

Empowerment of Tribal Women through Skill Development: The Role of Self Help Groups

Dr. Deepika Gautam

*Assistant Professor, Faculty of Management,
Himachal Pradesh National Law University, Shimla, H.P.*

Abstract

Empowerment of Tribal women is the central issue that has been pervading the development debate since eighties. Improving the status and empowering women would go a long way in accomplishing egalitarian gender relations in society. Tribal Women who are hitherto constrained by their social structure for their self-expression constitute the target of most of the development programs, which aim at bringing them into the mainstream of the development process and skill development training is a way to give a ray of hope to the community, to make them realize that they are capable of doing a lot more and to introduce them with self-confidence. Keeping in view the importance of skill development, an attempt has been made to know the impact of training programmes on empowerment of tribal women in the study area which not only reduced poverty & improved the welfare of participating households, but also enhanced the household's capacity to sustain their gains over time.

Keywords: Tribal Women, Empowerment, Self Help Groups, Skill Development and Area Development.

Introduction

Training and Development function plays a significant role to bring out the hidden talents and the capacity of all the SHG members through systematic modular training. Various kinds of training programmes are offered to the members to make them employable and self-independent. Women self-help groups are at present playing a vital role in the personality and skill development of women in India. Skill development determines the productivity as well as the ability to adapt to the changing industrial environment. Majority of rural women do not possess marketable skills, which is an impediment in getting decent employment and improving their economic condition. Keeping in view the importance of skill development, SHGs provide both skill development and human capital training services to their members. The skill formation training aims at improving income generating activities such as; farming, craft or business and is mostly provided to SHGs that are already credit linked. In order to promote employability of women, the SHG focuses on the skill up gradation strategy to enhance the employability of women in the self-employment & wage employment sectors.

Objectives of the Study

To examine effectiveness of microenterprise training programmes on self-help groups.

Hypothesis

In the light of the above mentioned objectives of the study and after reviewing the existing literature on the subject, the following hypothesis has been selected for the purpose of testing.

H_01 : Impact of training imparted to members of SHGs is same irrespective of their demographic profile.

H_a1 : Impact of training imparted to members of SHGs differs significantly on the basis of various demographic attributes

Research Methodology

Keeping in view this socio-economic feature of the state, a multi stage sampling has been designed for the purpose of seeking a representative sample of respondents. The study is both descriptive and evaluative in nature, examines the impact of training programmes on skill development of tribal women. The study has been conducted in 2 blocks namely Pangi and Bharmour of the Chamba District. Four villages from each Block and one Self Help group from each village has been selected on random basis. Thus the total eight Self-help groups were selected for the study. The sample consists of 80 rural women SHG members. This study will help the government to contribute substantially towards inclusive growth and to frame various policies which contribute substantially towards empowerment of women residing in tribal areas. Interview technique has been used for assessing the training needs of self-help group members.

Need of the Study

Self-Help Groups have become the focal point of poverty reduction efforts and occupies pride of place in national programmes such as Swarnajayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY), Rural Women Development and Empowerment Project, Swayamsidha Project and promotional programmes of the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development. Training is expected to inculcate positive changes in their knowledge, skill and attitude and to bring out the hidden talents and the capacity of all the SHG members, to improve employment, reduce poverty, provide livelihood opportunities, and enhance productivity to promote environmentally sustainable development.

Results & Discussion

Impact of training on improving skill of the women in the study area according to their age, education, marital status and family occupation has been presented in the following tables. Mean score of

satisfaction along with standard deviation of the responses gathered from respondents relating to the impact of training on skill development programme in the study area is depicted in table 1.

Table 1: Block-wise Impact of Training on Skill Development Programme:

District	Mean	Standard Deviation	S.E	F	P-Value
Pangi	4.16	.865	.109	45.247	.000
Bharmour	4.08	1.021	.129		

Source: Data collected through Interview Schedule

By applying F-test, the significance value has been found significant at 1 percent level of significance, which shows that block wise there is no significant difference in the responses of the respondents regarding impact of training on improving skill development of the tribal women.

Analysis of table 2 reveals age-wise impact of training on skill development programme. It is clear from the table that respondents less than 35 years of age feel more satisfied with the training programme in enhancing their skill as their mean score has been found highest (3.87), whereas mean score of satisfaction level of respondents above 55 years has been found least (3.36).

Table 2: Age-wise Impact of Training on Skill Development Programme:

Age Group (in Years)	Mean	Standard Deviation	S.E	F	P-Value
Less than 35 years	3.87	1.067	.157	2.934	.05
36- 55 Years	3.65	1.061	.121		
Above 55 Years	3.36	1.368	.149		
Total	3.58	1.208	.084		

Source: Data collected through Interview Schedule

Further, maximum variation in responses has been observed among the respondents having age above 55 years (1.368). By applying F-Test, impact of training on skill development has been found significant at 5 percent level of significance, which shows that age of the respondents has positive bearing in enhancing skill through training.

Table 3: Educational Qualification-wise Impact of Training on Skill Development Programme:

Educational Qualification	Mean	Standard Deviation	S.E	F	P-Value
Under Matriculation	3.30	1.185	.158	2.190	.080
Higher Secondary	3.66	1.318	.167		
Graduate	3.80	1.033	.125		
Post Graduate	3.33	1.328	.313		
Total	3.58	1.208	.084		

Source: Data collected through Interview Schedule

Table 3 highlights the descriptive statistical analysis of impact of training on skill development programme on the basis of educational qualification of the respondents. It is clear from the table that mean score of satisfaction in enhancing skill has been found highest among respondents having qualification up to graduate level (3.80) followed by Higher Secondary respondents (3.66); Maximum variation has been observed among graduate respondents (1.328). Further, the impact of training on skill development has been tested by using F -test and the significance value has been found insignificant at 5 percent level of significance which leads to the conclusion that all respondents irrespective of their education background have shown the same level of satisfaction as there is no significant difference in the responses.

Analysis of table 4 reveals that women who are single have been found more satisfied with the training programme in enhancing their skill, as the mean score of satisfaction of single women has been found highest (4.09) in comparison to married, widow and divorcee women

Table 4: Marital Status-wise Impact of Training on Skill Development Programme:

Marital Status	Mean	Standard Deviation	S.E	F	P-Value
Single	4.09	1.097	.151	9.770	.000
Married	3.57	1.203	.123		
Widow	3.12	1.141	.150		
Divorcee	3.65	1.061	3.65		
Total	3.58	1.208	.084		

Source: Data collected through Interview Schedule

Further, the married women have shown maximum variation in the responses. The significance value of F has been found significant at 1 percent level of significance which shows that marital status of the women has great impact in enhancing their skill through training programme.

Table 5: Family Occupation-wise Impact of Training on Skill Development Programme:

Family Occupation	Mean	Standard Deviation	S.E	F	P-Value
Agriculture	3.57	1.126	.113	6.420	.000
Labor/Helpers	3.88	1.162	.132		
Petty Ventures	2.73	1.343	.263		
Employed	3.50	.577	.289		
Total	3.58	1.208	.084		

Source: Data collected through Interview Schedule

It is clear from the table 5 that, women engaged as labour/helpers (3.88) have reaped the benefit of training to the maximum extent as compared to women engaged in agriculture (3.57) and petty ventures (2.73) as far as role of training in their skill development is concerned. Further F-test, also supports the result as significance value of F has been found significant at 1 percent level of significance which shows that family occupation of the respondents significantly affect the impact of training on skill development as there is a significant differences in the responses has been observed.

Table 6: Demographic Profile-Wise Mean Satisfaction Regarding Skill Development Training of Self Help Group Members

On the basis of demographic profile, mean satisfaction is shown in table 6. Demographic profile is sub-categorised into age, district, marital status, educational qualification and family occupation.

**1 stands for "Reading/Writing Skills", 2 stands for "Communication Skills", 3 stands for "Confidence in Operating Bank Accounts", 4 stands for "Enhancement of Management Competencies and Capabilities" and 5 stands for "Knowledge of Development Programmes".

Demographic Variables		Statements					Overall Mean
		3	4	5			
1							
2							
Age	Less than 35 years	2.69	2.53	2.41	2.04	2.67	2.47
	36- 55 Years	2.64	2.46	2.43	2.37	2.69	2.52
	Above 55 Years	2.62	2.49	2.54	2.45	2.75	2.57
Overall Mean		2.65	2.49	2.46	2.29	2.70	
District	Chamba	2.69	2.53	2.51	2.40	2.74	2.57
	Kinnaur	2.60	2.32	2.53	2.40	2.47	2.46
Overall Mean		2.64	2.43	2.52	2.40	2.61	
Marital Status	Single	2.68	2.51	2.49	2.41	2.68	2.55
		2.70	2.53	2.51	2.39	2.78	2.58
		2.23	2.06	2.85	2.46	2.08	2.34
		2.74	2.54	2.52	2.22	2.81	2.57
Married							
Widow							
Divorcee							
Overall Mean		2.59	2.41	2.89	2.37	2.59	
Educational Qualification	Under Matriculation	2.43	2.00	2.50	2.50	2.64	2.41
	Higher Secondary	2.48	2.17	2.46	2.31	2.42	2.37
Graduate		2.78	2.66	2.53	2.44	2.79	2.64
Post Graduate		2.81	2.67	2.63	2.51	2.74	2.67
Overall Mean		2.63	2.38	2.53	2.44	2.65	

Source: Field Survey

Age wise mean satisfaction reveals that beneficiaries under the age group of less than 35 years are highly satisfied with the statement 'Knowledge on Development Programmes' whereas, beneficiaries of all age group are least satisfied with the same statement 'Enhancement of Management Competencies and Capabilities'. On the Whole, statement-wise satisfaction ranges between 2.75 for "Knowledge of Development Programmes" to 2.45 for "Enhancement of Management Competencies and Capabilities".

District-wise, highest mean satisfaction value among beneficiaries of Chamba and Kinnaur district is observed for the same statement Reading/

Writing Skills at 2.64 & Knowledge on Development Programmes at 2.61 respectively. But the lowest mean satisfaction value at 2.46 is computed for "Enhancement of Management Competencies and Capabilities" by beneficiaries of Kinnaur district.

Marital status-wise, maximum mean satisfaction among married & Divorcee beneficiaries is measured at 2.58 & 2.57 for the statement "Confidence in Operating Bank Accounts". On an average, married beneficiaries are more satisfied in contrast to widow beneficiaries with mean value of 2.58 & 2.34.

Educational Qualification-wise, mean score highlights that beneficiaries who are post graduates are having highest level of satisfaction for the statement "Knowledge on Development Programmes" and beneficiaries passed up to higher secondary have least mean score for the statement "Communication Skills".

Conclusion & Suggestions

Training and Development function plays a significant role in energizing and empowering group members by increasing their skills through innovative and productive programmes as a silent revolution is taking place in the remote and backward tribal areas of Pangi and Bharmour of Chamba district with womenfolk emerging as harbinger of change by strengthening their economy and improving their socio-economic status. Training programmes has proved its value, in all occupations, as a weapon against poverty and hunger. With access to microfinance, women can earn more, build up assets and protect themselves against setback and business losses. These programmes enable Women to have more exposure in social, economic, political, educational and technical aspects. The impact of training on assets reveals that training strengthens member's reading/writing skills, communication skills and their enhancement of management competencies and capabilities.

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