutic diet' is the indicator of growing awareness and sensitivity of rural community towards health concerns. Identical training need for Government run schemes highlights their interest and concern towards development of rural areas. Besides, most of the women also evinced interest in getting training regarding 'Food Adulteration', 'Tie and Dye', 'Preservation of Fruits and Vegetables', 'Preparation of Soap and Detergent', 'Work Simplification' and 'Supplementary Diets/ Weaning'. Sanjeev and Singha (2010); Sanjeev *et al.* (2012) in their

studies on identification of training needs of women also concluded that value addition to the farm produce is among the sought training needs.

Conclusion and recommendation :

The analysis of the above need assessment data led to the conclusion that women required training in most of the identified thematic areas belonging to the different disciplines of Home Science for their empowerment. However, the current study like any other study also had few limitations. Worth mentioning among those is the collection of data from only one district. Stitching and Embroidery emerged to be the most needed training area. Most of the women appear to be sensitive towards contemporary issues such as Energy Saving devices, Drudgery reducing technologies and Income Generating Technologies. Both extensive and intensive hands on training programmes should be emphasized in identified areas. The concerned stakeholders should pay relatively higher emphasis on those trainings whose training need index is more. The generated data, therefore, will have direct utility to launch intervention based project for greater women empowerment. It will also serve as a bench mark to design appropriate training modules for empowerment of rural women in Punjab.

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