



ISSN (E): 2277- 7695
ISSN (P): 2349-8242
NAAS Rating: 5.23
TPI 2021; SP-10(7): 84-88
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www.thepharmajournal.com
Received: 13-05-2021
Accepted: 15-06-2021

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Understanding pattern of socio-economics of SHG members engaged in horticulture enterprises in Sonepur district of Odisha

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Abstract

The concept of Self-help group moves around to support resource poor farmers especially farm women indulging them in income generation activity. SHG is typically grouped with having common objectives, tasks, group identities and neighborhood. One of the common employment generation activity adopted by most of the SHGs are based on horticultural enterprises. To understand the social and economic characteristics of such SHGs, this study was taken up in the Sonepur district of Odisha. A sample of 120 SHG group members of the selected district were randomly selected for this study. Then collected data set has been analysis further to reveal level of selected socio-economic characters and it can be concluded that majority of SHG members practicing horticulture enterprises were from middle aged category, belonged to O.B.C. (other backward class), attended high school level of education, belongs from farming community, married and joint type of family consist of 5-7 family members. Again, majority of them were only member of SHG as their social participation, only upto 1 acre of land holding, katcha type of housing facility, had regular contact with horticulture extension officer.

Keywords: socio-economics, SHG, horticulture enterprises

Introduction

Based on the concept of “self-help”, small groups of women have formed into groups of ten to twenty and operate a saving-first business model whereby the members saving are used to fund loans. The results from these self-help groups (SHGs) are promising and have become a focus of intense examination as it is proving to be an effective method of poverty reduction. First official interest informal groups lending in India took shape during 1986-87 when National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) supported and funded an action research project on saving and Credit Management of Self-help Groups’ of Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA) (Khobarkar, et al, 2016) [3]. Self Help Groups are groups of women with identified common objectives, tasks, group identities and neighborhood. It is a system where all members work together to address problems and utilize opportunities through participatory action after co-operative decision making for the overall development of members (<http://www.vfpck.org>). The Self-Help Groups are voluntary association of people formed to attain a collective goal (Pal, 2015). The members of SHGs are common in respect to social background, heritage, caste or traditional occupation come together for a common cause to raise and manage resources for the benefit of the group members (Kumar, 2011) [4]. These Self-Help Group is a registered or unregistered group of micro entrepreneurs having homogeneous social and economic backgrounds; voluntarily coming together to save regular small sums of money, mutually agreeing to contribute to a common fund and meet their emergency needs on the basis of mutual help. (Jagtap and Goyal, 2012) [2]. The Self-Help Groups based on horticultural enterprises are one of the sound profitable activity engagement among other opportunities. The SHGs are characterized by a focused attention on providing employment opportunities by imparting training in order to generate both income as well as employment (Husain and Nair, 2006) [1]. A socioeconomic class is a group of people with similar characteristics. These characteristics can include social and economic standing, level of education, current profession, and ethnic background or heritage. Social economics is primarily concerned with the interplay between social processes and economic activity within a society. Study on social economics characteristics or variable helps to explain how a particular social group or socioeconomic class behaves within a society,

including their actions as consumers. Different socioeconomic variables may have different level of impact of the individual's behavior, perception, adoption and continuation of certain technology or enterprising (<https://www.investopedia.com>). The horticulture enterprises embrace the production, processing and shipping of and the market for fruits and vegetables. As such it is a sector of agribusiness and enterprising in agriculture. horticulture enterprise sometimes also includes the floriculture-based enterprise and production and trade of ornamental plants. With this back drop this study had undertake to understand the pattern of socio-economic characteristics of SHG members of horticulture enterprise of Sonepur district of Odisha.z3

Methodology

The study was conducted in the eight villages of Birmaharajpur and Ullunda block of Sonepur district of Odisha. Purposive and random samplings were followed in selecting the respondents. A total of 120 respondents (15 from each village) were selected randomly for the study. The socioeconomic variables used in the study are age, caste, education, occupation, marital status, family type, family size, social participation, land holding, house type and extension contact. The respondents were contacted in person to obtain the information. The timing for interview was scheduled as per the convenience of the respondent and the duration of each interview was on an average of 2 hours. The schedule was translated into local language (Odia) for easy understanding of the respondents. The information collected was dully recorded in the schedule for further analysis.

Results and Discussion

Human beings are not free agents without being influenced by personal, social and economic background. These conditions are also the limitations in achieving good results. The socio-economic conditions play an important role in accepting advanced technologies. Therefore, investigation was made to find out the socio-economic conditions under which the respondents were living and practicing different horticulture enterprises.

1: Age

Age of the respondent often determines the extent of involvement and use of modern technologies for the enterprises he/she is undertaking. Age distribution of the women SHG members undertaking the horticulture enterprises is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to age (N=120)

Sl. No.	Age group	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	up to 30 years	Young	52	43.3
2	30-50 years	Middle aged	56	46.6
3	>50 years	Old	12	10

It was observed from the table (1) that people from all age categories were involved in different horticulture enterprises. Among the age group, majority (46.6%) of respondents practicing horticulture enterprises belonged to 30 to 50 years followed by young age group (43.3%) and old age group (10%). The study therefore concluded that majority of the women SHG members belonged to middle age group engaged in different horticulture enterprises.

2: Caste

Our society is mostly caste structured which exerts considerable influence on adoption or rejection of technologies. In the present study, caste was another variable, more specifically, respondents were classified as general, other backward caste, scheduled tribe and scheduled caste categories. The results are given in table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to caste (N=120)

Sl. No.	Caste	Frequency	Percentage
1	S.T.	17	14.16
2	S.C.	28	23.33
3	O.B.C.	45	37.5
4	General	30	25

It was revealed from the table (2) that majority (37.5%) of respondents belonged to O.B.C. (other backward class) caste followed by general caste (25%). Only 23.33% of scheduled caste people were involved in horticulture enterprises. It was observed that 14.16% population belonged to other backward classes in the area under study. It might be concluded that the practice of horticulture enterprises was not restricted to any particular caste, it was accepted and practiced by all caste people in the community.

3: Education

Education is an important variable for the study. Education is believed to enhance the empowerment of women farmers. It is an important indicator of the socio economics status, which determines the degree of involvement in livelihood activities. Attempts made to assess the educational status of the respondents in the study area which was presented in table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to educational level (N = 120)

Sl. No.	Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	5	4.16
2	Primary school	40	33.33
3	High school	69	57.5
4	College and above	6	5

It was observed from the table (3) that 57.5 percent and 33.33 percent respondents received high school and primary education, respectively and 5 percent respondents had got the opportunity for higher education i.e. college level and above. However, 4.16 percent respondents were found illiterate. The data revealed that the majority of the respondents got good education.

4: Occupation

Occupation is an important indicator of the socio-economic status which determines the livelihood security status. The occupation of women SHG members was recorded and the results are given in Table. 4.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to occupation (N = 120)

Sl. No.	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Farming	89	74.16
2	Wage earner	31	25.83

From the table 4., it was observed that majority of respondents i.e. 74.16% belong to the farming community while 25.83% of respondents were wage earners. This may be

concluded that most of the respondents notified farming as their occupation.

5: Marital status

Women farmers’ marital status, either as married or unmarried was recorded here.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to marital status (N = 120)

Sl. No.	Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
1	Married	94	78.33
2	Unmarried	26	21.66

From the table it was observed that majority (78.33) of the respondents were married while 21.66% respondents were unmarried. It concluded majority of respondents were married.

6: Family

6.1: Family type

Each type of families has their respective advantages and disadvantages. However, type of family determines the progressiveness of the family in the society. It is the common phenomenon that joint families are more progressive and relatively resource rich. Moreover, the members of the joint family system are better involved in developmental activities for income generation. Distribution of the type of family of the respondents were analyzed and presented below-

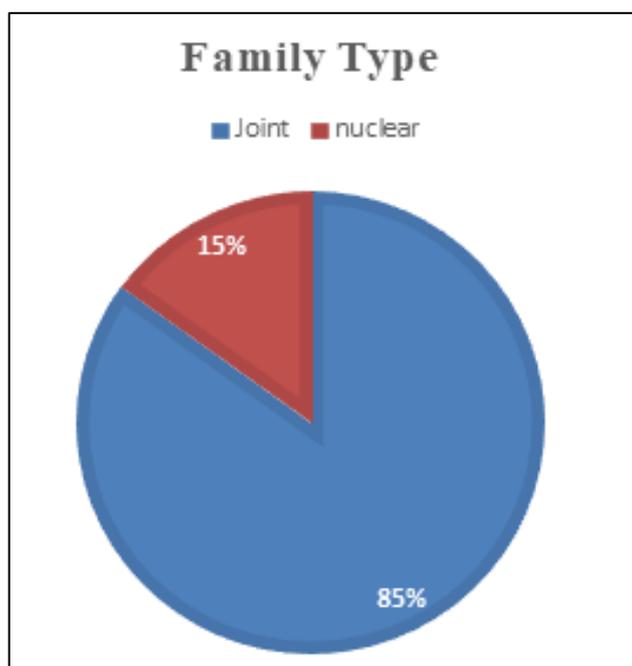


Fig 1: Distribution of respondents according to family type (N = 120)

It was observed from the table that out of the total 120 respondents most of the respondents belong to the joint family category i.e. 85% while the rest 15% respondents belong to the nuclear family category. The study revealed that the research study was mainly focused on the opinion and activities of the respondents of joint family category.

6.2: Family size

Family plays an important role as a supportive medium to acquire more knowledge and skill to be involved in various

activities. Information was collected on family size of the respondents which were analyzed and presented in fig 2.

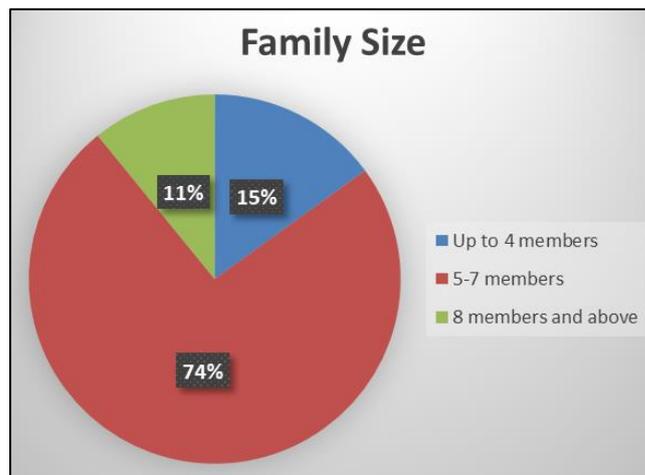


Fig 2: Distribution of respondents according to family size (N = 120)

From the fig 2, it was observed that majority of respondents i.e. 74 percent had a family size up to 5-7 members. Only 15% of respondents had a family size of up to 4 members. It may be concluded that women SHG members having more than 8 family members were practicing horticulture enterprises in a lesser extent.

7: Social participation

The extent of involvement in variety activities tells about the progressiveness and social position of a person in the society. A man with mass social contact is supposed to be exposed to up to date information being involved in many organization and program which in turn lead to motivation from the use of change practice. This provides an opportunity of exchanging ideas, facts, information and experiences. Further attempt was made to know the involvement of respondents in different organization existing in their situation. Responses obtained are presented in table 6.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to social participation (N = 120)

Sl. No.	Social participation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Member of a formal organization	2	1.66
2	Member of an informal organization other than SHG	4	3.32
3	No membership other than SHG	114	95

From the table 6, it was observed that majority of respondents i.e. 95% did not had any other membership in other informal groups other than SHGs. Only 3.32% of respondents were members of another informal group and only 1.66% of respondents were members of a formal organization. This concluded the respondents did not have any membership other than SHG.

8: Land holding of respondents

Land owned by a person is an important economic parameter to assess the economic standing of the individual in the rural society. It is also an important factor in relation to the adoption of innovative technologies. Land holding possessed by the women SHG members was measured in such a way that the category of the farmers (with respect to land size) was

recorded at nominal level. During the study, it is categorized in four types: (landless), (up to 1 acre), (1-2 Acre), (2-5 acre). The results are presented in the table. 7.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to Land holding (N = 120)

Sl. No.	Land holding	Frequency	Percentage
1	Landless	44	36.6
2	Up to 1 acre	61	50.8
3	1-2 acre	13	10.8
4	2-5 acre	2	1.66

The results revealed that maximum women SHG members were having land up to 1 acre i.e. 50.8%. Next to it 36.6 % of

respondents were landless. Very a smaller number of respondents i.e., 10.8% were having land size up to 1-2 acre and only 1.66% of respondents were having land up to 2-5 acre. Thus, it can be concluded that majority of respondents were found to possess up to 1.0 acre of their land holding.

9: House type

Housing comprises one of the basic human need and ranks next to food and clothing in importance. It is expected that better living condition helps in providing favourable attitude for undertaking any enterprise. Therefore, attempt was made to know about the house type of the women SHG members in the study area. The results were presented in table 9.

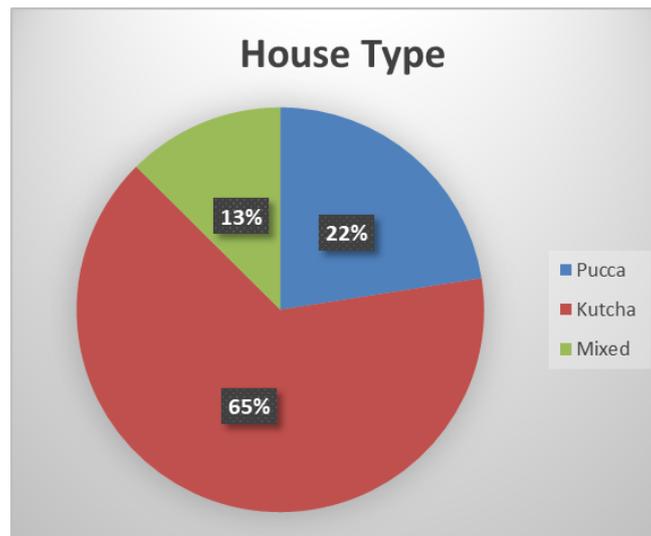


Fig 3: Distribution of respondents according to House type (N = 120)

It was found from the table 9., majority (65%) of the respondents were having kutcha houses followed by pucca houses (22.5%). 12.5 percent respondents were having mixed type houses. It can be concluded that, the respondents had good housing facilities.

10: Extension contact

There is a well-structured extension network for the development of horticulture enterprises in the state. There is

also regular transfer of technology to the farmers by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sonapur, and horticulture Extension Officers at block level. There is no doubt that an individual undertaking horticulture enterprise will get required information at any time, if he/she desires. As contact with extension agency accelerate flow of information and adoption of improved practices; therefore, an attempt was made in the study to assess the extent of change agent contact which were presented in table 8.

Table 8: Distribution of respondents according to Extension contact (N = 120)

	Extension contact	Frequency of contact						Mean Score	Rank
		Always		Sometimes		Never			
		f	%	f	%	f	%		
i	Horticulture extension officer	31	25.83	76	63.33	13	10.8	2.15	I
ii	Asst. director of horticulture	2	1.66	13	10.8	105	87.5	1.14	IV
iii	NGO personnel	5	4.17	22	18.33	93	77.50	1.27	III
iv	Bank personnel	9	7.50	40	33.3	71	59.16	1.53	II

As revealed from the table 8, majority of the SHG members were in contact with horticulture Extension Officer followed by bank personnel and NGO personnel and very few actually having contact with Asst. director of horticulture.

Conclusion

The analysis of different socio-economic characters, majority of SHG members practicing horticulture enterprises were from middle aged category, belonged to O.B.C. (other backward class), attended high school level of education,

belongs from farming community, married and joint type of family consist of 5-7 family members. Again, majority of them were only member of SHG as their social participation, only upto 1 acre of land holding, katcha type of housing facility, had regular contact with horticulture extension officer. These socio-economic characteristics were reflecting that SHG members were belongs from resource poor farm families with limited social mobility and extension contact.

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