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RESEARCH ARTICLE :

Study on the functioning of SHG group and opinion of non-participating respondents on lac production of participating women lac growers

MANOHER SARYAM, MONI THOMAS AND S.K. AGRAWAL

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Author for correspondence :
MANOHER SARYAM
Department of Extension Education, Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Banaras Hindu University, VARANASI (U.P.) INDIA
Email:manohar.saryam@gmail.com

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

SUMMARY : The participation of women in self-help groups (SHGs) made a significant impact on their empowerment both in social and economic aspects. This study addresses women empowerment through self-help groups in Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh. Self-help groups (SHGs) are becoming one of the important means for the empowerment of poor women in almost all the developing countries including India. Madhya Pradesh is no exception as regards the role played by women's collectives, known by different names for emancipation and empowerment of poor women. This study conducted in the year 2013 in Seoni district of Madhya Pradesh in India. Study revealed that fifty per cent lac growers had high level innovativeness,(60%) lac growers in the low aspiration level, among the eight components of lac production identified, it was found that all the lac growers had a good knowledge on all components. However, knowledge on the spray of pesticide was partial among 40 per cent lac growers and 30 per cent had poor knowledge on it. Majority (80%) of the members of lac growers, before adoption lac production were practicing agriculture+labour, and only 20 per cent engaged in agriculture. After adopting lac production, there was a shift in the livelihood pattern as 60 per cent of them adopted lac production+ agriculture + labour while remaining 40 per cent were engaged agriculture + lac production. Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak has grown upto be a matured SHG, since its formation in 2005-06. Its functioning's are conducting regular meeting of the SHG conducts, maintenance of bank account and profit sharing and market survey for current lac price in Mandis. All the young non- participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers increased their investments in agriculture, but only 58.33 per cent agreed on their diversified activities.Middle aged non- participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers increased investment in agriculture, but 91.66 per cent agreed on their diversified activities. Old aged non-participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers investment in agriculture, but 83.33 per cent agreed their diversified activities.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Lac is an export oriented non-timber forest produce (NTFP). It produced mostly by tribals, sub-forest, forest and rainfed area of Jharkhand, West Bengal, Chhattisgrah,

Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Maharashtra and part of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat and NEH region (Sharma *et al.*,1997; Sequeira and Bezkorowajnyj, 1998; Ogle and Thomas, 2006; Pal *et al.*, 2010; Neetu *et al*., 2011 and Jaiswal *et al.,* 2012). About fifty per cent of forest revenue and about 70 per cent of forest export revenue in India comes from NTFPs, mostly from unprocessed and raw forms (Giridhar, 2011). Lac production is a livelihood option of both rainfed farmers and forest dependents.

Madhya Pradesh was traditionally a lac producing centre of the country during late 19th century. In the M.P., Jabalpur division is the major producer of lac. Balaghat and Seoni districts in Jabalpur division are the largest producers of lac in the state, Anuppur district is the largest producer and seller of brood lac (Ogle and Thomas, 2006). In MP over 600 training on lac production was organized since 1997 touching over 20,000 people to promote it in a SHG mode (Thomas *et al.,* 2011). In Odisha, too over 500 SHGs are engaged lac production in different districts (Panda, 2010). Jharkhand is the largest producer in India followed by Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

Seoni and Balaghat districts contributed 72 per cent of lac produced in M.P. and the former registered a growth rate of 6.9 per cent for the Rangeeni production (Ramani, 2010). According to Jaiswal *et al.* (2010) Seoni contributed maximum in the lac production (41.6 %) followed by Balaghat (30.6 %), Hosangabad (8.4 %) and Mandla (7.0 %). Even during the negative lac growth period (2005-06 to 2009-10) in the country, Madhya Pradesh (-1.5 %) registered lowest negative growth rate in comparison to other lac producing states (Jaiswal *et al.,* 2012). It indicates MP's robust lac promotion policy and effort made.

The concept of self-help groups serves to underline the principle "for the people, by the people and of the people". The self-help groups is the brain child of Gamelan Bank of Bangladesh, which was founded by Prof. Mohammed Yunas of Chittagong University in the year 1975.

Self-help groups (SHGs) are becoming one of the important means for the empowerment of poor women in almost all the developing countries including India. Madhya Pradesh is no exception as regards the role played by women's collectives, known by different names for emancipation and empowerment of poor women.

The empowerment of women through self-help groups (SHGs) would lead to benefits not only to the individual women, but also for the family and community as a whole through collective action for development. Self-help groups have linkages with NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) and banks to get finance for development. In turn it will promote the economy of the country by its contribution to rural economy. Self-help groups are small voluntary associations of rural people, preferably women folk from the same socio-economic background. They come together for the purpose of solving the common problems through self-help and mutual help in the self-help groups.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was undertaken during the years 2013-14. 40 Respondents of the study were carried out in Malhara village, barghat block, Seoni district, Madhya Pradesh. Seoni district was purposively seleted because of the economy of district is forest based. Main minor forest produce such as lac, bamboo, Mahua, Sitafal, Chirongi etc. Seoni is the largest producer of lac in M.P. The Barghat block is the major lac producer comprise of 136 villages.There were more than four women lac growers SHGs in Barghat. Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak (MAMLU) is a SHG of women lac growers, formally constituted in the year 2010 in village Malhara. The village has a large tract on land with Palash (*Butea monosperma*) trees on which lac is produced by lac growers. MAMLU adopted lac production on the Palash trees in 2010. The present study was conducted to psychological behavior and opinion about participant women lac growers of the 10 participating (Women lac growers) members of Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak SHG and thirty non-participating (Non lac growers) (10-Youth, 10-Middle age, 10-Old) were selected for their opinion about the members of Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak SHG through group discussion and structured interview schedule. Analysis was done with the use of frequency, mean, percentage, absolute change and relative change.

Mean :

Mean was obtained by dividing the sum of the score by the total number of cases involved. The formula

$$X = \frac{\Sigma Xi}{N} \quad [i=1,2,3,\ldots..n]$$

where,
X = Mean
Sxi = Sum of all the score in a distribution
n = Number of respondents
N = Total number of respondents

Percentage :

The term 'percentage' means a fraction whose denominator is 100.00 and the number of the fraction is called percentage.

$$P = \frac{X}{N} \times 100.00$$

where,
P = Percentage
X = Frequencies of respondents
N = Total number of respondents

Absolute change :

Absolute change was obtained by difference between change occurs after and before condition.

Absolute change = Income after lac production – Income before lac production

Relative change :

Relative change was obtained from absolute change divided by before condition and multiple of 100.

$$\text{Relative change} = \frac{\text{Income before lac production - Income after lac production}}{\text{Income before lac production}} \times 100$$

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

The profile of members of Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak SHG :

Occupation :

Table 1 shows that majority of the members (80%) of MAMLU SHG, before adoption lac production were practicing agriculture+labour, followed by agriculture (20%). After adopting Lac production there was a shift in the livelihoods pattern as (60%) of them adopted lac cultivation + agriculture + labour while remaining (40%) agriculture + lac cultivation.

Access to Palash trees :

As 8000 Palash trees have been conserved by the 10 women lac growers 2005. They have equal access, therefore, the income generated throught lac production on these trees are also equally distributed.

Innovativeness :

Innovativeness is the product of self-confidence, economic motivation and ability to take risk (Table 2). There were 50 per cent lac growers in the high level innovativeness and followed by 30 per cent low level innovativeness.

Knowledge level :

Knowledge level of lac growers in different components of lac cultivation is important to understand where more emphasis has to be made to improve

Table 1 : Distribution of lac growers according to their occupation **(n=10)**

Sr. No.	Categories	Lac growers			
		Before		After	
		No.	%	No.	%
1.	Agriculture	2	20	0	0
2.	Agriculture + Labour	8	80	0	0
3.	Agriculture + Lac cultivation	0	0	4	40
4.	Agriculture+ Lac cultivation + Labour	0	0	6	60

Table 2 : Distribution of lac growers according to their innovativeness **(n=10)**

Sr. No.	Innovativeness	Level of innovativeness among lac growers	
		No.	Percentage
1.	Low (Upto 18 scores)	3	30
2.	Medium (19 scores)	2	20
3.	High (above 19 scores)	5	50
	Total	10	100

productivity. There were eight component identified to pre-examine the knowledge of lac growers (Table 3). Almost all the lac growers had a good knowledge of all components. However, knowledge had on the spray of pesticide was partial among 40 per cent lac growers and 30 per cent had poor knowledge.

Aspiration level :

Aspiration can be conceived as future level of achievement. It is the achievable level of set goal, the matter for progress and prosperity. There were (60%) lac growers in the low aspiration level followed by (20%) medium and (20%) high level of aspiration (Table 4).

Functioning Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak SHG :

Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak SHG is very matured since its formation in 2005-06. The SHG manages the finance and capitals during its regular meeting. Its functioning through

– Conducting regular meeting of the SHG conducts
– Production and sale of brood as well as raw lac
– Maintenance of bank account and profit sharing
– Imparting skill based programme on lac production to others
– Interaction with other lac growing SHGs and extending support them
– Seeking technical advice from extension functionaries for diversification and improving agriculture productivity
– Market survey for corrent lac price in *Mandis*

Opinion of non-participating respondents on the investment, income and empowerment of participating women lac growers :

The opinion of non-participating respondents on the investment, income, and empowerment of participating women lac growers as below (Table 5).

There were 30 non- participating respondents from whom the opinions of participating respondents were gathered. Investment in production, increase in agriculture production and annual household income, investment household expenditure, social empowerment and leadership were areas of engaging. All the young non-participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers increased their investments in agriculture, but only 58.33 per cent agreed on their diversified activities. However, 91.33 per cent agreed that participating women lac growers increase their agriculture production, while all they agreed that the annual household income of lac growers increased from the past. Regarding investment in children education 83.33 per cent agreed that this was an increase spending by participating women lac growers in the education of

Table 3 : Distribution of lac growers according to their knowledge level **(n=10)**

Sr. No.	Technological component	Knowledge level		
		High	Medium	Low
1.	Selection of field	8(80)	1(10)	1(10)
2.	Preparation of *Palash* trees	3(30)	6(60)	1(10)
3.	Brood Lac inoculation	3(30)	5(50)	2(20)
4.	Removal of phunki	3(30)	6(60)	1(10)
5.	Spray of pesticides	3(30)	4(40)	3(30)
6.	Maturity evaluation	1(10)	8(80)	1(10)
7.	Harvesting	4(40)	3(30)	3(30)
8.	Scraping of Lac	6(60)	4(40)	0(00)

Figure in parenthesis indicates in per cent to the total

Table 4 : Distribution of lac growers according to their aspiration level **(n=10)**

Sr. No.	Categories	Aspiration level of lac growers	
		No.	Percentage
1.	Low (Upto 19 scores)	6	60
2.	Medium (20 to 25 scores)	2	20
3.	High (above 25 scores)	2	20
	Total	10	100

Table 5 : Opinion of non-participating respondents on the investment, income and empowerment of participating women lac growers

Sr. No.	Age groups	Investment in production		Increase in		Investment in house hold		Social empowerment	
		Agriculture	Diversification	Ag. production	Income	Education	Health	Social participation	Leadership
	Youth								
1.	Male(6)	6(100%)	4(66.66%)	5(83.33%)	6(100%)	4(66.66%)	3(50%)	6(100%)	5(83.33%)
2.	Female(6)	6(100%)	3(50%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	5(83.33%)	5(83.33%)	5(83.33%)
	Sub total	12(100%)	7(58.33%)	11(91.33%)	12(100%)	10(83.33%)	8(66.66%)	11(91.33%)	10(83.33%)
	Middle								
1.	Male(6)	6(100%)	5(83.33%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	5(83.33%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	4(66.66%)
2.	Female(6)	6(100%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	4(66.66%)	5(83.33%)	5(83.33%)	6(100%)
	Sub total	12(100%)	11(91.66%)	12(100%)	12(100%)	9(75%)	11(91.66%)	11(91.66%)	10(83.33%)
	Old								
1.	Male(3)	3(100%)	3(100%)	3(100%)	3(100%)	2(66.66%)	2(66.66%)	3(100%)	3(100%)
2.	Female(3)	3(100%)	2(66.66%)	3(100%)	3(100%)	2(66.66%)	3(100%)	3(100%)	2(66.66%)
	Sub total	6(100%)	5(83.33%)	6(100%)	6(100%)	4(66.66%)	5(83.33%)	6(100%)	5(83.33%)
	Grand total	30(100%)	24(80%)	29(96.66%)	30(100%)	23(76.66%)	24(80%)	28(93.33%)	25(83.33%)

children, while 66.66 per cent agreed that they invested in health care. Majority (91.33 %) agreed that the participating women lac growers increased their social participation, but only 83.33 per cent agreed that they have improved their leadership capacity.

Middle aged non- participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers increased investment in agriculture, but 91.66 per cent agreed on their diversified activities. All of them agreed that participating women lac growers increased their agriculture production and annual household income from the past. Regarding investment in children education 75 per cent agreed that there is an increased spending by participating women lac growers in the education of children, while 91.66 per cent agreed that they invested in health care. Majority (91.33 %) agreed that the participating women lac growers increased their social participation, but only 83.33 per cent agreed that they have improved their leadership capacity. Old aged non-participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers investment in agriculture, but 83.33 per cent agreed their diversified activities. All of them agreed that participating women lac growers not only increased their agriculture production, but also annual household income from the past. Regarding investment in children education 66.66 per cent agreed that they is increasingly spend in the education of thier children, while 83.33 per cent agreed that they invested in health care. All of them agreed about the increased participation of women lac growers in social activities, but only 83.33 per cent agreed that they have improved their leadership capacity.

Conclusion :

To sum up, the present study gives final results that women in the study area are among the eight components of lac production identified, it was found that all the lac growers had a good knowledge on all components. However, knowledge had on the spray of pesticide was partial among 40 per cent lac growers. Majority (80%) of the members of lac growers, before adoption Lac production were practicing agriculture+labour, and only 20 per cent engaged in agriculture. After adopting lac production, there was a shift in the livelihood pattern as 60 per cent of them adopted lac production+ agriculture + labour while remaining 40 per cent were engaged agriculture + lac production.Mahalaxmi Adivasi Mahila Lac Utpadak has grown upto be a matured SHG, since its formation in 2005-06. Its functioning's are conducting regular meeting of the SHG conducts, maintenance of bank account and profit sharing and market survey for current lac price in *Mandis*. All the young non-participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers increased their investments in agriculture, but only 58.33 per cent agreed on their diversified activities.Middle aged non-participating respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers increased investment in agriculture, but 91.66 per cent agreed on their diversified activities. Old aged non- participating

respondents were of the opinion that participating women lac growers investment in agriculture, but 83.33 per cent agreed their diversified activities.

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Authors' affiliations :

MONI THOMAS, Directorate of Research Services, Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, JABALPUR (M.P.) INDIA

S.K. AGRAWAL, Department of Extension Education, Jawaharlal Nehru Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, JABALPUR (M.P.) INDIA

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