

Constraints Perceived by Members and Non-members About Women Dairy Cooperative Societies in Haryana

Upayana Singh ¹, Vijay Avinashilingam N.A. ² and Malik, B.S. ³

ABSTRACT

Livestock sector plays an important role in the national economy and social development of the country. Women constitute 71 per cent of the labour force in livestock sector as against 35 per cent in crop farming. Cooperatives have provided a platform to women to demonstrate their capabilities and competence through their activities. Cooperatives exclusively of women demonstrated that gender based interventions in its programmes planning not only increased income and employment, but also enhanced women's status in family and society.

To contribute particularly for women development in dairy sector, the Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP), launched in 1987 by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India aims to increase the self-reliance and autonomy of women by enhancing productivity and enabling them to take up income generation activities by sales of milk and use of income from it. The constraints perceived by the members of the WDCS viz., lack of loan facilities, lack of educational programme on dairy, lack of regular training programmes and lack of / Inadequate input supply. Whereas the nonmembers considered the Lack of / Inadequate input supply by WDCS, unavailability of technical personnel in time, lack of supply of free cattle feed mixtures and lack of regular supply of cattle medicines on free of cost.

Key words: Women Dairy Cooperative Societies (WDCS), Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP)

INTRODUCTION

Livestock sector plays an important role in the national economy and social development of the country. Livestock is the major source of work power for farm operation and transportation in addition to meeting manure requirement for crop husbandry. Last three decades have witnessed a significant growth in the Indian dairy sector, primarily because of the production and marketing impetus released by the Operation flood programme, which was designed to have a link of rural milk sheds with urban consumption centers. Dairying is found to provide about 20 percent of farm employment and about 30 percent of family income (Ramasamy, 2000). So, dairying can be used as a tool for poverty alleviation in the country.

Women constitute half the population and are critical to the production and social processes of the economy. Women constitute 71 percent of the labour force in livestock sector as against 35 percent in crop farming. Cooperatives have provided a platform to women to demonstrate their capabilities and competence through their activities. Cooperatives exclusively of women demonstrated that gender based interventions in its programmes planning not only increased income and employment, but also enhanced women's status in family and society and made them poised for much grater

challenges in society (Rao, 2004). Efforts are on to give them their due place in dairy development Over a million producer members of dairy cooperatives, about 20 per cent are women. However, their participation in decision-making bodies (Board of Directors, and Management committees) is marginal. Dairy Cooperatives can be an approach to integrated development, enhancing status of disadvantaged and marginalized women, and utilizing women to play a significant role in the process of collective action.

To contribute particularly for women development in dairy sector, the Support to Training and Employment Programme (STEP), launched in 1987 by Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India aims to increase the self-reliance and autonomy of women by enhancing productivity and enabling them to take up income generation activities by sales of milk and use of income from it. Another objective is recognition of women as members of dairy cooperative societies, so that the price of milk supplied to society can be paid to the women directly. For this purpose, Haryana Dairy Development Cooperative Federation Limited had been sanctioned one dairy project to cover 10,000 women beneficiaries through 200 Women Dairy Cooperative Societies (WDCS) focusing on multifarious activities concerning women's development.

¹Ex-Ph.D Scholar and ³Ex-Principal Scientist, Division of Dairy Extension, National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI), Karnal 132001 (Haryana).

²SMS (Extension / Social Sciences), Vivekananda Parvatiya Krishi Anusandhan Sansthan (VPKAS), ICAR, Hawalbagh campus, Almora 263 601(Uttarakhand)

But the question arise that how far these dairy cooperatives have come up to the expectations of the dairy farm women in terms of providing the required facilities i.e. loans and inputs and other educational & training programmes.

Keeping the above discussion in mind, this study identified and listed the constraints perceived by the members and non-members of women dairy cooperative societies in Haryana.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Sampling

The present study was carried out in the eastern and western regions of Haryana state. The design formulated for this study consists of one experimental group and one control group. The experimental group consists of the members of women dairy cooperative societies whereas the control group consists of the non-members belonging to the adjoining areas of cooperative societies having similar conditions as prevailing in the village where women dairy cooperative society is working. Out of a total of six milk unions functioning in Haryana, two milk unions namely Kurukshetra-Karnal from eastern and Rohtak from western region were randomly selected. The total number of WDCS functioning under Kurukshetra-Karnal milk union and Rohtak milk union are 25 and 50 respectively. A sample of 15 WDCS i.e. 5 societies from Kurukshetra-Karnal and 10 from Rohtak were selected through proportionate random sampling. Only those societies were selected as samples which were in operation for at least three years. Eight members from each dairy cooperative society and four non-members from the adjoining areas of the village where women dairy cooperative was functioning were selected randomly. Members were those who had supplied milk to the WDCS at least for six months in an year. A list of such women members of each cooperative society was made and eight members were selected randomly from the list. Non-member respondents were those who had at least one milch cattle or buffalo but not selling milk through WDCS. Thus total respondents were 180, 120 members and 60 non-members. Data were collected through a well-constructed interview schedule. The constraints variable was measured through open-ended questionnaire and it refers to all those factors which hinder the members as well as non-members in joining the societies, functioning of societies and benefits accrued from the societies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints perceived about the women dairy cooperative societies by the members

It could be observed from the Table 1 that lack of loan facilities was expressed as the major constraint by 91.67 per cent of the members. The respondents felt that the cooperatives were not availing the loan facilities to the members which pulls them towards other means like banks, friends, relatives and self-help groups etc. This indicated the lack of efforts by the society management in providing loans to the members.

The Table 1 further showed that 70 per cent of members expressed lack of educational programme on dairy as a constraint followed by lack of regular training programmes (65.83%) and lack of / inadequate input supply by WDCS (60.83%). It was seen that the number of training programmes conducted by the society were very low. The respondents felt that the content of training programmes were good but the frequency of the training programmes conducted was very low. Most of the trainings conducted were on the topic of artificial insemination.

Table 1: Constraints perceived about the Women Dairy Cooperative Societies by the members

Constraints	f
Low price paid for milk by WDCS	40 (33.33)
Irregular payments by WDCS	13 (10.83)
Lack of / Inadequate input supply by WDCS	73 (60.83)
Lack of educational programmes on dairy	84 (70.00)
Lack of regular supply of cattle medicines on free of cost	66 (55.00)
Lack of loanfacilities	110 (91.67)
Lack of regular training programmes	79 (65.83)
Difficulty in getting the members convinced regarding the fat percentage of milk	17 (14.17)
Unavailability of technical personnel in time	60 (50.00)

- *Figures in parenthesis indicates percentage in their respective categories*
- *The total percentage in respective categories may be more than 100 due to multiple response of the respondents*

The input supply from society was found inadequate. Very basic inputs like milk cans were made available to each society.

Lack of regular supply of cattle medicines on free of cost was reported as constraint by 55.00 per cent of the members, whereas 50.00 per cent members reported unavailability of technical personnel in time as constraint. The respondents felt that supply of free medicines to the cattle was not regular which makes them to spend more money on the disease management of the cattle.

About 33.33 per cent members felt low price paid for milk by the WDCS as a constraint, whereas difficulty in getting the members convinced regarding the fat percentage of milk was considered as a constraint by 14.17 per cent. Only 10.83 per cent members felt irregular payments by WDCS as a constraint.

Constraints perceived about the Women Dairy Cooperative Societies by the non-members

The Table 2 showed that majority of the respondents (93.33%) stated lack of loan facilities as a constraint. The non-member felt that the society is not providing any loan facilities to the farm women which is an essential requirement of a poor and below poverty line women. It is difficult for a poor and assetless rural woman to bear the expenses of dairy farming without a financial support.

Table 2: Constraints perceived about the Women Dairy Cooperative Societies by the non- members

Constraints	Frequency
Low price paid for milk by WDCS	34 (56.67)
Lack of supply of free cattle feed mixtures	36 (60.00)
Lack of / Inadequate input supply by WDCS	42 (70.00)
Lack of regular supply of cattle medicines on free of cost	20 (33.33)
Lack of loan facilities	56 (93.33)
Difficulty in getting the non-members convinced regarding the fat percentage of milk	41(68.33)
Unavailability of technical personnel in time	38 (63.33)

- *Figures in parenthesis indicates percentage in their respective categories*
- *The total percentage in respective categories may be more than 100 due to multiple response of the respondents*

Lack of / Inadequate input supply by WDCS was considered as a constraint by 70.00 per cent of non-members, whereas 68.33 per cent of non-members reported difficulty in getting convinced regarding the fat percentage of milk. About 63.33 per cent of non-members expressed unavailability of technical personnel in time as a constraint followed by lack of supply of free cattle feed mixtures (60.00%) and lack of regular supply of cattle medicines on free of cost (33.33%).

The non-members felt that the price paid by the society was comparatively less as compared to vendors and other milk sellers. The concept of fat percentage in milk was also not so clear in the mind of people. The non-members felt that the services provided by the society are

very few and also not so regular which makes them not to join the societies.

CONCLUSION

It was found that funding support for women was not available under STEP project, so it was difficult for them to get loan or subsidies for purchase for livestock or fodder. Besides fulfilling the other objectives of STEP programme i.e. economic stability, self-sufficiency and recognition, the dairy officials had overlooked the importance of educational and training programmes. This has to a large extent inhibited the urge of dairy women to acquire knowledge and technologies. It is always necessary to intimate the women about the huge potentiality of the livestock production, so that they will think seriously about its prospects. Moreover, the traditional knowledge and practices of women can be further developed and used for improving productivity in a sustainable manner by conducting numerous training programmes. The latest technologies in dairy farming are also need to be brought to the knowledge of the dairy farm women so that they can take correct decisions and can actively participate in the development process. Women dairy cooperatives need to organize more number of training programmes with an emphasis on the need based areas i.e. feeding, healthcare and management etc. which can help the women to be skilled in the improved dairy farming practices. Adequate input supply and regular supply of cattle medicines on free of cost by women dairy cooperatives is also very essential in order to get more membership of women to the cooperatives.

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