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Research Journal of Agricultural Sciences
An International Journal

P- ISSN: 0976-1675

E- ISSN: 2249-4538

Volume: 12

Issue: 05

Res Jr of Agril Sci (2021) 12: 1630–1631



CARAS

Empowerment of Farmers and Self-help Group through Income Generating Activities in Kohima District, Nagaland

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Received: 18 Jun 2021 | Revised accepted: 24 Aug 2021 | Published online: 21 Sep 2021
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Key words: Empowerment, Self-help group, Income generating activities, Economic independence

Empowerment is the degree of autonomy and self – determination in people and in communities. This enables them to represent their interest and responsible and self-determined, acting on their own authority. Empowerment as a concept, which characterized by a move away from a deficit- oriented towards a more strength-oriented perception, can increasingly be found in management concepts as well as in areas of continuing education and self-help. Empowerment also implies control over resources and autonomy in decision making, at the individual level [1]. It refers to enhancing individual capabilities and at the collective level, it stands for the ability to organize and mobilize to take action and to solve their problems [2].

Economic empowerment involves the ability of farmers to engage in income generating activities which will give them an independent income. Income generating activity is an important tool for empowerment of farmers. The Self – Help Group provided an appropriate platform for initiating and sustaining income generating activities for farmers. The state Nagaland is an agrarian state with agriculture and animal husbandry as their livelihood venture and about 70 percent of the population directly or indirectly depends on agriculture [3]. Different development agencies have been promoting different income generating activities for economic upliftment of farmers. Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Farm Science Centre) along with Agriculture and allied departments are taking initiative for economic upliftment of the farm families. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to study the extent of involvement and empowerment of farmers and SHG through income generating activities.

The present investigation was carried out in Tseminyu Sub-Division of Kohima district in Nagaland. The respondents were identified and selected from several villages under Chunlikha block. Proportionate random sampling technique was applied to select a sample size of

120 respondents from farmers and Self-Help Group. The data were collected using well-structured interview schedule, questionnaire, group discussion, personal interview. The data were tabulated and suitable statistical analysis like frequency, percentage analysis and rank correlation were done to interpret the result.

Extend of involvement in different income generating activities

The results of the present study as well as relevant discussions are presented according. The extents of involvement in different income generating activities are given in (Table 1). Nine activities for income generating activities were identified and they are analyzed in frequency and percentage wise and ranked accordingly. The data further revealed that majority of the respondents (72.5%) were actively involved in ‘backyard poultry farming’ and secured as Rank I. ‘Vegetable cultivation’ (60.00%) secured Rank II as income generating activities. ‘Orchard’ (54.16%) secured rank III as income generating activities, ‘backyard piggery farming’ (41.66%) secured rank IV as income generating activities. ‘Rabbit farming’ (40.00%) secured rank V as income generating activities. ‘Guinea pigs farming’ (35.00%) secured rank VI as income generating activities. ‘Mushroom cultivation’ (20.83%) secured rank VIII as income generating activities. ‘Bee keeping (20.00%) and Fisheries (15.00%) secured rank VIII and Rank IX respectively as income generating activities [4-5].

Extend of economic empowerment

The data from (Table 2) revealed that the extent of economic empowerment of respondents were assessed by using seven economic parameters like ‘self-confidence’ (77.50 %) was Rank as the first which is highly essential for any development or empowerment. ‘Decision on expenditure’ (70.00%) secured Rank II. ‘Living standard’ (60.00%) secured Rank III. ‘Decision making in financial aspect’ (50.83 %) secured Rank IV. ‘Helping in family finance’ (45.00%) secured Rank V. ‘Food habit’ (42.50%) secured Rank VI as their altitude changed from food quantity to its quality. ‘Saving money’ (37.50%) secured Rank VII as their income increases after adopting agri-allied

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enterprises of income generating activities, the habit of saving the surplus money were initiated [6-7].

Table 1 Extent of involvement in different income generating activities (N=120)

Activity	Extent of involvement		
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Backyard poultry farming	87	72.50	I
Vegetable cultivation	72	60.00	II
Orchard	65	54.00	III
Backyard piggery farming	50	41.00	IV
Rabbit farming	48	40.00	V
Guinea pigs farming	42	35.00	VI
Mushroom cultivation	25	20.83	VII
Bee keeping	24	20.00	VIII
Fisheries	18	15.00	IX

Table 2 Extent of economic empowerment (N =120)

Parameters	Extent of involvement		
	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Self confidence	93	77.50	I
Decision on expenditure	90	75.00	II
Living standard	72	60.00	III
Decision making in financial aspect	61	50.89	IV
Helping in family finance	54	45.00	V
Food habit	51	42.50	VI
Saving money	45	37.50	VII

SUMMARY

Empowerment is a process in which the person gains greater share of control over resources and control over decision making in the home, community, society and nation. Self-help group are informal association of people who chose to come together to find ways to improve their living conditions. Economic independence is one of the means to empower the farmers particularly self-help group. This study was conducted in Chunlikha block of SHG under Kohima district of Nagaland. The study revealed that, among various income generating activities the extend of involvement of SHGs in backyard poultry farming (Rank I), Vegetable cultivation (Rank II), orchard (Rank III), backyard piggery farming (Rank IV), backyard Rabbit farming (Rank V), Backyard Guinea pigs (Rank VI),

mushroom cultivation (Rank VII), bee keeping farming (Rank VIII) and fisheries (Rank IX). The economic parameters like self-confidence, decision on expenditure, living standard, decision making in financial aspects, helping in family finance, food habit and saving are the positive outcomes and were rank according in ascending order. The development department of Agri and allied, funding agencies and financial institute needs to intervene, participate and assist more for economic independence. But there were some areas of concern where progress was limited. Therefore, there is a need to thrust these factors with suitable changes in training and empowerment curriculum to fill the gaps by designing suitable empowerment programmes. Thus, the farmers need to be strengthened more to achieve social, economic and technologies empowerment.

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