

Original Research Article

A Study on Impact of Self-Help Group on Economic Status of Farmers in Gwalior (M.P), India

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted in 2011-12 to determine the impact of self-help group in social development at morar block Gwalior district M.P. with a view that its result might be useful to extension workers, administrators, communication expert, researcher and planner. For the selection of villages, the simple random sampling procedure was considered. Gwalior district comprises of 4blocks viz. Morar, Dabra, Bhitwar and Ghatigaon. Out of these, one block- Gwalior was selected randomly. From the analysis of the data regarding the diversification of agriculture, it was found that the significant number of farmers adopted the diversification. A vital change in the irrigation source of the respondent farmers, substantial increase was recorded in the percentage of the well, as a irrigation source, as most of the farmers took loan for digging well and for the machines required for the irrigation as motor, wires etc. An increase was found in the amenities available at home. The purchasing power has been found to increase gradually due to the loan provided by the SHGs. It has been found that there was rise in the annual income of the respondents after taking the membership of the self-help groups. Majority of the members built *Kachcha - Pucca* houses after taking loan from the SHGs (55%), previously the number of respondents residing in *Kachcha-Pucca* houses were 46%. Thus an increase of 10% was found in the number of respondents an increase was found in the agriculture technologies available at the farm. The purchasing power has been found to increase gradually due to the loan provided by the SHGs. After the membership of the SHGs, the respondent farmers were found to use the increased agricultural inputs and advanced agricultural techniques for farming. Thus, it indicated a substantial change in the economic status of the farmers after joining the SHGs

Keywords

SHGs, Crop diversification, Agriculture input, Economic status

Introduction

Self Help Group is a small, economically homogenous and affinity group of rural poor which voluntarily agrees to contribute to a common fund to be lent to its members as per group decisions, which works for group solidarity, self and group-awareness, social and economic empowerment in the way of democratic functioning^[2]. Self Help Group

has got a great potential in creating awareness on day to day affairs, promoting saving habit, developing self and community- assets, increasing income level, improving social power etc. Self Help Group concepts generate self- confidence, self-security and self-reliance. It is projected that the Self Help Groups may replace the traditional commercial/co-operative lending institutions at the village or at least

supplement rural financing. The Self Help Group movement has its roots in the spirit of 'Swashraya' self- help through mutual help for common goal. It is the ideal combination of one's rights and responsibilities.

Self Help Groups have, therefore been developed as a means of dealing with commonly shared social, emotional and physical problem conditions.^[7] A Self Help Group can be identified as a supportive educational, usually change oriented mutual aid group that addresses a life problem or condition commonly shared by all members. Its purpose may be personal or societal change or both. Its leadership is indigenous from within the group's members and participation and contributions are voluntary. Professionals rarely have an active role in the groups activities, unless they participate as members. Boundaries include all those who qualify for membership by having the problem, situation or identification in common with other members. Meetings are structured and are task oriented and use specific methods of help for the basic problem or condition and local groups are usually autonomous from their national headquarters^[1].

Materials and Methods

Selection of the block

To achieve the objectives of the research Programme selected, an explanatory type of approach was followed. Several organizations including both government and non- government agencies and banks are engaged in forming self-help groups in the various blocks of the district. Hence, the chance of studying various types of self-help groups were more in Morar block. Looking to the interest of various agencies in forming SHGs, and possibility of variety in structure and functions of SHGs, the Morar block of

Morar district has been selected purposively as location of the study.

Selection of the villages

For the selection of villages, the simple random sampling procedure was considered. Gwalior district comprises of 4 blocks viz. Morar, Dabra, Bhitwar and Ghatigaon. Out of these, one block- Gwalior was selected randomly. Gwalior block comprises of 84 panchayats and 154 villages. A list of villages where SHGs are been operating by the NABARD was prepared and on the basis of this list, 10 villages viz. Dagiapur, Sausa, Utila, Udaypura, Hasanpura, Bada gaon, Bijoli, Mohanpur, Khureri and Kheria were selected randomly. In next stage, two self-help groups from each selected village were selected randomly for the purpose of evaluation of the impact of self-help groups on economic status of farmers.

Selection of respondents

From each selected SHG a list of members was obtained with the help of president of the respective group. Ten respondents from each SHG were randomly selected to constitute the total sample size of 100 respondents (Table 1).

Collection of the data

Primary data were collected from the sampled SHG member of the respective group. The data were related to following items:

- i. Source of income and their present economic status.
- ii. Opinion related to the role of the funding agencies for the sustenance of the SHGs.

The data of the study were primary in nature; hence an interview schedule was prepared for collection of the required data.

This interview schedule had all the information about the sample farmers *viz.* The prepared interview schedule was pre tested for its reliability. The primary data were collected from the individual sample respondents using this pre-tested interview schedule through survey method through personal contact. The primary data were collected in the year 2011-12

Tabulation of data

The data were carefully examined before tabulation. All the entries in the schedule were checked for accuracy and completeness and then it was tabulated.

Analysis of data

Frequency, percentage, mean and various descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

Frequency and percentage

Frequency and percentage were used for making simple comparison to calculate percentage, the frequency of a particular cell was multiplied by 100 and divided by total number or respondents in that particular category.

Arithmetic mean (Mean)

The arithmetic mean was worked out by using the following formula:-

$$\bar{X} = \sum x_i / n$$

Where,

$$\bar{X} = \text{Arithmetic mean}$$
$$\sum x_i = \text{Sum of } x \text{ values}$$
$$n = \text{Number of values}$$

Impact of SHG on economic status of farmers

Increase in diversification of agriculture

Diversification of agriculture is related to the adoption of high valued crops and other allied activities such as poultry, dairy etc. for sake of better returns and income throughout the year. Diversification of agriculture requires capital investment. The credit disbursed by the self-help groups to the members practicing agriculture, were found to be utilized in the adoption of newer income generating activities^[5] (Table 2).

From the analysis of the data regarding the diversification of agriculture, it was found that the significant number of farmers adopted the diversification. Whether it may be the crop diversification or the adoption of allied income-generating activities such as poultry, dairy etc. An increase of 20.93% in case of crop diversification was found. Also an increase of 17.91% was seen in the dairy production, which resulted in more economic benefits.

Increase in agricultural inputs

After the membership of the SHGs, the respondent farmers were found to use the increased agricultural inputs and advanced agricultural techniques for farming. Thus, it indicated a substantial change in the economic status of the farmers after joining the SHGs. The credit availed by the SHGs was utilized for better farming which resulted in higher returns as increase in agricultural inputs and advanced agricultural techniques for farming resulted in more production[4] (Table 3).

Sources of irrigation

A vital change in the irrigation source of the respondent farmers in the source of

irrigation in their farms was found after the membership of the SHGs.

as a irrigation source, as most of the farmers took loan for digging well and for the machines required for the irrigation as motor, wires etc.

Table 3 shows that the substantial increase was recorded in the percentage of the well,

Table.1 Description of the Self Help Groups under study

S. No	Name of SHGs	Location	Established On	No. of members
1.	Jai Ganesh Samooh	Panampur Kheriya	20.12.2007	10
2.	Radha Rani Samooh	Dhaneli	26.10.2007	14
3.	Radha Samooh	Ratwai	12.10.2007	11
4.	Jhalkari Samooh	Ramnagar Khatoli	02.10.2007	11
5.	Mahatma Phulee Samooh	Chak Keshavpur	10.10.2007	12
6.	Jay Ambe Samooh	Khureri	14.02.2008	10
7.	Maan Kaali Samooh	Khureri	10.12.2007	11
8.	Jay Durge Samooh	Khudarpura	19.01.2009	10
9.	Girraj Samooh	Baretha	17.08.2009	11
10	New Balaji Samooh	Baretha	11.11.2010	10
11	Siddh Guru Samooh	Baretha Suron	10.06.2009	10
12	Balaji Samooh	Sooron	14.02.2009	13

Table.2 Diversification in agriculture after joining SHGs

S.No	Diversification	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
A. Crops					
1.	Horticultural crops	5	11	11.63	14.93
2.	Floricultural crops	1	2	2.33	4.48
3.	Cash crops	9	18	20.93	26.87
4.	Traditional crops	20	21	46.51	31.34
B. Allied activities					
1.	Poultry	1	3	2.33	4.48
2.	Dairy	7	12	16.28	17.91
3.	Fisheries	0	0	0	0
Total		43	67	100	100

Table.3 Change in agricultural inputs utilization after joining SHGs

S.N	Agricultural Inputs	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
A.	Fertilizer Consumption				
	N	26	31	22.50	17.92
	P	15	22	11.67	12.72
	K	7	16	5.83	9.25
B.	Plant protection measures				
	Pesticides	24	30	20.0	17.34
	Fungicides	5	11	4.16	5.78
	Weedicides	10	13	8.33	7.51
	Others	12	21	10.0	12.14
C.	Seeds of HYV.	21	30	17.5	17.34
	Total	120	173	100	100

Table.4 Irrigation facilities on the farm after joining SHGs

S. No.	Source	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
1.	Well	25	33	52.08	61.11
2.	Tube well	15	17	31.25	31.48
3.	Pond	8	4	16.67	7.41
	Total	48	54	100	100

Table.5 Change in annual income of respondents

S.N	Annual Income (in Rs.)	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
1.	Below 20,000	60	47	60	47
2.	20,000-40,000	26	35	26	35
3.	Above 40,000	14	18	14	18
	Total	100	100	100	100

Table.6 Change in household type of the respondents

S. No.	Type of House	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
1.	<i>Kachcha</i>	19	10	19	10
2.	<i>Pucca</i>	18	20	18	20
3.	<i>Kachcha -pucca</i>	46	55	46	55
4.	<i>Jhopadi</i>	17	15	17	15
	Total	100	100	100	100

Table.7 Change in agricultural technical inputs available on the farm

S. No	Technologies available	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
1.	Tractor and trolley	4	6	4.30	4.72
2.	Thresher, Electric engine pump	13	17	13.98	13.39
3.	Diesel engine pump	25	36	26.88	28.35
4.	Sprayer, seed drill,	14	19	15.05	14.96
5.	Modern plough, Duster Sprinkler	17	28	18.28	22.05
6.	Bullock and cart.	11	8	11.83	6.30
7.	Storage facilities.	9	13	9.68	10.24
	Total	93	127	100	100

Table.8 Change in size of land holding of the respondents

S. No	Land holding size (ha)	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
1	Small (upto 2 ha)	16	21	51.61	67.74
2	Medium(2.01-4.00 ha)	8	9	25.81	29.03
3	Large(above4.01ha)	7	8	22.58	25.81
	Total	31	38	100	100

Table.9 Change in amenities available at home of respondents

S. No.	Amenities available	Frequency (Before joining)	Frequency (After joining)	Percentage (Before joining)	Percentage (After joining)
1.	B/W Television	40	57	19.51	22.17
2.	Colour Television	3	6	1.46	2.33
3.	Telephone/ Mobile	12	16	5.85	6.22
4.	Bicycle	80	87	39.02	33.82
5.	Two wheeler	21	31	10.24	12.06
6.	Ceiling/ Table fan	47	56	22.93	21.78
7.	Fridge/ Cooler	2	4	0.98	1.55
Total		205	257	100	100

Comparative study of annual income of the members before and after joining SHGS

It has been found that there was rise in the annual income of the respondents after taking the membership of the self-help groups. Table 5 shows that many of the members took loan for starting the income generating activities. It was found that the frequency of the individual members having annual income less than 20,000 Rs. was gradually decreasing, which resulted in increase in the in the frequency of the annual income of the respondents in the range of 20,000-40,000 and above 40,000 [3].

Comparative study of change in household type of the respondent before and after joining SHGS

Changes in the house hold type of the respondents were found after becoming the member of the SHGs. The SHGs were providing loans for building houses or for the renovation of the *Kachcha* house to *Pucca* house. Table 6 shows that majority of the members built *Kachcha -Pucca* houses after taking loan from the SHGs (55%), previously the number of respondents residing in *Kachcha -Pucca* houses were

46%. Thus an increase of 10% was found in the number of respondents who built *Kachcha -Pucca* houses. Also there was decline in the percentage of the number of respondents residing in *Kachcha* houses or *Jhopadi*. Thus, it can be interpreted that the economic status of the respondents were strengthening after joining the SHGs.[6]

Comparative study of change on agricultural technical inputs in farm of the respondent before and after joining SHGS

An increase was found in the agriculture technologies available at the farm Table 7. The purchasing power has been found to increase gradually due to the loan provided by the SHGs. A majority of the respondents were found to purchase Modern plough, Duster, Sprinkler after being the member of SHGs. Also two of the respondents were found to purchase Tractor after joining the SHGs.

Comparative study of change in size of land holding of the respondent before and after joining SHGs

In the case of size of the land holdings the number of small farms increased with 0.42

% and medium farms increased with 0.51 % while large farms decreased with 0.93 % (Table 8).

Comparative study of change in infrastructural facilities of the respondents before and after joining SHGs

An increase was found in the amenities available at home (Table 9). The purchasing power has been found to increase gradually due to the loan provided by the SHGs. A majority of the respondents were found to purchase Colour Television and Telephone/Mobile after being the member of SHGs (22.17% and 6.22% respectively).

It is concluded from the study, Diversification of agriculture is related to the adoption of high valued crops and other allied activities such as poultry, dairy etc. for sake of better returns and income throughout the year

After the membership of the SHGs, the respondent farmers were found to use the increased agricultural inputs and advanced agricultural techniques for farming.

It was found that the frequency of the individual members having annual income less than 20,000 Rs. was gradually decreasing, which resulted in increase in the in the frequency of the annual income of the respondents in the range of 20,000-40,000 and above 40,000.

A majority of the respondents were found to purchase Modern plough, Duster, Sprinkler after being the member of SHGs. Also two of the respondents were found to purchase Tractor after joining the SHGs.

An increase was found in the amenities available at home. The purchasing power has been found to increase gradually due to the loan provided by the SHGs

Changes in the house hold type of the respondents were found after becoming the member of the SHGs. The SHGs were providing loans for building houses or for the

renovation of the *Kachcha* house to *Pucca* house.

Majority of the members built *Kachcha* - *Pucca* houses after taking loan from the SHGs (55%), previously the number of respondents residing in *Kachcha* -*Pucca* houses were 46%. Thus an increase of 10% was found in the number of respondents who built *Kachcha* - *Pucca* houses

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