

A Study on the Socio-Economic Status of the Fishery-Based Self-Help Groups in Jagatsinghpur, Odisha, India

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha State on the status and performance of women's Self-Help Groups in the fisheries sector. Two blocks i.e., Jagatsinghpur Sadar and Earsama, block were selected for the study. A survey and group discussions were conducted to interview 150 respondents from two Self Help Groups (SHGs) each. Despite the fact that majority of the women being illiterate, participation in Self Help Groups had a significant impact on their empowerment (30.85%). The effectiveness of each SHG's Group Dynamics was measured using a 12-sub-dimension index called the Group Dynamics Effectiveness Index (GDEI), which included participation, influence and styles of influence, decision-making procedures, task functions, maintenance functions, group atmosphere, membership, feelings, norms, empathy, interpersonal trust, and SHG accomplishments. Therefore, it has been determined that the women's SHGs in the study area have a greater influence and benefit their members socially and economically which indicates that the fisherwomen SHGs are doing well in exploring and repaying microloans.

Keywords: Self-Help Groups, Women Empowerment, Fisheries, Performance

Introduction

The State has a 480-kilometer coast line and abundant water resources in the form of 1.16 lakh hectares of ponds/ tanks, 2.56 lakh hectares of reservoirs, 1.80 lakh hectares of lakes, swamps, and jheels, and 1.55 lakh hectares of rivers and canals, all of which can be used for fisheries development through SHGs (Department of Fisheries, Odisha) (World Fish, 2019). In the fisheries sector of India's maritime

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States, the Self Help Groups (SHG's) run by fishermen play an important role (Arora et al., 2017). A widespread method of empowering women and lifting them out of poverty has been organizing women into Self-Help Groups across India. SHGs have been important in the empowerment of disadvantaged rural women and are increasingly considered as a tool of alleviating poverty. The State of Chhattisgarh is also playing a vital role by producing self-employment in rural areas through fishery women SHGs, which gives income and improves their living (Ahmed et al., 2012). The Government's Mission Shakti program has helped more than 600,000 women in Odisha's coastal State since 2001. Odisha's community aquaculture effort makes use of the state's estimated 60,000 community tanks, 80.0 percent of which are in disrepair or aren't being used. While the initiative's major goal is to boost rural earnings by raising fish such as the carp-like rohu, the aquaculture programme also intends to enhance household nutrition by increasing access to nutritious tiny fish such as mola. Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, the Department of Fisheries, Govt. of India to implement the initiative. World Fish, a global research organisation, offers technical assistance in the form of training and capacity building. Along with Government's assistance, members of Self Help Groups utilized credit and project loans. The subsidy for pisciculture contributed substantially to the development of the family. Fish culture empowers women SHG members in several ways: it increases employment, income, purchasing power, lifestyles, food security, and the sustainability of fish culture. In order to maximize profit from catches or produce, it is necessary to support basic infrastructures, financial support, and institutional arrangements for fishing, marketing, and caring policies for the fishing community. Each SHG had at least one pond. Women's empowerment and the development of small scale fisheries have been linked under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana, which focuses on small-scale fisheries (Jayasankar, 2018).

According to reports, SHGs in Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha have aided in the reduction of poverty in rural regions and the improvement of impoverished people's living standards. The current study underlined that women empowerment through fisheries SHG is only attainable through conscious planned effort carried out in a systematic manner, and there have been very few studies done so far in the study region connected to women SHG in fisheries (Odisha Fisheries Policy, 2015).

Methodology

The study focused on two blocks in Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha, India: Earsam and Jagatsinghpur, Sadar. A total of 10 women SHGs in fisheries from each block were chosen at random for the survey. A total of 20 people were surveyed at random utilizing a semi structured questionnaire and a focus group discussion. The members' achievement motivation and innovativeness were measured using a three-point continuum scale created by Harackiewicz et al., 1997, on a Likert scale of 3 (agree), 2 (neither agree nor disagree), and 1 (strongly disagree). The overall score for a person was calculated by adding the scores for each statement. The performance of the selected fishery SHGs was assessed using a NABARD-recommended check list. The constraints analysis was done using Garrett's ranking technique (Garrett and Woodworth, 1969).

Percentage position = $100 (\text{Rij}-0.5)/\text{Nj}$

Where, Rij = Rank given by ith item to jth individual Nj = Number of items ranked by jth individual

Results and Discussion

Fishery-based SHGs' Socio-Personal Profile

The socio-personal details of the respondents are given in Table 1. It was found that 67.0 percent of the members of Fishery based SHGs belonged to young age category (up to 34 years); whereas 33.0 percent were in middle age (up to 34 years) category in Jagatsinghpur Sadaar and 60.0 percent of members of the Fishery based SHGs belonged to young age category (up to 34 years) whereas 40.0 percent were in middle age (up to 34 years) category in Earsama. Majority (93.0 and 80.0) of the respondent members were found to be literate (high school) 93.0 % and 80.0 % in Jagatsinghpur Sadaar and Earsama respectively. 6.6 percent and 20.0 percent of the respondents were middle school literate.

Majority of the respondents (80.0 % each block) were engaged in fishery as their primary occupation; wherein they are also doing agriculture (13.0% and 7.0% in Jagatsinghpur Sadaar and Earsama respectively) as secondary occupation. remain worked as tailors and as housewife. It is well established that income affects the living standard of people and therefore it was observed that 47.0% and 67.0% of the respondents from low income group in the two places respectively which may be due to small land holding. 53.0 and 33.0 percent of the respondents in Jagatsinghpur Sadaar and Earsama made an earning of Rs. 10,000 to 50,000 per month but none were in higher income group. 87.0 & 93.0 percent of the respondents from Jagatsinghpur Sadaar and Earsama participate regularly in various extension work conducted by the Government department.

It is worth mentioning here that with such involvement, their exposure to mass media also increased as 54.0 & 73.0 percent of the SHG members from Jagatsinghpur Sadaar and Earsama were in high category mass media exposure. Majority of the respondents had very low level of achievement motivation and innovativeness, which might be due to illiteracy and inadequate awareness among the members.

Table 1. Socio-personal profile of fishery based SHGs (N= 150)

Variable		Jagatsinghpur Sadaar (n=150)	Mean	SD	CV (%)	Earsama (n=150)	Mean	SD	CV (%)
Age									
	Young (up to 34 years)	100 (67.0%)	50	50	100	90 (60.0%)	50	45.83	91.65
	Middle (35-45 years)	50 (33.0 %)				60 (40.0%)			
	Old (> 45 years)	0 (0)				0 (0)			
Education									
	Illiterate	0 (0)	50	78.11	156.2	0 (0)	50	62.45	124.9
	Primary School	10 (7.0 %)				120 (80.0 %)			
	High School	140 (93.0 %)				30 (20.0 %)			
Occupation (Primary)									
	Agriculture	20 (13.0 %)	50	60.83	121.65	10 (7.0 %)	50	60.83	121.66
	Fisheries	120 (80.0 %)				120 (80.0 %)			
	Others	10 (7.0 %)				20 (13.0 %)			

Income									
	Low (10,000)	70 (47.0 %)	50	43.59	87.18	100 (67.0 %)	50	50	100
	Medium (10,000-50,000)	80 (53.0 %)				50 (33.0 %)			
	High(>50,000)	0 (0)				0 (0)			
Extension Participation									
	Regularly	130 (87.0 %)	50	70	140	140 (93.0 %)	50	78.1	156.2
	Occasionally	20 (13.0 %)				10 (7.0 %)			
	Never	0(0)				0(0)			
Mass Media Exposure									
	High	81 (54.0 %)	50	31	62	110 (73.0 %)	50	52.92	105.83
	Medium	50 (33.0 %)				30 (20.0 %)			
	Low	19 (13 %)				10 (7 %)			
Achievement motivation									
	High	0 (0)	50	78.1	156.2	0 (0)	50	70	140
	Medium	10 (7.0 %)				20 (13.0 %)			
	Low	140 (93.0 %)				130 (87.0 %)			
Innovativeness									
	High	10 (7.0 %)	50	60.83	121.7	20 (13.0 %)	50	43.59	87.18
	Medium	20 (13.0%)				30 (20.0 %)			
	Low	120 (80.0 %)				100 (67.0 %)			

Performance Evaluation of Fishery Based SHGs

The performance of the SHGs examined is presented in Table 2. 35.0 percent of the SHGs group women's were found to have very good performance. 55.0 percent of them had good performance and the remaining 10.0 percent had unsatisfactory performance that can be improved with appropriate awareness and exposure. Therefore, it can be inferred from these results that the overall SHGs performance of the fishery in the study area was found to be good. Das (2016) while assessing the impact of the participation of women in Self-Help Groups based on microfinance, reported a positive impact on the increase in income. Mishra et al., 2016 reported that when evaluating the impact of women's Self-Help Groups based microfinance; the researchers found that it had a favorable influence on income, assets, savings, and literacy, as well as a reduction in rural household migration in India (Srinivas et al., 2019).

Table 2: Performance of SHGs

Performance of SHGs	No.	%
Very good	15	35.0
Good	11	55.0
Unsatisfactory	04	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Constraints Faced by the SHGs

SHGs based on fisheries are subject to a variety of constraints, which can differ depending on the type of fish farming methods and practices. The results presented in Table-3 indicates that political biasness in the area was the greatest constraint faced by the respondents (34.86%), followed by lack of adequate capital (20.12%) as their sources of funds are their own contributions or middlemen. Lack of information among members has also been a limitation, as more than half of them were unaware of the various Governments initiatives related to fishing and the benefits of the State Government's SHG-Bank linkage programme. 11.02 percent of the respondents considered non-cooperation among group members and the consequent conflict in management to be a significant limitation. Non-participation by members during meetings and association gatherings had been identified as a factor that hinders SHG's operation because they are unable to voice their concerns

Table 3: Constraints faced by fishery based SHGs (N=15)

Constraints	(%)	Rank
Political biasness	34.86	I
Inadequate capital	20.12	II
Lack of awareness	10.12	III
Conflict during decision making	11.02	IV
Non participation	10.0	V

Conclusion

The SHG concept has now become one of the most effective microfinance programmes for rural women, allowing them to gain without having to spend a lot of time or money. State Governments have also introduced programmes to promote and encourage the formation of SHGs in order to increase their income levels by making loans available to start small businesses. The current findings suggest that SHGs in fisheries aided in the empowerment of women in the research region, with overall positive results. As a result, increased knowledge and support from the State Government will further assist them in developing larger elements of activities that are productive. Furthermore, regular supervision by extension personnel and well-organized training on various elements of fisheries might improve performance.

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