

Factors influencing socio-economic impact of women SHG members

Vengatesan D. and Santha Govind*

Department of Agricultural Extension, Faculty of Agriculture, Annamalai University, ANNAMALAINAGAR (T.N.) INDIA

ABSTRACT

Women are now coming out of their seclusion and they are assuming greater responsibilities in national reconstruction activities. Women comprise of almost half of the available human resource. The Self Help Group concept is a silent revolution promoting women development in many parts of the world. This study aims at analyzing the factors influencing socio-economic impact of members of women self help groups. A sample size of 120 women SHG members organized by the NGOs under the TNCDW formed the sample of the study. The study was undertaken with six SHGs of Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu. Data were collected through a well structured and pre-tested interview schedule and the results were analysed using Zero-order correlation and linear multiple regression analysis to know the relationship and contribution of characteristics of the respondents with their socio-economic impact of SHG members. The variables educational status, social participation, mass media, caste, socio-economic status, exposure, farm power, credit orientation and empowerment had shown positive and significant association with socio-economic impact of women SHG members. The study further revealed that socio-economic status, credit orientation and empowerment were crucial variables which had maximum effect on socio-economic impact of SHG members.

Key words : Factors influencing, Socio-economic impact and SHG members.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, considerable efforts have been made to increase the quantum of institutional credit for rural development in order to reduce the extent of dependence of rural households on exploitative, non-institutional sources. There is, however a general feeling that the increased flow of institutional credit has not yielded the expected results. A vast majority of rural people were not involved in the development activities because they lacked the economic based frame to intervene in the local development process. In this scenario, the challenge was to develop a village centered development strategy for the marginalised rural poor who always experienced shortage of liquidity to respond to new investment opportunities, especially in agriculture. The strategy was to develop in such a way that people can 'plan' for their means and have the 'power' to implement their programmes. Analysing this possibility, the Non-governmental organizations decided that the strategy of raising their economic status can be made possible by putting together small groups of poor people with similar interests and other homogenous factors. Hence, a study was undertaken with the objective to study the factors influencing socio-economic impact of the members of women Self Help Groups.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was undertaken with the women Self Help Groups formed by the NGOs under Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women of Cuddalore District in Tamil Nadu. They were selected considering the criteria of its establishment period and the location of the NGOs. Accordingly, six Self Help Groups were selected from six blocks of Cuddalore district. Thus, twenty members from each SHGs comprising of 120 women SHG members formed the sample for the study. Twenty one independent variables viz., age, educational status, caste, occupation, annual income, nature of family, farm size, farming experience, house owned, farm power, livestock possession, material possession, social participation, socio-economic status, extension agency contact, mass media exposure, information seeking behaviour, information giving behaviour, credit orientation, economic motivation and empowerment were selected for the study. The socio-economic impact of the members of the SHGs were measured under ten dimensions. The selected dimensions were area, production, income, information, credit, marketing, knowledge, attitude, adoption of recommended paddy technologies and asset creation. The impact on the dimensions viz., area, production and income were measured by taking the difference between the scores before and after becoming members and the respective indices for SHG

members were calculated. For the remaining dimensions viz., information, credit, marketing and attitude, the perceived change was measured with the help of in the scales developed for calculating the respective SHG members cumulative frequency and indices. The level of knowledge, adoption and asset creation of the members before and after becoming members were considered based on the score the respective indices. The data were collected through personal interview using a well structured, pre-tested interview schedule and analysed using appropriate statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Relationship of characteristics with the socio-economic impact of the members

The zero-order correlation was computed to know the relationship of characteristics of the respondents with their socio-economic impact of the members. The results are presented in Table 1.

NS Non-significant

Out of 21 variables, nine variables were found to have positive and significant relationship with the socio-economic impact of the members. The variables caste, socio-economic status, credit orientation and empowerment had shown positive and significant relationship at 0.01 level of probability, whereas the characteristics namely educational status, farm size, farm power, social participation and mass media exposure were found to be significant at 0.05 level of probability. All those characteristics that had exhibited significant relationship with the socio-economic impact of the members alone were considered for discussion and presented here under.

Education had created a positive and significant association with their socio-economic impact. This might be due to the fact that majority of the women had acquired education and this situation might have influenced the women to involve themselves intensively in socio-economic related activities. The impact of SHG members on the social front was assessed mainly in terms of improvement in literacy level. The women with higher education would have easily understood the information on credit and marketing facilities, would possess favourable attitude towards group and may have adequate knowledge. Hence, they would have easily adopted the recommended paddy practices. This finding is in line with the findings of Suguna (1994) and Jamatia (1999).

Caste had a positive and significant association with their socio-economic impact. The reason might be due to the fact that a majority of women belonged to backward caste and scheduled caste.

*Author for correspondence

Among them, normally the backward class people would have belonged to high socio-economic status in rural areas. This finding is in line with the findings of Puthirapathap (1994).

Farm size had shown a positive and significant relationship at 0.05 per cent level of probability. The reason might be due to the fact that the families with large farm size had more opportunities to earn more income and to get more output from their farm. Hence, the women with large farm size tend to improve their socio-economic conditions in addition to being members of Self Help Group members. It is quite obvious that large farm size would serve as the potential source of income with diverse enterprises. This finding derives support from the findings of Ramesh (1998).

A positive and significant association was observed between farm power and socio-economic impact of the members. It is quite obvious for women with more farm power possession to get more income from farm resulting with higher socio-economic impact. This study derives support from the findings of Parthasarathi (1997) and Ramesh (1998).

Social participation had also shown a positive relationship at 0.05 per cent level of probability with the socio-economic impact of Self Help Group members. The respondents with higher social participation would have chance to interact with resourceful persons and thereby this would have enabled them to gain more knowledge about information, credit and marketing facilities. It is quite obvious that members with high social participation to improve the socio-economic impact. This findings is in line with the findings of Raji *et al* (1996) and Parthasarathi (1997).

Socio-economic status had shown a positive and significant relationship at 0.01 per cent level of probability with socio-economic impact of Self Help Group members. This might be due to the fact that most of the members were having more economic activities for getting additional income for the family in rural areas. The increase in income generating assets through loans availed from banks had made significant

impact on the overall economic status of the group members. This results is in agreement with the results of Santha (1992).

Mass media exposure had shown a positive and significant relationship at 0.05 per cent level of probability with the socio-economic impact of the members. This may be due to the effective utilization of various mass media sources on marketing and economic activities through the use of manuals, journals and magazines provided by the NGOs and TNCDW. Hence, it may be stated that better utilisation of mass media exposure increased the socio-economic impact of the members. This findings is in the line with the findings of Parthasarathy (1997) and Ramesh (1998).

Credit Orientation had shown a significant relationship at 0.01 per cent level of probability with socio-economic impact of Self Help Group members. Hence, it could be inferred that the most of the members of the Self Help Groups had positive attitude towards credit orientation and the flexibility in credit provisions and relatively faster sanctioning were also the other reasons for the resulting positive association. This results is in agreement with the result of Jamatia (1999) and Kumar (1998).

Empowerment had created a positive and significant relationship with their socio-economic impact at 0.01 per cent level of probability. This might be due to the fact that majority of women had acquired greater degree of empowerment and this situation might have influenced women to participate in Self Help Groups, thus making a significant impact on both social and economic aspects. Most of the women were able to increase their income level manifold and contribute to the development of their family members.

The rest of the characteristics viz., age, occupation, annual income, nature of family, farming experience, house owned, livestock possession, material possession, extension agency contact, information seeking behaviour, information giving behaviour and economic motivation had shown non-significant relationship with the socio-economic impact of the members of Self Help Groups.

Table 1: Zero Order Correlation and Multiple Regression of Socio-economic impact with Independent variables (n=120)

Variable No.	Independent variables	'r' value	Partial regression co-efficient (b)	Standard error of reg. coff.	't' value
X ₁	Age	0.0789 NS	0.6184	3.0650	0.2017 NS
X ₂	Educational status	0.1999 *	3.3509	1.1570	2.8961**
X ₃	Caste	0.2330 **	1.3804	0.5594	2.4682*
X ₄	Occupation	-0.0582NS	-2.3703	7.3567	-0.3222 NS
X ₅	Annual income	-0.006NS	0.1062	0.3555	0.2988 NS
X ₆	Nature of family	-0.1679 NS	-1.3085	2.2396	-0.5842 NS
X ₇	Farm size	0.2183*	3.2003	1.525	2.4280*
X ₈	Farming experience	-0.0502 NS	-0.0786	2.7570	-0.0285 NS
X ₉	House owned	0.1642 NS	4.3563	2.2764	1.9136 NS
X ₁₀	Farm power	0.1962*	0.8780	0.5655	1.5526 NS
X ₁₁	Livestock possession	-0.1107 NS	-3.1043	2.2068	-1.4066 NS
X ₁₂	Material possession	0.0665 NS	2.3686	0.8516	2.7813**
X ₁₃	Socio participation	0.1856*	4.5644	4.3733	3.3302**
X ₁₄	Socio-economic status	0.3361**	0.9549	0.2666	3.5820**
X ₁₅	Extension Agency contact	0.1664 NS	0.2027	0.6358	0.3188 NS
X ₁₆	Mass media exposure	0.2195*	1.2907	0.5882	2.1944*
X ₁₇	Information seeking behaviour	0.1309 NS	0.5533	0.3821	1.4478 NS
X ₁₈	Information giving behaviour	-0.0340 NS	-0.4687	1.9575	-0.2394 NS
X ₁₉	Credit orientation	0.3005**	3.7308	1.2672	2.9440**
X ₂₀	Economic motivation	0.1088 NS	3.6965	1.7146	2.1559*
X ₂₁	Empowerment	0.4103**	5.0825	1.8759	2.7093**

R² = 0.5386 F = 6.0594

* Significant at 0.05 level of probability

**Significant at 0.01 level of probability

Linear multiple regression analysis of characteristics of women with socio-economic impact of the members

In order to find out which of the characteristics contributed towards their socio-economic impact linear multiple regression analysis was carried out. The result on linear multiple regression analysis of characteristics of the Self Help Group members have been presented in the same Table 1.

A perusal of regression co-efficient and 't' value as given in Table 1 indicates, that out of the selected 21 variables, only ten variables namely education, caste, farm size, material possession, social participation, socio-economic status, mass media exposure, credit orientation, economic motivation and empowerment had influenced the socio-economic impact of the members. All exhibited variables showed significant and a positive relationship with the socio-economic impact of the members.

The predictive power of the linear multiple regression was estimated with the help of the co-efficient of multiple determination ($R^2 = 0.5386$). The ' R^2 ' value indicated that all the 21 variables taken together explained as much as 53 per cent of the variation in the socio-economic impact of the members. The 'F' value was found to be significant at 0.01 level of probability. Hence the higher R^2 value might be due to the significant positive correlation co-efficient of education, caste, farm size, material possession, social participation, socio-economic status, mass media exposure, credit orientation, economic motivation and empowerment.

This meant that the Self Help Group members who had more education, farm size, material possession, social participation, socio-economic status, mass media exposure, credit orientation, economic motivation and empowerment would lead to better socio-economic impact of the members. The finding is in accordance with the findings of Jamatia (1999).

From this study it could be concluded that educational status, caste farm size, farm power, social participation, socio-economic status, mass media exposure, credit orientation and empowerment had positive and significant association with socio-economic impact

of SHG members. The study further revealed that socio-economic status, credit orientation and empowerment were identified as crucial variables which had maximum effect on socio-economic impact of SHG members.

REFERENCES

- Jamatia, P.B. (1999).** Participation of Tribal Women in Agriculture and Allied Activities in Tripura State, Unpublished M.Sc., (Ag.) Thesis, TNAU, Coimbatore.
- Kumar, Baby, P. (1998).** Farmers and Farm Women in Farm and Home Decision Making, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, TNAU, Coimbatore.
- Parthasarathap, S. (1997).** A Study on the Impact of Rice Farmers Field School Among Trained and Untrained Farmers, Unpublished M.Sc. (Ag.) Thesis, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar.
- Puthiraprathip, D. (1994).** Participation of Farmers in Credit Management Groups Organised by an NGO (MYRADA), Unpublished M.Sc. (Ag.) Thesis, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar.
- Raji, R.J. Muthiah, M. and R. Arunachalam (1996).** Relationship Between Knowledge and Adoption of Behaviour of Trained and Untrained Farmers with their Socio-personal Characteristics, *Journal of Extension Education*, **7(1)** : 1304-1306.
- Ramesh, P. (1998).** A Study on the Knowledge and Adoption of Organic Farming Practices in Paddy Among the Members of NGOs, Unpublished M.Sc.(Ag.) Thesis, Annamalai University, Annamalai Nagar.
- Santha, G. (1992).** Integrated Pest Management in Rice-Achievements and Opportunities, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, TNAU, Coimbatore.
- Suguna, K. (1994).** A Study on Gender Issue - Pattern of Gender Responsibility in Agriculture, Unpublished M.Sc. (Ag.) Thesis, TNAU, Coimbatore.

Received : November, 2005; Accepted : January, 2006

Read **Agricultura Update**
regularly for research based articles of agriculture development.