

Constraints faced by rural women in availing benefits of women empowerment programme

VIDYA TAYDE AND R.R. CHOLE

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

Correspondence to :

VIDHA TAYDE

Department of
Extention Education,
College of Agriculture,
Dahegaon, Vaijapur,
AURANGABAD
(M.S.) INDIA

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in twelve villages of six development blocks of three districts of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state on 120 women respondents with an object to study the constraints faced by the rural women in availing benefits of women empowerment programmes. The data were collected by personally interviewing the respondents and analyzed statistically. The results of the study depicted that majority of the respondents were delay in getting benefits, complex procedure and inadequacy of technical guidance.

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is a process of acquiring rights, developing self (personality development) and deciding by self - independently (self – decision making process). Women empowerment means providing women social, political, economical and religious rights, so that the status of women may become equal to the men in society. Empowerment is an active, multidimensional process which enable women to realize their full potential and power in all spheres of life. The present study was undertaken to the difficulties faced by the beneficiaries while getting the benefits of women empowerment programme.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in randomly selected Parbhani , Hingoli and Nanded districts of Marathwada region in Maharashtra state. From each district, two development blocks were randomly selected. From each of the development blocks, two villages out of those in which the beneficiaries were receiving benefits during last two years (2003-04 and 2004-05), were randomly selected. The list of women beneficiaries was obtained from the ICDS office in each Panchayat Samiti. Twelve villages, having highest number of women beneficiaries of developmental programmes,

were selected. Then from each village, 10 beneficiary women were selected from among the total beneficiaries in the village. Thus, the final sample comprised of 120 beneficiaries.

Constraints faced by beneficiaries were ascertained by asking questions to beneficiaries to know which they faced by adopting benefits. The frequency and percentage of each constraint were worked out for the purpose of interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It could be observed from Table 1 that 60.00 per cent of the respondents faced the problem of delay in getting the benefits. This may be due the lack of clear understanding about their role to play in the implementation of empowerment programmes. About 50 per cent respondents faced the constraint favouritism in distribution of benefits. Because most of the respondents were from medium level and below poverty level, their social participation was also low. Hence, there is need for availing better treatment by the traders, bank officials and the government officials. Those who are directly involved in empowerment programmes, should pay their attention on increasing better relations between officials and beneficiaries.

Two fifth (40 per cent) beneficiaries were suffering from the lack of cooperation among

Key words :

Constraints,
Women
-empowerment
programmes

Accepted :
July, 2010

Table 1: Constraints faced by the respondents in availment of benefits

Sr. No.	Constraints	Number	Per cent
1.	Delay in getting the benefits	72	60.00
2.	Complex procedure involved in getting certificate	40	33.33
3.	Lack of technical guidance	39	32.50
4.	Non-cooperative attitude of officers	42	35.00
5.	Favouritism in distribution of benefits	60	50.00
6.	Lack of cooperation among the rural women for formation of self-help group	48	40.00

themselves for formation of self-help groups. Because of our traditional thinking of the society and secondary status of women in different walks of life, the male members dominate on women members in the society. More than one third (35 per cent) of beneficiaries faced the problem of non-cooperative attitude of the officers. It may be due to the lack of proper guidance and mutual understanding among the various agencies. Beneficiaries felt that there was need to give good treatment on humanitarian grounds, while the agencies were dealing with them.

One third (33 per cent) of beneficiaries expressed the complex procedure involved in getting certificates, because all the beneficiaries were from poorest of the poor family residing in villages and could not afford to spend money to reach at district level offices for availing the benefit. Similarly, due to the low education level, most of the beneficiaries faced the problem of filling number of various forms and collecting papers from Gramsevek,

Talathi etc. Finally, 32 per cent beneficiaries revealed the problem of inadequacy of the technical guidance. Because most of the beneficiaries were from below poverty line and belonged to schedule caste, the treatment given to them by the officials and bank officials was undesirable and worst. Asha Rani *et al.* (1997) and Deshmukh (2002) have also contributed some information regarding the implementation of programme and constraints faced by rural women.

Conclusion:

Implementing authority should give more attention towards the problems of the respondents like delay in getting benefits, complex procedure and inadequacy of technical guidance, so that attitudinal change may take place making it favourable towards empowerment programmes.

Authors' affiliations:

R.R. CHOLE, Department of Extension Education, Marathwada Agricultural University, PARBHANI (M.S.) INDIA

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