

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN THROUGH DAIRY FARMING: A CASE STUDY OF SIDHESWARI WOMEN'S MILK PRODUCERS UNION IN ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

Dairy development is considered as a potential scheme for rural poverty elevation in India. The focus of women dairy development projects are socio economic development of the poor rural women. The Women dairy cooperatives in Odisha are becoming the driving force behind the economic empowerment of rural women in Odisha. The present study was conducted among the selected women dairy farmers affiliated to Sidheswari Women Milk Union co-operative society of Puri district in Odisha. There is a significant change in the economic condition of the women after taking of dairy farming and joining the women dairy cooperative society. However some major constraints faced by the women farmers are sickness of dairy animals, irregular dividend payments, lack of improved breed cows, lack of full time employment opportunity in dairy and less profitability due to high price of cattle feed. Employment at home, flexible timing, contribution to family income, enhancement of social status, govt initiatives, and easy marketing are some of the factors which motivated the women farmers to take up dairy farming.

KEY WORDS: Dairy farming, economic empowerment, AI services & cattle feed.

INTRODUCTION:

Empowering women and girl is not only the right thing to do, it is also smart economics and vital to ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity – The World Bank. Movement towards empowerment of women and gender equality has become a part of developmental goals all over the world. The millennium developmental goals (UN Summit, 2000) have tried to campaign for women's rights in areas such as education, health, income, wealth, to eradicate poverty at household level. In India the potential of women are not achieved as they suffer deprivations due to social structure which keep them away from the mainstream (Krishnaswami, 1976; Parthasarathy, 2007; Srivastava, 2007).

United Nation in the year (2001) defined empowerment as the process by which women take control and ownership of their lives through expansion of their choices. The key to long term poverty alleviation in developing countries is empowerment, in the broadest sense of increasing self reliance of the poor, especially poor women (DAWSON 1998). Various research findings indicate that women are the disadvantaged gender in both rural & urban areas of the country (Dubeetal 1986 Chen 1993, Agarwal 1994). "Poverty has a women's face" (UNISEM Biennial report 2000) shows the status of women in various developing countries of the world. Empowerment of women as defined by Kabeer (1999,) is the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability. Rowland (1997) & Mayoux (2000) maintain that empowerment means increase in the authority and power of an individual. Empowerment can be looked at in a behavioural sense as the ability to take effective action (Snow 1990).

Different government and non government organisation are playing a vital role in providing various interventions and initiatives for women empowerment at different levels. One of such interventions is dairy cooperative movement. There are many studies on women empowerment which highlights how the cooperatives have provided a platform for rural women to carry out entrepreneurial and income generating activities that improve their livelihood, enhance their access to economic resources and opportunities and thus increasing the wellbeing of the women and their families (Anula, 1980; Aruna, 1990; Bibby and Shaw, 2005; Bhatt, 1991; Dash, 2007; ICA, 1980; Jabvala, 1994; Koli, 1994; Krishnaswami, 2004; Manchanda, 1998; Nagalaxmi, 2003; Naik, 2005; Rao, 1996).

This study aims to analyse the economic empowerment of women through dairy cooperative societies in rural Odisha, particularly Sidheswari Women Milk Producer Society, in Puri district. Sidheswari Women Milk Producer Society is registered with PUMUL in the year 1998 and is functional at present with 190 women dairy farmer members. But there are only 45 actual pourer members at present.. Society procures approximately 185 litres of milk per day. Society undertakes activities necessary for clean and quality milk production through guidance and assistance to the members. It provides facilities for profitable marketing of milk through district cooperatives (OMFED) as well as local sell. It

undertakes programmes in dairy extension & dairy husbandry to improve animal health, sell nutritionally balanced cattle feed and promote fodder cultivation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE CASE STUDY:

1. To assess the economic empowerment of women through Sidheswari Women Milk Producer cooperative Society.
2. To assess the factors responsible for taking up dairy farming.
3. To find out problems faced by women dairy farmers and suggest appropriate measures.

SAMPLING DESIGN: The exploratory pilot study is being adopted for this particular case. There are 190 women farmer members associated with the Siddheswari Women milk producers union. Out of which only 45 poorer members are providing milk to the society at present time.

METHODOLOGY FOR THE CASE STUDY. Observation, direct interactions with the women farmer members, interview with the Union staff was used as methods to gather information. The primary data was collected from concerned poorer members of the society through interview schedule. The secondary data about the society is collected from PUMUL office at Bhubaneswar & from the society itself through a questionnaire.

TOOLS OF ANALYSIS:

This study adapted various statistical tools & techniques. Traditional tools like bivariate and multivariate analysis, percentage, table & graphic analysis are used to analyse the collected data. SPSS 17 version was used to analyse the data, paired sample T test & F test are used to study the economic condition of women respondents before and after taking up dairy farming. Factor analysis was used to find out factors which have motivated women to take up dairy farming and problems faced by them.

SOCIAL – ECONOMIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS:**1. Table**

	ITEM	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Type of Family	Nuclear	4	8.9
	Joint	41	91.1
Social group	SC	13	28.9
	OBC	21	46.7
	General	11	24.4
	Total	45	100
Marital Status	Married	45	100
	Unmarried	0	0
Economic Status	BPL	36	80
	APL	9	20
Literacy	Illiterate	1	2.2
	Just Literate	1	2.2
	Primary	4	8.9
	Middle	27	60
	Matric	10	22.2
	Higher Secondary	2	4.4
Occupation	Agriculture wage	25	55.6
	Non Agriculture wage	2	4.4
	Dairy	4	8.9
	House wife	12	26.7
	Service	2	4.4

Source primary data

Most of the members (91.7 %) belong to joint family and only 8.9 % belongs to nuclear family. It has been found that among the women who joined the WDCs, 46.7 % belong to OBC, 28.9 % belong to SC & 24.4 % belong to general category. 80 % of women belong to BPL families whereas 20 % belong to APL families. All the respondents are married & are involved in dairy farming to augment their family income.

It has been found that 60 % of the women have education level up to middle class & only 22 % of them have passed less than 10th, only 4.4 % have higher secondary education. Maximum number of the women members of the WDCs is agricultural wage earners. 26.7 % are house wives and only 4.4 % are engaged in small private service.

It is observed that the women who work as agricultural wage earners are more involved in dairy farming. As the maximum education levels of the women are up to middle school only, they have less opportunity to get service in govt or private sector. Thus dairy farming has provided an extra income for these families. The house wives 26.6 % after being involved in dairy farming have earned more income for their family. However dairy farming has been a secondary occupation for most of the respondents, only 8.9 % have opted for dairy farming as their main occupation.

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF THE WOMEN DAIRY FARMERS:

Objective of the study is to examine the economic condition of women dairy farmers after taking up dairy farming and joining the WDCs. To find out what motivated them to take dairy farming as a household business.

Change in Monthly average income from dairy across social group

2. Table

Social Group	MonthlyIncome before joiningwdc (mean value in Rs)	MonthlyIncome after joiningwdc (mean value in Rs)	Change in Income(Rs)
Schedule Cast	1592.31	2048.14	455.83
OBC	1980.95	2524.35	543.40
General	1681.82	2228.28	546.46
F-Ratio	0.871	0.952	0.237
Significance	0.426	0.394	0.79

Source primary data

The women farmers gave the information out of their memory.

The income includes revenue from liquid milk, milk products and value of Dung.

There is significant change in the average monthly income of the social group (SC – 455.83, OBC – 543.39 & General – 546.46). it has been found that there is no ST family who has joined the WDCs. Difference in change in monthly income between OBC & General is very negligible, where as there is a significant difference between SC & OBC.

Change in monthly income from dairy across economic status

3. Table

Economic status	Income before joining wdc (mean value in RS)	Income after joining (mean value in RS)	Change in income (Rs)
BPL	1841.67	2325.62	483.95
APL	1611.11	2269.55	658.44
“T” Ratio	0.79	0.155	-1.262
Significance	0.442	0.879	0.229

It is observed from the above table that there is significant change in the average monthly income of the BPL families between the year 2001-02 (1841.67) and 2013-14 (2325.62). However there is more change in monthly average income of APL families (658.44). One of the reasons observed during field investigation is that management of the dairy farming is better in case of APL families, therefore quality & productivity of dairy animal is more.

FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN TO TAKE UP DAIRY FARMING:

The second objective of the study is to find out the factors influencing women respondents to take up dairy farming. Factor analysis was used to extract the prominent factors, which provide them motivation to adopt dairy farming as a secondary source of income. Total variance explained in the table below:-

4. Table

Rotated Component Matrix

Variables	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Dairy firming provides regular employment	-.862	-.021	.065	.150	-.016	-.003	.156
Dairy farming is convenient for women	.787	-.038	-.001	.137	-.042	.063	.268
Women get regular income	-.163	.755	-.261	.045	-.211	.166	.018
Dairy farming gives more income	-.083	-.724	-.338	-.020	-.064	-.014	.167
Women enjoy economic independence through work	-.215	-.610	-.140	.092	-.221	.316	-.069
Women contribute more to family income	-.088	.588	-.154	.148	-.126	.066	.343

Dairy farming improves standard of leaving of the family	-.343	.002	.837	-.154	-.029	.146	.049
Better utilization of time for women	.387	.039	.687	.176	-.219	.127	.158
Flexible working hours	.215	.024	.110	.763	.236	-.158	-.057
Milk marketing made easy by joining WDCS	.120	-.118	.225	-.689	.186	-.103	-.025
Transport charges are less	.306	.195	-.388	-.536	.283	-.180	.039
Self interest encourage women to take dairy farming	.003	-.051	-.126	-.009	.887	.086	-.031
Enhancement of social status	.014	-.015	-.226	-.015	-.136	-.866	-.130
Dairy farming easier source of employment for women	.375	.048	.006	.011	-.513	.576	-.046
Women want to be roll model to others	.111	.123	.232	.005	.057	.171	.823
Govt incentives & awareness program	.046	.140	.341	.389	.178	.242	-.515

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 12 iterations.

To find out the reasons for which the women dairy producer wanted to take up dairy farming as a source of income factor analysis has been used in the study. Seven factors having Eigen value one and more than one were extracted. The seven factors accounted for 71.94 % of the total variant as seen in cumulative percentage column.

From the above table No 5 it is observed that dairy farming provides regular employment and give economic independence have high loading 0.862 and 0.787 respectively. These factors together can be called **Financial Independence** and might be one of the most important reasons for taking up dairy farming.

The second factor includes dairy farming is convenient for women (loading 0.755), provides regular income (loading 0.724), to the women farmers and enhance social status (loading 0.610) and the women become role model (loading 0.585) for others can be coined as **empowerment**.

Third factor influencing the women to take up dairy farming is flexible working hour (loading 0.837) and self interest (loading 0.687) can be named as **self esteem**.

Forth factor might be women contribute more to family income (loading 0.763) by taking up dairy farming & women utilise time productively (loading 0.689) can be named as contribution to **family income**.

Fifth factor might be marketing of milk made easy (loading 0.887) by joining women dairy cooperative societies can be named as **easy marketing**.

Sixth factor might be reasons like less transport cost (loading 0.866) has been acknowledged by the women as profitable, dairy farming provides more income (0.576) can be called as **profitable business**.

Seventh factor might be the govt incentives and awareness programme (loading 0.823) has motivated the women to join WDCs and increase in standard of living (loading 0.515) can be coined as effect of **govt promotional measures**.

5. Table
GROUPED FACTORS

Factors	Variables/Loading	% of variants	Name of the Factor
1	V1=0.862, v5=0.787	12.661	Financial independence
2	V2=0.755, v3=0.724, v13=0.610, v15=0.585	11.925	Empowerment
3	V9=0.837, v12=0.687	11.587	Self esteem
4	V6=0.763, v14=0.689	10.160	Family income
5	V10=0.887	8.993	Easy marketing
6	V4=0.866, v14=0.576	8.859	Profitable business
7	V7=0.823, v16=0.515	7.755	Govt measures

6. Table
ROLE OF SIDDHESWARI WOMEN MILK PRODUCERS UNION IN PROVIDING DAIRY RELATED SERVICES

Srl No	Frequency of getting services					
	Whenever needed	Percentage	Some times	Percentage	Never	percentage
Marketing	45	100	0	0	0	0
AI service	43	95	2	4.4	0	0

Feed	45	100	0	0	0	0
Veterinary medicines	44	98	1	2	0	0
Improved breed cows	0	0	1	2	44	98
Extension advisory service	3	6.6	9	20	33	73.3
Training & education service	1	2	16	35.5	28	62.5
Dividend payment	0	0	18	40	27	60
Employment opportunity	5	11.5	9	20.5	31	68
Information sharing among members	11	24.5	7	15.5	27	60
Close linkage with dist veterinary office	12	26.6	6	13.4	27	60
Close linkage with private agency like input suppliers & customers	4	8.8	14	31.2	27	60

Source Primary data

The members of the dairy cooperative society usually receive services like milk marketing, AI service, nutritionally balance cattle feed, veterinary medicine (first aid) frequently & whenever they needed. The members receive training & education service, dividend payment & advisory services some time from the WDCs.

PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN DAIRY FARMERS & WDCs MEMBERS

From the above table it has been observed that most of the women farmers are of the opinion that they never received improved breed cows from the WDCs, 73.3% of the women are not satisfied with the extension advisory services as well as training programme. 60% of the members think that they do not get enough help from district veterinary office. Again 60% of women find that the cattle feed price in the local market is high and low linkage with private input suppliers is one of the cause.

SUMMARY & FINDINGS

There is a significant change in the economic condition of the women after joining the WDCs. The government incentives like training and awareness program, easy marketing of milk through WDCs, regular income and employment has motivated many women wage earners in the area to take up dairy farming. There is improved sense of economic independence felt by the cooperative members after joining the milk Union. They are able to provide better education to their children with the dairy income. The self confidence of these women to face situations like food shortage, drought situation ,etc has increased .Some of them has purchased land of one to two acres with the dairy income. About 10 women dairy farmers told they have renovated the house with the dairy income. It was interesting to observe that all of them have become member of SHG and availing the benefits of credit facilities when ever needed. Thus social interaction and knowledge sharing has increased for these rural women after joining the milk cooperative.

CONCLUSION

Dairy farming has been an important source of income for rural resource poor, less skilled, less educated women. It is a boon for traditionally weak small land holder and landless women labourers. Women dairy cooperative societies are instrumental in generating income and employment for the women members resulting in women empowerment and also dairy development.

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