SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS IN LIVESTOCK REARING FOR SELF HELP GROUP MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT

A study was carried out in Tiruvannamalai district of Tamil Nadu to evaluate the social, economic and political constraints in livestock rearing as perceived by women SHG members and non-members. A detailed questionnaire among various aspects of socio-economic and political constraints involved in livestock rearing were enlisted and women livestock farmers from SHG members and non-members in the study area were asked to rank each constraint which was then analyzed using Garret's ranking technique. The results showed that SHG member's perceived lack of gender based academic institutions causing illiteracy and lack of agro based industries in rural atmosphere as their vital constraints whereas non-members perceived these constraints trivially. Both SHG members and non-members identified unhealthy traditions and customs existing in the social atmosphere insignificantly.

INTRODUCTION

Promoting livestock activities at the rural level will assist women enormously in their livelihood behaviors. Development of rural areas and development of livestock activities are superfluous over one another and are not mutually exclusive. Thus the present study was carried out to evaluate the socio-economic and political constraints involved in livestock rearing among SHG members and non-members.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For collection of data, a multi-stage random sampling design (I Stage - Selection of Blocks and II Stage - Selection of Villages) was used. From 18 blocks of Tiruvannamalai district, two blocks (Polur and Kalasapakkam) were selected by simple random sampling. From each selected block, a sample of five villages was selected by simple random sampling technique. From each of the selected villages, six respondents who were rearing livestock each from SHG members and non-members were selected. Thus, a sample of 60 respondents from SHGs and 60 respondents from non-SHG members who were rearing livestock were selected. The field survey for the study was conducted during the period of December 2009 to February 2010. The pertinent data for the constraints faced by SHG members and non-members in terms of production and marketing in livestock rearing were obtained by personal interview with the help of pre-tested questionnaire.

Garret's ranking technique was adopted to analyse the constraints perceived by Self-help group members and non-members in the study area. The respondents were asked to rank the given constraints which were related to livestock activity. The order of merits that were given by the respondents was converted into ranks by using the following formula (Garret and Woodworth, 1971).

$$\text{Per cent position} = \frac{100\,(R_{ij}-0.50)}{N_j}$$

Where,

   R_{ij} - Rank given for ith factor by jth individual

   N_j - Number of factors ranked by jth individual

The per cent position of each rank thus obtained was converted into scores by referring to table given by Garret. For each factor or problem, the scores of the individual respondents were added together and divided by the total number of respondents for whom scores were given and thus based on the mean scores, the ranks were given. These mean scores for all the factors were arranged in descending order and the most important factor was ranked first and the least important problem was ranked as the last.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Commonly occurring constraints in livestock rearing were enlisted under social, economical and political dimensions and the women livestock farmers from SHG members and non-members in the study area were asked to rank the constraints which affect their performance in livestock rearing and the same was analyzed by using Garret ranking technique.

The results revealed that lack of gender based academic institutions causing illiteracy was the constraint ranked foremost by member's category (with a mean score of 64.22) whereas it was ranked third (with a mean score of 46.82) in non-members category. This result is in agreement with the results of Kaur et al. (2007). The dependable nature of women was the constraint ranked first and second by non- members and members' category, respectively. Since non-members are not participating in the SHG programme, their independence in many of the farm and household decision making is limited. Opposition to participate in social activities was the constraint ranked second by non-members, relatively a higher position compared to SHG members. This could be one of the reasons for the non- participation in the programme by non-members. Among the social constraints, both members and non-members identified unhealthy traditions and customs in the lower position with a mean score of (35.55 and 30.25, respectively which showed the unimportance of this constraint in today's rural atmosphere.

Under the umbrella of economic constraints, members ranked lack of agro based industries in rural environment as their prime constraint although non-members ranked it in fourth position. Dominance by male in financial transactions was the constraint ranked fourth (with the mean score of 43.72) by the members whereas it was ranked first (with a mean score of 53.44) by non-members. Because of the participation in the SHG programme, members had to operate the financial transactions of the group activities habitually with the financial institution they had associated. But in majority of the non-members category, the financial transaction of the family was carried out by their husbands which made them to recognize this constraint at the prime one with a mean score of 53.44. So, the participation in the programme made SHG members access the credit at a lower level of interest. Both the results from the above economic constraints convey the quality of mind-set the members acquired in SHG activities compared to non-members. This result concurs with the findings of Kaur et al. (2007) who found that lack of agro-based industries for the income generation and employment was the main constraint felt by rural women farmers.

Among political constraints, members perceived harassment and exploitation of women leaders by officials and others as their prime constraint (with a mean score of 62.40) whereas the non-members perceived it in third position (with a mean score of 48.00). Participation in the programme, the members were easily exposed to outside environment that involves bureaucrats, banking and NGO officials where they could have to face all the challenges relevant to this constraint and this had forced the SHG members to rank this constraint on a bigger scale compared to non- members. The constraint named women in nature avoid to lead the group was totally insignificant according

to members perception (with a mean score of 40.80). However, it was given in prime position (with a mean score of 68.00) among non members. This might be due to the non-participation of members in the SHG programme.

The constraints perceived by the SHG members and non members clearly varied in many of the dimensions of constraints. Appropriate policy level decisions may be formulated to reduce the level of hindrances faced by SHG members in livestock rearing.

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