

Assessment of Training Needs of Members of Tribal Women SHGs for Agriculture Development

N.M. Chauhan¹ and S.M. Kshirsagar²

1. Programme Coordinator, KVK, RRRS, Vyara, NAU, Gujarat, 2. Vice-President, Global Research and Education Foundation, Nashik-422 001, (Maharashtra)

Corresponding author e-mail: nikulsinh_m@yahoo.in

ABSTRACT

The study of 100 members of the Tribal Women SHGs from Sinnar taluka of Nashik district revealed that the members in general are not conscious in full of the SHG concepts and latest crop production and marketing technology. The study further revealed that 81 per cent of the respondents suggested providing information on SHG concepts and linkage programme. Seventy-nine per cent suggested arranging village level training programmes on crop production technology of soybean crop, which is now widely accepted short duration high yielding oilseeds crop followed by onion, garlic and tomato cultivation technology by organic farming methods. Marketing of produce attained the top most priority in assessing training needs (76 per cent), followed by plant protection (66 per cent) and manures and fertilizers (61 per cent). Vermicompost, its preparation and application methods accorded highest response (87 per cent) from the members followed by ITKs (81 per cent) being used in organic farming. Poultry farming ranked first (78 per cent) followed by agro-processing units (71 per cent) in the assessment of training needs. Communication skills ranked first (84 per cent) followed by access to infrastructural facilities like transport, water supply, school, marketing etc (81 per cent). Almost more than two third respondents indicated the training needs on the subjects like, conflict management, self confidence and self worth, participation in local affairs and meetings and community health and sanitation etc.

Key words: Tribal Women; SHGs; Crop production; Marketing technology; Cultivation technology; Organic farming;

Following the success of Grameen Bank experiment in Bangla Desh, the strategy of forming Self Help Groups (SHGs) and extending micro-credit through them has been successfully adopted in India. SHG Bank Linkage Programme launched by NABARD in 1991-92, as an experiment in providing hassle free institutional credit to rural poor has achieved phenomenal success over last 15 years and is now acclaimed as largest micro credit programme in the world. The programme received further boost during 2003-04 in the country and Maharashtra is no exception to this. Maharashtra is the first state of the country to expand the Central Sector Scheme on "Women in Agriculture", which started on a pilot basis in Thane District to "One Taluka in each District". This scheme is being implemented by Mahila Arthik Vikas Mandal (MAVIM) and NGOs. The Department of Agriculture of Maharashtra State has been implementing the centrally sponsored scheme of Women in Agriculture through this innovative approach of SHGs, with the help of NGO in Sinnar Taluka of

Nashik District since 2003-04. The main objective of the scheme is to enhance women's participation in agriculture in a very effective manner through technology transfer. Hence, village level training to the members of the women SHGs has been the major component of the scheme. Therefore, to impart the training in a very effective manner the identification of training needs of the tribal women SHG members has been of prime importance. Thus the present study was focused to identify training needs of the members of tribal women SHGs in the field of agriculture and to examine the relationship between training needs and personal, psychological and socio-economic characteristics of the members of women SHGs.

METHODOLOGY

Since this study was confined to the operational area of the centrally sponsored scheme viz "Women in Agriculture", the Sinnar Taluka of Nashik District has been purposively selected for the same. A survey design

involving observations at single time has been used for conducting this investigation. Thus Ex-post-facto research design was used for the study, since the researcher has no control over the independent variables. In view of the objectives of the study the Researcher has relied mainly on primary data collected from the randomly selected 100 members of the 50 Tribal Women SHGs through specially prepared interview schedule. The respondents were contacted personally. Data collected were tabulated and analyzed by using various statistical tools. The statistical methods used were correlation coefficient and multiple regression coefficients.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Assessment of Training Needs: For sustainable development of the group and individuals, the members should receive the training in almost all the fields like SHG orientation, agricultural activities, allied activities to agriculture, cottage industries, small business and services, access to infrastructural facilities, Human Resource Management and social development. In view of this and in order to priorities the training needs in these fields the responses of the members were collected in a specially designed interview schedules. The data has been compiled and analyzed and presented as follows:

Table 1. Assessment of Training Needs in SHG Orientation (N=100)

Training Needs	Very Much Needed (3)		Some What Needed (2)		Least Needed (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Concept of SHG	76	76.00	21	21.00	03	03.00
Role and responsibilities of Members, Group Leaders	77	77.00	17	17.00	06	06.00
Conduct Group Meetings	78	78.00	18	18.00	04	04.00
Banking Operations	73	73.00	24	24.00	03	03.00
Internal Lending Rules and Roles	77	77.00	21	21.00	02	02.00
SHG-Bank Linkage	79	79.00	18	18.00	03	03.00
Record Keeping	81	81.00	16	16.00	03	03.00

Training Needs in SHG Orientation: It can be revealed from the Table 1, that almost more three fourth members prioritized their training needs in all the aspects of SHG orientation. Record keeping was most important training need since 81 per cent of the members opined it very much needed followed by training on SHG-Bank linkage programme (79 per cent). The members also desired to have training on conduct of group meetings, internal lending and role and responsibilities of the group leaders for successful running of SHGs.

Training Needs in Crop Production: It can be seen from the Table 2 that, the production techniques of food

grains crops by and large stabilized in the area and hence the respondents have not indicated any urgent training need on these crops. However, more than three fourth (79 per cent) respondent have shown interest in knowing the production technology of soybean crop, which is now widely accepted short duration high yielding oilseeds crop. Similarly the Sinnar Taluka being pioneer in Onion and Garlic production the members have indicated the training needs for these crops by 83 and 63 per cent respectively. Tomato also seems to be very important cash crop, since 76 per cent of respondents wanted to know the latest production techniques of the same.

Table 2. Training Needs on Crop Production Technology (N = 100)

Training Needs	Very Much Needed (3)		Some What Needed (2)		Least Needed (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Crop Production Technology						
Bajra	51	51.00	21	21.00	28	28.00
Jowar	33	33.00	13	13.00	54	54.00
Paddy	19	19.00	18	18.00	63	63.00
Groundnut	39	39.00	36	36.00	25	25.00
Soybean	79	89.00	11	11.00	10	10.00
Wheat	53	53.00	38	38.00	09	09.00
Gram	36	36.00	17	17.00	47	47.00
Onion	83	83.00	17	17.00	00	00.00
Garlic	63	63.00	33	33.00	04	04.00
Tomato	76	76.00	24	24.00	00	00.00

Extent of Training Needs in the Subject Matter Areas: The Table 3 shows that that marketing of produce attained the top most priority in assessing training needs (76 per cent), followed by plant protection (66 per cent) and Manures and fertilizers (61 per cent).

Table 3. Extent of Training Needs in the important Subject Matter Areas of Crop Production (N = 100)

Training Needs	Very Much Needed (3)		Some What Needed (2)		Least Needed (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Crop Production Tech.						
Land Preparation	31	31.00	44	44.00	25	25.00
Improved Varieties	56	56.00	41	41.00	03	03.00
Seeds and sowing	37	37.00	41	41.00	22	22.00
Manures & Fertilizers	61	61.00	32	32.00	07	07.00
Plant Protection	66	66.00	28	28.00	06	06.00
Irrigation	36	30.00	44	44.00	16	16.00
Use of Farm Implements & Machinery	60	60.00	33.	33.00	07	07.00
Harvesting of produce	56	56.00	43	43.00	01	01.00
Marketing	76	76.00	21	21.00	03	03.00

Assessment of training needs on organic farming and its certification:

Table 4. Assessment of Training Needs on Organic Farming and Its Certification (N = 100)

Training Needs	Very Much Needed (3)		Some What Needed (2)		Least Needed (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Crop Production Technology						
Concepts of Organic Farming	67	67.00	21	21.00	12	12.00
Organic farming systems	76	76.00	23	23.00	01	01.00
Indian local knowledge used in organic farming	81	81.00	19	19.00	00	00.00
Vermicompost	87	87.00	13	13.00	00	00.00
Biological control of pests	74	74.00	21	21.00	05	05.00
Certification process of organic farming system	76	76.00	13	13.00	11	11.00
Marketing of organic products	78	78.00	18	18.00	04	04.00

It can be observed from the Table 4 that, the Vermicompost, its preparation and application methods accorded highest response (87 per cent) from the members followed by ITKs (Indigenous Technical Knowledge, 81 per cent) being used in organic

farming. This might only to reduce the ever increasing cost of production of different crops. By and large Training Needs in Organic farming methods and Its Certification was seen the top most priority amongst the members.

Assessment of training needs in allied activities to agriculture and agro based enterprises:

Table 5. Assessment of Training Needs in Allied Activities to Agriculture and Agro-based Enterprises (N = 100)

Training Needs	Very Much Needed (3)		Some What Needed (2)		Least Needed (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Crop Production Tech.						
Animal Husbandry and Dairy	62	62.00	29	29.00	09	09.00
Poultry Farming	78	78.00	19	19.00	03	03.00
Sheep and Goat Rearing	56	56.00	32	32.00	12.	12.00
Agro-processing Units	71	71.00	26	26.00	03	03.00
Agro-based small business and Services	55	55.00	36	36.00	09	09.00
Kitchen Yard Gardening	61	61.00	33	33.00	06	06.00

It can be revealed from the Table 5 that the Poultry farming ranked first (78 per cent) followed by Agro-processing units (71 per cent) in the assessment of training needs. In Sinnar taluka establishment of broiler

poultry farms with the help of leading poultry industrial units like C & M. and Venkateshwara Hatcheries got very good momentum. Therefore, majority of the respondents have given priority in training needs in

poultry. Similarly the training on agro-processing like cashew processing, masala making, papad and chatani making also accorded priority in the assessment in training needs. The respondents also desired to have training on priority in the field of Dairy and Kitchen yard gardening.

Assessment of Training Needs in Human Resource Development and Conflict Management in Social Participation: It could be observed from the Table 6

that the respondents felt the Training Needs on HRD and Managerial aspects too. Communication skills ranked first (84 per cent) followed by access to infrastructural facilities like transport, water supply, school, marketing etc (81 per cent). Almost more than two third respondents indicated the Training Needs on the subjects like, Conflict Management, Self confidence and Self Worth, Participation in Local Affairs and Meetings and Community Health and Sanitation.

Table 6. Assessment of Training Needs in Human Resource Development and Managerial Aspects (N = 100)

Training Needs	Very Much Needed (3)		Some What Needed (2)		Least Needed (1)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Communication Skills	84	84.00	16	16.00	00	00.00
Participation in local affairs and meetings	67	67.00	24	24.00	09	09.00
Resolving conflicts	79	79.00	19	19.00	02	02.00
Access to Infrastructural facilities	81	81.00	17	17.00	02	02.00
Community health and sanitation	78	78.00	18	18.00	04	04.00
Recognizing self worth	68	68.00	21	21.00	11	11.00

Relationship of selected independent variables with training needs: To ascertain the relationship between Training Needs of the respondents and their selected socio-economic characteristics, the correlation co-efficient test was applied. The correlation co-efficient between Training Needs and various independent variables are presented in the following Table 7.

Table 7. Relationship between respondent's Training Needs and selected independent variables

Independent Variables	Correlation Co-efficient (r)
Age	0.607 **
Education	-0.458 NS
Size of Family	0.410 **
Type of Family	0.088 NS
Land Holding	0.322 **
Caste	0.210 **
Social Participation	-0.083 NS
Annual Income	0.164 NS

** Significance at 0.01 level of probability NS: Non Significant

The results in Table 1 indicated that dependent variable "Training Need" exhibited non significant correlation with the independent variables namely education, type of family, social participation and annual income. However the dependent variable training need had significant correlation with age, size of family and caste, at 0.01 level of probability

Multiple Linear Regressions of Training Needs with the selected Independent Variables:

It could be seen from above Table 8 that out of

eight independent variables, only age, and land holding contributed significantly towards the variation in the Training Needs of the respondents. The extent of variation was 47.12 per cent as the co-efficient of Determination being 0.4712. The unexplained variation to the extent of 52.88 per cent may be attributed to the variables not included in the study. Thus, the Training Needs of the respondents about the various aspects of SHG functioning, farm and non-farm activities, Human Resource Development etc, were determined by the selected socio-economic characteristics. Among them, age and land holding were more prominent to decide requirement of the training needs of the respondents.

Table 8. The multiple linear regression of Training Needs with the selected independent variables.

S.N.	Independent Variables	Regression Co-efficient (b)	't' value of 'b'
1	Age	0.2196	5.09 **
2	Education	-0.2802	-1.37 NS
3	Size of Family	0.1063	0.45 NS
4	Type of Family	0.1000	0.21 NS
5	Land Holding	0.5066	2.19 *
6	Caste	0.5959	1.87 NS
7	Social Participation	-0.1253	-0.56 NS
8	Annual Income	0.0000	0.76 NS

$R_2 = 0.5288$ Multiple Correlation = 0.6866 * Significance at 0.05 level of probability

** Significance at 0.01 level of probability NS: Non-significant

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded from the study that almost more three fourth members prioritized their training needs in all the aspects of SHG orientation. Record keeping was most important training need since 81 per cent of the members opined it very much needed followed by training on SHG-Bank linkage programme (79 per cent). It can be seen from the Table 2 that, the production techniques of food grains crops by and large stabilized in the area and hence the respondents have not indicated any urgent training need on these crops. However, more than three fourth (79 per cent) respondent have shown interest in knowing the production technology of soybean crop, which is now widely accepted short duration high yielding oilseeds crop. Similarly the Sinnar Taluka being pioneer in Onion and Garlic production the members have indicated the training needs for these crops by 83 and 63 per cent respectively. Tomato also seems to be very important cash crop, since 76 per cent of respondents wanted to know the latest production techniques of the same.

The members also desired to have training on conduct of group meetings, internal lending and role and responsibilities of the group leaders for successful running of SHGs (Table-3). It can be observed from the Table 4 that, the Vermi-compost, its preparation and application methods accorded highest response (87 per cent) from the members followed by ITKs (Indigenous Technical Knowledge, 81 per cent) being used in organic farming. This might only to reduce the ever increasing cost of production of different crops. By and large Training Needs in Organic farming methods and Its Certification was seen the top most priority amongst the members. It can be revealed from the Table 5 that the Poultry farming ranked first (78 per cent) followed by Agro-processing units (71 per cent) in the assessment of training needs. In Sinnar taluka establishment of broiler poultry farms with the help of leading poultry industrial units like C & M. and Venkateshwara Hatcheries got very good momentum. Therefore, majority of the respondents have given priority in training needs in poultry. Similarly the training on agro-processing like cashew processing, masala making, papad and chatani making also accorded priority in the assessment in training needs. The respondents also desired to have training on priority in the field of Dairy and Kitchen yard gardening. The results in Table 7 indicated that dependent variable "Training Need" exhibited non

significant correlation with the independent variables namely education, type of family, social participation and annual income. However the dependent variable training need had significant correlation with age, size of family and caste, at 0.01 level of probability. It could be seen from above Table 8 that out of eight independent variables, only age, and land holding contributed significantly towards the variation in the Training Needs of the respondents. The extent of variation was 47.12 per cent as the co-efficient of Determination being 0.4712. The unexplained variation to the extent of 52.88 per cent may be attributed to the variables not included in the study. Thus, the Training Needs of the respondents about the various aspects of SHG functioning, farm and non-farm activities, Human Resource Development etc, were determined by the selected socio-economic characteristics. Among them, age and land holding were more prominent to decide requirement of the training needs of the respondents. In short, tribal farm women engaged with SHGs are needed trainings in each and every aspect of agriculture and Animal husbandry along with organic farming as a whole.

Suggestions/ Implications:

On the basis of findings and general observations emerged from the analysis of data, the following suggestions can be made in formulation of Training Curriculum for members of women Self Help Groups in agriculture.

SHG Orientation : SHG concept, Need of mutual help and working together with people's participation, Role and responsibilities of members and group leaders, Conduct of Group Meetings, Banking Operations and Nature of Transactions, Internal Lending : Rules and Roles, SHG-Bank Credit linkage, procedures and principles and Record Keeping.

Crop Production: Soybean cultivation practices, Onion production techniques, Garlic production and Tomato production and marketing.

Subject Matter Areas: Organic Farming methods, Vermi-compost, it's preparation and application, Biological control of pests and diseases for Crop Protection, ITKs in Organic Farming, Certification procedures and Marketing of an organic produce.

Non-farm Activities: Poultry keeping, Animal Husbandry and Dairy, Sheep and Goat Keeping, Agro-processing, Agro-based Enterprises and Services and Kitchen Yard Gardening.

Human Resource Development and Managerial Skills: Communication Skills, Leadership Skills, Participation in Local Affairs and Meetings, Recognizing Self Worth, Resolving Conflicts, Access to the Infrastructural Facilities and Community Health and Sanitation.

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