



Factors influencing Self-help group members for selecting livestock rearing as an income generating activity

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ABSTRACT : A study on Self-help groups (SHGs) was carried out in Durg district of Chhattisgarh State to highlight the socio-economic status of the SHGs members, to investigate the various Income generating activities taken by the SHG members and to identify the reason for selecting livestock as a major source for income. The study shows that majority of the group opting for livestock rearing that to for goat, poultry and dairy rearing. Thus three SHGs each from goat farming, dairy farming and poultry farming IGAs were selected and all the 36 members belonging to these SHGs formed the respondents of the study. The information was collected through semi structured interview schedule, group discussion and through personal interview. In addition, the SHGs with livestock rearing as IGA in Durg were involved in-group farming rather than individual farming. The SHGs were considered as ATM (any time money) by the members to meet their daily expenses, festival expenses expenditures, which include agricultural operations. The SHGs opted for livestock enterprises mainly because they want to improve their economic status, want to get additional income, advice of the officials and availability of the grazing land.

KEY WORDS : Income generating activity (IGA), Livestock, Livelihood, Self-help group

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INTRODUCTION

The livestock sector in India provides employment to 19 million people (Government of India [GOI] 2011-12) and over 70 per cent of the rural households depend on livestock farming. Many studies reveal the multiple roles of livestock in livelihoods of people (Rao and Ramkumar, 2005 and Rangnekar, 2006). Livestock offer food security and provide essential nutrients required for the people. It is also considered as a type of capital that is both financial and social, as forms of saving or investment, provide security or insurance for the poor people (Ramkumar and Rao, 2002). The lack of or inadequate access to the formal credit sources such as banks in rural areas,

particularly for the poor did create a vacuum, which was filled up primarily by informal sources of borrowing (like money lenders).

Self-help groups (SHGs) are becoming increasingly popular as a tool of intervention to address poverty through sustainable livelihood avocations. NABARD (1995) described SHGs as homogeneous affinity of rural poor, voluntarily formed to save small amounts out of their emergent credit needs and revolving their resources among the members, both for consumption and small productions, at such rate of interest, period of loans and terms, which the group may decide. The concept of SHGs was proved to be success and had encouraged their widespread application across throughout the country. It is acting as a primary mechanism to empower the men and women who are willing to take income generating activity and thus can improve their livelihood (Jakimow and Kilby, 2006).

The SHG is a unique approach as it provide both social and economic benefit to the people. SHGs enable the members to grow their saving and access to easy credit. The approach had leads to their economic development by indulging them in any economic activity. The SHGs members had selected both

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agricultural and non-agricultural activity as their major IGAs. In this context livestock is one of the most preferred IGAs by the SHGs in Chhatisgarh. The specific objectives of the study investigating the group involved in livestock rearing are (i) to know the socio-economic status and functioning of the SHG members (ii) to identify the reason for selecting livestock as a major source for income and (iii) to identify the purpose for availing loan from the SHG.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The district Durg was purposively selected for the study to know about the pattern of SHG progress in the Central Indian states. The district is a good sample of the state as about 14 per cent SHGs are concentrated in Durg district. The groups were mostly involved (72 %) in livestock rearing as an important IGA including poultry rearing. The selection of the group was done based on the secondary information provided by officials and the evaluation criteria like group meetings, regular deposit of money, internal circulation of money and monthly meetings.

The SHGs, which were having at least two-year experience in the livestock and poultry activity, were considered for inclusion in the study. Based on the criteria proposed by DRDA in three groups from three different villages involved in dairy, goat and poultry SHGs were selected for the study. The information was collected from all the members (36 members) of

these SHGs. A pre-tested semi structured interview schedule was prepared for primary data collection. Along with this focused group discussion, transit walk and observation technique was used to collect the information. The collected data was coded and subjected to suitable statistical tool to draw a meaning conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study were classified and presented under the socio-economic profile, purpose of availing loan and reason for selecting livestock rearing as their major IGAs. Livestock rearing is taken up as an IGA by majority of the SHGs in Durg district of Chhatisgarh.

Socio-economic profile and functioning of SHG members :

The result of socio-economic profile of the members were presented in Table 1. It includes results about age, caste, family size, educational level land holding and annual income of the SHG members. A perusal of Table 1 reveals that majority of the members belong to middle (55.00 %) age and then to young as well as old age category. Many youngsters have taken up this IGA through SHGs due to intervention of government programme to alleviate poverty and provide employment. The members in the group (86.11 %) had a medium family size with 4-7 and to take care of the family, consistent source of income

Table 1 : Socio-economic profile of the SHG members

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Age	Young (25-34)	7	19.44	
	Range: 25 - 60 year	Middle (35-44)	20	55.56
	Mean: 38	Upper middle (45-54)	7	19.44
		Old (more than 55)	2	5.56
Caste	Other backward class	23	63.89	
	Schedule tribe	13	36.11	
	Schedule caste	0	0.00	
Family size	Small (< 4)	1	2.78	
	Range: 4-8	Medium (4-7)	31	86.11
	Mean: 6	Large (> 7)	4	0.11
Education	No formal education	3	8.33	
	Primary	10	27.78	
	High school	15	41.67	
	Intermediate	8	22.22	
	College	0	0.00	
Land holding	Landless	13	36.11	
	Range: 0.2- 3.0 acre	Very low (upto 1 acre)	7	19.44
	Mean: 1.4 acre	Low (1.1-2.0)	9	25.00
		Medium (Above 2.0)	7	19.44
Annual income	< 17000	18	50.00	
	Range: 15,250-20,500	17000-19990	12	33.33
	Mean: 17,605	Above 20000	6	16.67

is required and people diversifying their income sources like goat rearing in addition to agriculture labour could be a result of this need. The education level of the group shows that majority of the members (64.00 %) have education up to high school or more education. High education had provided the positive insight to the members making them to join and avail the benefits from the group.

Land holding of the members is very low as almost 50 per cent of the SHGs members are having very low land holding. As due to low land holding the annual income of the members is also less which is further motivating the members to search for additional income and making to join the group. The result further state about the low annual income of the members as about 50.00 per cent were having less than Rs. 17,000 income, which is further acting as a motivating factor to move forwards to join the group. Similarly the study of Pradan (2005) and Gangaiah *et al.* (2006) indicate that after joining the SHG, the income of the group members has increased making them to participate in group activity which in future would help the groups to sustain.

Functioning of SHGs :

All the three group used to conduct meeting once a

fortnight at the particular place preferably at president house. They used to discuss the IGAs agenda and to sanction loan to the needy member of the group. All the SHGs members used to save Rs. 20/- month in bank. From this amount only they used to provide loan to the members at @ Rs. 2 per cent per month. SHGs differ in their cohesiveness based on formation and operational parameters. This is also reflected with the degree to which members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group.

Reason for selecting livestock as major IGAs :

Lot of factor has been identified from literature for selecting agricultural and non-agricultural activity by SHGs members (Table 2). But only few factors push and motivate the SHGs members for selecting peculiar IGAs which will be helpful for their future improvement. The SHGs members choose the various IGAs because firstly they want to improve their socio economic and living condition as stated by 92.00 per cent. They cheap and easily available resource are also effecting their decision to choose the IGAs (Preeti *et al.*, 2008).

The other factors include to acquire additional income from IGAs (86.00 %), availability of grazing land for livestock rearing (83.00 %) and these activity can adjust with their routine

Table 2 : Reasons for selecting livestock rearing as an IGA

Sr. No.	Factors	Number of individual	Percentage (%)	Rank
1.	To improve their living status	33	92.00	i.
2.	To get additional income	31	86.00	ii.
3.	Availability of grazing land and resource	30	83.00	iii.
4.	Can adjust with the routine activity	27	75.00	iv.
5.	Motivation by experienced persons and veterinary assistant surgeon	25	69.00	v.
6.	Easy to take up with less training	21	58.00	vi.
7.	Assurance to supply inputs at farm	18	50.00	vii.
8.	Readily available market	17	47.00	viii.
9.	Can sell to local market	12	33.00	ix.
10.	Less labour is required	11	31.00	x.

Table 3 : Purpose of availing loan by SHG members

Sr. No.	Reasons of availing loan	Members *	Percentage (%) availing loan
1.	Agricultural operations	14	39.00
2.	Repairing of roof	8	22.00
3.	House hold expenditure	8	22.00
4.	Festival celebration	8	22.00
5.	Treatment of sick family member	6	17.00
6.	Purchase of bullock	3	08.00
7.	Purchase of television	3	08.00
8.	For paying school fee	2	06.00
9.	Purchase of calf	1	03.00
10.	For arranging rituals	1	03.00
11.	To start a cycle repair shop	1	03.00

* Frequency of availing loan

work (75.00 %). The members involved in rearing one of the livestock are mostly subject to select another livestock as an IGA. The other important factors according to their priority are motivation by members, market availability, easy IGAs can go without any formal training and less labour which make to work for their normal routine. Some of the factors which are not encouraging the members in not taking the IGAs was government policy for livestock insurance and a schedule training programme before taking any livestock enterprise.

Purposes for availing loan from SHGs :

All the members in the group had availed loan from the group for one or the other purposes (Table 3). Half of the members in the group availed loan more than one times. Majority of the group members utilized the loan amount for agricultural purposes (39.00 %) and that too just before the sowing season to get the inputs.

This indicates the importance of SHG in micro credit. In the absence of SHG this money would have been borrowed from money lenders at a high interest rate Apart from agricultural operation members used money for repairing their house (22.00 %) celebrating festival (22.00 %) and to incur household expense. The study shows that due to SHGs majority of the money was borrowed from the group giving some relief to farmers from money lenders who charge heavy interest from them. This is acting another source of economic stability for farmers as no one used to borrow money from other sources like money lender or local shopkeepers (Karmakar, 1999).

Conclusion :

The studies shows that among the IGAs selected by members of SHGs livestock rearing is one of the preferred activity in the state. The goat rearing was one of the preferred one. The important reasons for selecting any IGAs were experience of any group member or guidance by experienced person from village whose growth has inspired the whole group to take the activity. Apart from this the IGAs which don't hamper their routine work is the choice from all members. Although the members initially perceived that there was no need of formal training to start the livestock rearing activities, later they all

realized that lack of formal training did affect the economics of IGA. The important reason for joining the group and take IGA is to improve their livelihood by earning an additional income. Hence, it is worthwhile to organize tailor made training programmes for the members of SHGs in the concerned IGA to enable them to manage it profitably.

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