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A Case Study

# Profile characteristics of Stree Shakthi Programme beneficiaries

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### ARTICLE CHRONICLE:

**Received :** 21.08.2014; **Accepted :** 20.10.2014 **SUMMARY :** The study was conducted in the purposively selected two taluks of Chitradurga district based on maximum number of Stree Shakthi Groups (SSG's). From each taluka, 12 SSG's and five members from each SSG's were selected randomly thus, making a total sample of 120. The results revealed that majority of respondents belonged to young age, high level of education, nuclear family, agriculture as main occupation, high social participation, high extension participation, high mass media exposure, had income up to Rs.20,000/- and medium livestock possession. Hence, it can be concluded that strategic manipulation of these variables of SSP beneficiaries through extension educational activities can motivate them to avail the benefits of the women empowerment programme.

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#### KEY WORDS:

Personal, Socio-economic, Characteristics, Stree shakthi programme

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# **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

Women play an important role in development of family and hence, considered as backbone of the family. If these women trained for development they can contribute to alleviate poverty to a greater extent. The past experiences of programmes implemented for poverty alleviation shown successful results, when they are targeted and focused on women. With this background, Government of Karnataka has launched Stree Shakthi Programme (SSP) during 2000-01 with the main aim to make rural women self dependent. The programme was implemented by forming Stree Shakthi Groups (SSGs) under the supervision and guidance of Anganawadi workers.

The SSP beneficiaries contribute towards development of family and also society. In this context, it may be interesting and useful to study the personal and socio-economic characteristics of SSP beneficiaries.

## **R**ESOURCES AND METHODS

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The study was conducted in purposively selected Chitradurga district. Two talukas namely Chitradurga and Hiriyur were selected based on maximum number of Stree Shakthi Groups (SSG's). The villages having maximum number of SSGs were listed in each taluka and 12 SSGs per taluka were selected randomly. Five members from each SSGs were considered as respondents for the study thus, making a total sample of 120. The data were collected by using pre-tested interview schedule and analyzed by using suitable statistical tests.

#### **OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS**

The data in Table 1 shows the personal and socio-economic characteristics of Stree Shakthi Programme beneficiaries, which are discussed as follows.

#### Age:

Majority of respondents belonged to young age group (50.84%), while 41.66 per cent belonged to middle age group and remaining 7.50 per cent were old age. The possible reasons might be due to the large number of young women, the free time, being responsible and enthusiasm to do something for the family in terms of financial support. Older women might have been discouraged due to age, poor health and less enthusiasm. Puhazhendi and Jayaraman (1999), Murugan and Dharmalingam (2000), Hemalatha Prasad (2001); Pappachen (2001) and Prita (2001) reported similar findings.

#### **Education :**

Majority of respondents had high level of education (61.67%) followed by 23.33 per cent had medium level of education and 15 per cent had low level of education. This might be due to presence of educated women as they take

Table 1: Personal and socio-	economic characteristics beneficiaries
of SSP	(n=120)

of SSP		(n=120)		
Sr.	Characteristics	Category	Respondents	
No.	Characteristics	Category	Number	Per cent
1.	Age	Young (<35)	61	50.84
	Middle (35-50)	50	41.66	
	Old (>50)	9	7.50	
2. Education	Low (<2.8)	18	15.00	
	Medium (2.8-4.1)	28	23.33	
	High (>4.1)	74	61.67	
3. Occupation	Agriculture	77	64.16	
	Agricultural laboureres	36	30.00	
	Non-Agriculture	7	5.84	
4. Family type	Nuclear	85	70.84	
	Joint	35	29.16	
5.		Low (<2.6)	7	5.84
participation	Medium (2.6-3.4)	33	27.5	
	High (>3.4)	80	66.66	
6. Extension participation	Low (<6.8)	26	21.66	
	Medium (6.8-10.3)	44	36.67	
	High (>10.3)	50	41.67	
7. Mass Media exposure	Low (<1.2)	24	20.00	
	Medium (1.2 -2.7)	46	38.84	
	High (>2.7)	50	41.66	
8. Annual income	Up to 20,000	81	67.50	
	Above 20,000	39	32.50	
9. Livestock possession	Low (<2.126)	37	30.83	
	Medium (2.126-3.123)	51	42.50	
		High (>3.123)	32	26.67

care of all the records and documents of SSGs. Further, they also take their own decisions. These findings are similar to the findings of Kumaran (1997), Hemalatha Prasad (2001), Puhazhendi and Jayaraman (1999) and Prita (2001).

#### Family type :

Large majority (70.84%) of the beneficiaries had nuclear family type and only 29.16 per cent belonged to joint family. The probable reason might be due to the fact that in nuclear families have less family members to convince and easy to take their own decisions to participate in the programme. Besides, they took their own responsibilities in raising the family income. But, women from a joint family had more restrictions to participate in the programme. However, there are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

#### **Occupation :**

Most of the beneficiaries occupation was agriculture (64.16%) followed by agriculture labour (30%) and nonagriculture (5.84%). This is quite natural in villages, since agriculture is the main occupation. Members of SSGs belonged to poor section of the society and they do work in others field on casual basis. This is only next best alternative after agriculture for their livelihood in the villages. The results of the study are in line with the findings of Raghavendra (2002).

#### Social participation :

Majority (66.66%) of the women had high social participation, followed by 27.50 per cent and 5.84 per cent had medium level and low level of social participation, respectively. This may be due to the fact that all the beneficiaries were members of SSGs and most of them involved in social services activities. This finding is in contrast with findings of Usha Rani (1999) and Raghavendra (2002).

#### **Extension participation :**

About 41.67 per cent of beneficiaries had high extension participation followed by 36.67 per cent and 21.66 per cent had medium level and low level of extension participation, respectively. This might be due to lack of exposure about trainings conducted. The finding of the study is in agreement with the findings of Hemalatha Prasad (1995).

#### Mass media exposure :

About 41.66 per cent of the beneficiaries had high mass media exposure followed by 38.34 per cent and 20.00 per cent had medium and low level of mass media participation, respectively. This was because most of them possessed radio and television and also had habit of hearing and viewing the agriculture programmes regularly. Even though some of the beneficiaries did not have television at their homes; they were having the practice of viewing it by going to their neighbors

house. This might have contributed for their increase in knowledge about Stree Shakthi Programme. These findings are contradicting to the results of Manjula (1995).

#### Annual income :

Majority (67.50%) of the beneficiaries had income upto Rs. 20,000/- and remaining 32.50 per cent had income more than Rs. 20,000/-. This might be because the members of SSGs were poorest of the poor. Therefore, in spite of income generation, it has not been substantial enough to raise above poverty line. This clearly shows that the beneficiaries who hailed from very poor families and their income was very meagre to support their livelihood. Kumaran (1997), Puhazhendi and Jayaraman (1999), Murugan and Dharmalingam (2000), Hemalatha Prasad (2001), Pappachen (2001) and Prita (2001) reported similar findings.

#### Livestock possession :

Majority (42.50%) of the beneficiaries had medium livestock possession followed by 30.03 per cent and 26.67 per cent had low and high livestock possession, respectively. The probable reason might be due to the livestock possession provides subsidiary income. The inherited livestock acted as a basic source to increase the numbers without any initial investment. The findings are inline with the findings of Hemalatha Prasad (2001).

#### **Conclusion :**

The study revealed that personal and socio-economic characteristics of SSP beneficiaries were relatively younger in age, higher in their educational level, majority of them had nuclear family type and practicing agriculture as occupation. Also, their social participation, extension participation and mass media exposure were high. They were having higher annual income and livestock possession. With this, it can be concluded that strategic manipulation of variables such as education, social participation, extension participation and mass media participation of SSP beneficiaries through extension educational activities can motivate them to avail the benefits of the women empowerment programmes. Authors' affiliations :

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