

Influence of Trainings on the Knowledge Level of Self Help Group Members

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ABSTRACT The study was conducted during November-December, 2005 in Sandur taluk of Bellary district in Karnataka state, covering 100 SHG members to obtain impact of training programme on knowledge level and improvement in their economic status. The socio-economic profile revealed that majority of the members were middle aged (59 %), married (73.28%), illiterate (69 %), with nuclear families (78 %) and the main occupation was agricultural labour (62%). Many of them were below poverty line. The overall knowledge level of respondents before training was 48 per cent and the overall knowledge level after training was 56 per cent of medium knowledge category. Knowledge level on individual practices such as animal husbandry, goats and sheep rearing before training program was more than 50 per cent. Further, after training it was 67 per cent. Study also revealed that adequate credit and knowledge about the animal breeds were the major constraints expressed by the respondents.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty and unemployment are the twin evils being faced in many of the developing nations. The growing problem of poverty in our county has prompted the economic planners/policy makers to come up with various programs that can help in combating it. Self help group formation is one such effort which will enable the poor to participate in the process of development.

Self Help Group (SHG) is a homogeneous group of not more than 20 people who join on a voluntary basis in order to undertake some common activity through mutual trust and mutual help. Of late, SHGs have come to be recognized as a pivotal means of sustainable community development. Many non- governmental organizations and the government are trying to promote SHGs.

In recent years, SHGs have become significant institutions for rural development. This has been particularly so in case of poor women. It is now being realized that instead of targeting the individual in the process development, it would

be more useful to adopt the approach of group development.

The poor women do not have enough capital to take up any business/enterprise. The number of self help groups in the country has multiplied by hundred folds during the past decade. In 1992-93 they were only 255 in number which rose to 33,000 by March 1999 and today there are over 4,50,000 SHGs all over the country.

SHGs are the grass root level organizations which are based on the principles of need and collective action. Some SHGs are in action spontaneously but most are promoted by the active involvement of some self help promoting institutions like MYRADA, IDS, BAIF etc.

Karnataka is pioneer in this endeavor of establishing SHGs and till March 2000, there were 10,610 SHGs linked to various banks in the state. At present there are over 65,000 SHGs of which 55,223 SHGs were formed under the 'Shree shakthi' and 'Swashakthi' programs of the Government.

The *Swashakthi* project is implemented in Karnataka by Karnataka State Women Development Corporation. The main thrust of the project is empowerment of rural women as social and economic aspects. NGO's are the partners in this project to implement in the field. The project is also associated with government and bank functionaries for convergence purpose. These functionaries will support SHG women in their ventures. Various training programs have been planned under the project after

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identifying their needs. *Krishi Vigyan Kendra's* are designed to provide skill oriented vocational training programs to the farmers, farm women, rural youths and school dropouts who intend to go for self employment in rural areas. Hence, the Indian Council for Agricultural Research established *Krishi Vigyan Kendra*, one each in all districts to cater to the needs of rural masses. They offer different kinds of training programs to the farmers. *Krishi Vigyan Kendra*, Hagari of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, hosted training programs with the financial assistance from Karnataka State Women Development Corporation. It has organized 12 training programmes on animal husbandry comprising of 377 members from different *taluks* of Bellary district. The training programme on animal husbandry is given to those '*Swashakthi*' members who are either landless farmers or small and marginal farmers looking into the consideration that the training program will motivate them to start subsidiary enterprises to improve their economic level. The duration of each training program was of 5 days.

The evaluation of training programs helps to locate the strong and weak points in the program and it gives the direction to the continued improvement of work, besides bringing confidence and satisfaction to the workers.

With this backdrop the present study was designed to obtain impact of training program on knowledge level and suggestions and constraints given by '*Swashakthi*' SHG members.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the members
2. To study the impact of training on knowledge level of SHG members in animal husbandry.
3. To study the suggestions given by the SHG members
4. To study constraints faced by the SHG members

METHODOLOGY

It was essential to select a *taluk* which had sufficient number of trained farmers who had undergone training under *Swashakthi* project for the purpose of collecting data. For this purpose, a list of SHG members who were trained at *Krishi Vigyan Kendra*, Hagari was prepared and hence Sandur *taluk* was selected. The simple

random sampling method was used in selecting the respondents in the study. The mean scores, per cent, standard deviation and 't' values were worked out to draw inferences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic Profile of the SHG Members

A perusal of Table 1 reveals that majority of the respondents (59 per cent) belonged to middle age group while 28 per cent were young and the remaining 13 per cent of the respondents were old. In case of marital status, 83 per cent of the respondents were married while 15 per cent of the respondents were unmarried and 2 per cent of the respondents were widows. The educational level of the members shows that 69 per cent were illiterate followed by 19 per cent who had primary level education, 3 per cent, 3 per cent and 4 per cent respectively had middle school, high school and intermediate level education. Only 2 per cent of the respondents were graduates. Most of the respondents belonged to nuclear families. Only 22 per cent belonged to the joint families. In the case of family size, large families with more than 4 members was reported by 45 per cent while remaining respondents belonged to small families. Majority of the respondents (62 per cent) were farm laborers followed by 20 per cent who mainly depended on agriculture, 12 per cent of the respondents who derived their income from agriculture as well as labour, 2 per cent, 2 per cent and 2 per cent, of the respondents depend on kirani shop, vegetable vending and tailoring respectively. Eighty-two per cent of the respondents were either landless (42 per cent) or marginal farmers (40 per cent), 13 per cent of the respondents were small farmers and only 5 per cent of the respondents were big farmers. More than 80 per cent of the respondents came below poverty line and 18 per cent were above poverty line. Majority of the respondents (69 per cent) did not listen to radio, of the remaining, 21 per cent listened occasionally, while 10 per cent were regular listeners.

The television viewing habit was found regular amongst 41 per cent, occasional among 55 per cent while the remaining never watched. Newspaper reading was very poor with 3 per cent reading it regularly, 12 per cent reading it occasional and the remaining never read.

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of SHG members

S. No.	Category	Respondents	
		Frequency	Per cent
1.	<i>Age</i>		
	Young (18-30 years)	28	28.00
	Middle (31-50 years)	59	59.00
	Old (above 50 years)	13	13.00
2.	<i>Marital Status</i>		
	Married	83	83.00
	Single (un married/ widows)	17	17.00
3.	<i>Education</i>		
	Illiterate	69	69.00
	Primary school	19	19.00
	Middle school	3	3.00
	High school	3	3.00
	PUC	4	4.00
	Graduate	2	2.00
4.	<i>Type of Family</i>		
	Joint	22	22.00
	Nuclear	78	78.00
5.	<i>Size of the Family</i>		
	Small (upto 4 members)	55	55.00
	Large (more than 4 members)	45	45.00
6.	<i>Occupation</i>		
	Farm laborer	62	62.00
	Agriculture + laborers	12	12.00
	Agriculture	20	20.00
	Kiryana shop	2	2.00
	Vegetable vendor	2	2.00
	Tailoring	2	2.00
7.	<i>Land Holding</i>		
	Landless (No land)	42	42.00
	Marginal farmers (upto 2.5 ac)	40	40.00
	Small farmers (2.5 ac to 5.0 ac)	13	13.00
	Big farmers (5 ac and above)	5	5.00
8.	<i>Annual Income</i>		
	Above poverty line	18	18.00
	Below poverty line	82	82.00
9.	<i>Mass Media Participation</i>		
	<i>Radio Listening Behavior</i>		
	Regular	10	10.00
	Occasional	31	31.00
	Never	69	69.00
	<i>Television Viewing Behaviour</i>		
	Regular	41	41.00
	Occasional	55	55.00
	Never	4	4.00
	<i>Newspaper Reading</i>		
	Regular	3	3.00
	Occasional	12	12.00
	Never	85	85.00

Overall Knowledge Level of SHG Members Regarding Animal Husbandry

The results in Tables 2 and 3 revealed the knowledge level of respondents and difference between knowledge level of SHG members before and after training.

The overall knowledge level of respondents before training revealed that majority of the respondents (48 per cent) belonged to medium

Table 2: Overall knowledge level of SHG members before and after the training

S. No.	Knowledge level	Before training		After training	
		Fre- quency	Per cent	Fre- quency	Per cent
1	Low	25	25.00	21	21.00
2	Medium	48	48.00	56	56.00
3	High	27	27.00	20	20.00
Mean		3.82	6.06		
S.D.		2.0566	2.237		

Table 3: Difference between knowledge level of SHG members before and after training

S. No.	Knowledge level		Mean difference	't' value
	Before training	After training		
1	3.82	6.06	2.76	4.8637

knowledge category, 25 per cent of the respondents belonged to low knowledge category and 27 per cent of the respondents belonged to high knowledge category.

The overall knowledge level of respondents after training revealed that majority of the respondents (56 per cent) belonged to medium knowledge category, 21 per cent of the respondents belonged to the high knowledge category and the remaining respondents belonged to low knowledge category.

The mean knowledge score for respondents before and after training was 3.82 and 6.06 respectively. This establishes that after training respondents were slightly better with regard to their knowledge compared to before training of the respondents.

The inference that could be drawn from results in Tables 2 and 3 with reference to the knowledge level of respondents is interesting. The knowledge level of the trained respondents was significantly higher than that of the untrained farmers. The findings of this study indicated that training had a definite impact on the knowledge level of the respondents. These findings were in conformity with Reddy (1989).

The fact that the trained respondents had a higher knowledge score for animal husbandry than untrained farmers suggests that when special educational efforts by way of training are made, it is possible to increase knowledge level of respondents in animal husbandry. The reason for higher knowledge of the trained respondents might be due to the appropriateness of the subject matter covered during the training situ-

ation, the training environment in which the farmers were exposed to the messages structured with different teaching aids like lectures, group discussion, skills taught and field visits etc., another reason may be higher interest and the experience of respondents in the training situation, as a result of which trainee got an opportunity to discuss their doubts with both *Krishhi Vigyan Kendra* specialists and experienced farmers and get solutions and clarifications.

Knowledge Level of the SHG Members Regarding Individual Animal Husbandry Practices Before and After Training

The data in the Table 4 reveals knowledge level of the SHG members regarding individual animal husbandry practices before training and after training.

The data in the Table 3 before training reveals that more than 50 per cent of the respondents were having knowledge level about improved breeds of cow (58 per cent), local breeds of goat (51 per cent) and local breeds of sheep (59 per cent). Nearly 50 per cent of the respondents were having knowledge about products of milk (48 per cent), diseases of goat and sheep (46 per cent). Thirty-one per cent, 20 per cent, 20 per cent, 20 per cent and 13 per cent of the respondents are having knowledge about products of meat, *Giriraja* bird rearing, diseases of poultry, management of diseases of goat and sheep, green manure crops and management of diseases of poultry respectively. Less than 10 per cent of respondents were having

knowledge about vermicompost preparation (3 per cent), fodder mixture preparation (1 per cent), inbreeds of sheep (2 per cent) and inbreeds of goat (4 per cent). None of the respondents had knowledge about piggery and fishery.

Further, after training, the data in Table 3 revealed that majority of the respondents possessed knowledge about improved breeds of cows (82 per cent), more than 60 per cent of the respondents had knowledge about inbreeds of sheep (62 per cent), local breeds of sheep (67 per cent) and products of milk (65 per cent). More than 50 per cent of the respondents had knowledge about products of meat (51 per cent), diseases of goat and sheep (52 per cent). Forty-two per cent of the respondents had knowledge about *Giriraja* bird rearing. Very less per cent of respondents had knowledge about fodder mixture preparation (7 per cent), piggery (8 per cent) and fishery (4 per cent). Twenty-nine per cent, 25 per cent, 15 per cent and 12 per cent of the respondents had knowledge about green manure crops, vermicompost preparation, and management of diseases of poultry, inbreeds of sheep and inbreeds of goat respectively.

In general, the trained SHG members had correct knowledge of almost all the practices than untrained growers. This indicates that training has an impact on respondents. The reason for this type of behaviour might be that the trained farmers had a unique opportunity of contrived as well as direct purposeful experience during the training session. The other reason might be that the interaction with other farmers during training situation might have influenced

Table 4: Impact of training program on knowledge level of SHG members

S. No.	Category	Before training		After training	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1.	Green manure crops	13	13.00	29	29.00
2.	Vermicompost preparation	3	3.00	25	25.00
3.	Fodder mixture preparation	1	1.00	7	7.00
4.	<i>Giriraja</i> bird rearing	20	20.00	42	42.00
5.	Products of milk	48	48.00	65	65.00
6.	Products of meat	31	31.00	51	51.00
7.	Piggery	0	0	8	8.00
8.	Fishery	0	0	4	4.00
9.	Diseases of poultry	20	20.00	34	34.00
10.	Management of diseases of poultry	11	11.00	15	15.00
11.	Local breeds of sheep	59	59.00	67	67.00
12.	Inbreeds of sheep	2	2.00	19	19.00
13.	Local breeds of goat	51	51.00	62	62.00
14.	Inbreeds of goat	4	4.00	12	12.00
15.	Diseases of goat and sheep	46	46.00	52	52.00
16.	Management of diseases of goat and sheep	20	20.00	32	32.00
17.	Improved breeds of cow	58	58.00	82	82.00

the increased knowledge. Another reason might be that the increased exposure to training situation leads to increased knowledge.

Constraints Faced by Members

It is clear from Table 5 that there were a number of constraints faced by members among which not getting adequate credit was the major constraint faced by 86 per cent of the members while 77 per cent of the members lacked in knowledge about breeds of animals. The members might not have got the guidance from veterinary departments and organizations. Frequent power cut and lack of space, difficulty in getting good breeds of animals and difficulties in getting good breeds of animals and difficulties in sale of prepared products were faced by 52 per cent, 46 per cent and 48 per cent respectively. This was mainly because of seasonality of produce and lack of spare time to go for collection of raw materials, so most of the members carried out their activity at their own premises thus inadequate storage space was a common problem. While 21 and 14 per cent of the members faced difficulties in retention and difficulty in arriving at consensus amongst the group members, illiteracy, lack of awareness, limitation in creative ideas could be the other reasons. The above constraints share similarity with the constraints reported by Snehalatha (1998).

Table 5: Constraints faced by members

S. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Per cent
1	Frequent power cut and lack of space	52	52.00
2	Difficulties in sale of prepared products	48	48.00
3	Not getting adequate credit	86	86.00
4	Difficulties in diversification of activities and / or starting new activities	14	14.00
5	Difficulties in retention	21	21.00
6	Lack of knowledge about breeds of animals	77	77.00
7	Difficulties in getting good breeds of animals	46	46.00

Suggestions Made by Members

A cursory glance over Table 6 revealed that make frequent contacts to help in establishment of subsidiary enterprise are suggested by 83 per cent. This might be due to lack of awareness, limitation in creative ideas and illiteracy. While, 64 per cent suggested to avail SJSY loan for

cattle and buffalo rearing. A few members availed SJSY loan where in an individual could avail Rs. 20,000 and more. This has encouraged other members to largely follow in their footsteps. Nearly 60 per cent of the members suggested arranging training program on dairying and 47 per cent of the members suggested to arrange training programs on *kasuti*, *agarbatti* and candle making. The probable reason might be most of the members were either landless laborers or small and marginal farmers as they could enter into those enterprises during off season. Improvement in activities undertaken was suggested by 23 per cent of them. It might be due to the difficulties they were facing in various stages of the activities carried out.

Table 6: Suggestions made by members

S. No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Per cent
1	Make frequent contacts to help in establishment of subsidiary enterprise	83	83.00
2	To avail SJSY loan for cattle and buffalo rearing	64	64.00
3	To arrange separate training programme on dairying	59	59.00
4	To arrange training programs on <i>kasuti</i> , <i>agarabatti</i> and candle-making	47	47.00
5	To take measures to improve in activities undertaken	23	23.00

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the present study, it could be concluded that majority of the respondents were found to be of medium knowledge category. The mean knowledge score of the respondents has increased after training when compared to before training. It could be inferred that because of the training the knowledge level of respondents has increased and also, it can be seen that there is significant difference in the knowledge level of the respondents before training when compared with knowledge level of the respondents after training.

Most of the members suggested to make frequent contacts to help in establishment of subsidiary enterprises and to avail SJSY loans for cattle and buffalo rearing. In case of constraints faced by the members, not getting adequate credit and lack of knowledge about breeds of animals are the major constraints. The extension agencies such as *Krishi Vigyan Kendra*, Non-governmental organizations etc need to organize regular training programs with spe-

cial emphasis on animal husbandry and allied activities for the rural women.

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