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**WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN U.P.: A STUDY OF
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Women Empowerment in U.P.: A Study of Muradabad Division

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Abstract – Moradabad district is a major producer of milk in Uttar Pradesh and it has a very good network of co-operatives which provide necessary infrastructure for the growth of women empowerment and its production in the district. The nearness to the national capital region has further enhanced the growth of marketing due to high demand. This paper was undertaken in a sampled to understand the role in co-operatives in the socio-economic development of dairy farmers at micro level in the study area.

Keywords: Empowerment, Development, Women

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is the phenomena of nineties and is defined as 'giving power to', creating power within and enabling'. Power is a relative concept, which describes a relationship between people; a powerful person has power over others. Empowerment entails power sharing, a change in the balancing of power between people. An increase in power of one party necessarily implies reduction in power of the other or others. Therefore, empowerment involves negotiation of the balance of power between the more and less powerful (through reformist or revolutionary means). Most of the modern democracies and developing nations have a public agenda for the process of empowerment of women. Empowerment means giving legal and moral power to an individual in all spheres of life-social, economic, political, psychological, religious and spiritual-which are essential for the survival and overall development of the mankind. Every society has known racism, sexism and authoritarianism. In broader terms, it is empowerment in nothing but a religious, cultural and legal struggle against oppression, injustice and discrimination. Empowerment expresses the bold idea that all people have claims to social arrangements that project them from the worst abuses and deprivations and secure the freedom for a life of dignity. It is also a process of enhancing human capabilities to expand choice and opportunities so that each person can lead a life of respect and value (Singh and Bansal, 2002).

REVIEW OF LITERATURES:

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged in order to help poor women to secure inputs like credit and other services. The concept of SHG in India was introduced in 1985. Self-Help Groups are small, economical, homogeneous, affinity groups of rural poor who are

voluntarily ready to contribute to a common fund to be lent to their members as per the group decision. They work for group solidarity, self-group awareness and social and economic empowerment through democratic functioning and have refinanced Rs. 3.00 crores to the banks. Many rural development program like 'Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yozana' (SGSY) which is a combination of six rural development programmes, are based on the self-help group strategy. It is a viable alternative to achieve the objectives of rural development and to get women's participation in all rural development programs.

Majority of population in India lives in villages where agriculture is the main economic activity. The domestication animals have been an integral part of the farming system from immemorial time. Dairy farming is an important aspect of the rural economy of India. It is centuries old tradition for millions of Indian rural households (Khan N.et.al., 2011). The advent of Green revolution and other modern agricultural practices have declined the role of livestock in agriculture. Still, livestock is correlated with agriculture and social customs in India [13].

The important role played by dairy farming in the sustenance of landless and poor people in the village economy is quite evident (Pandey V.N. and Pathak A., 1997). Marketing of milk through organized sector involves government and cooperatives agencies while the unorganized sector involves the private organizations. Major part of milk is marketed through the unorganized sector and the organized sector has a very low share (Rjendran K. and Mohanty S., 2004). The government of India has started the "operation flood" programme for the proper enumeration of milk & milk products (George S., 1987). Further, various programs were undertaken for

the formation of dairy co-operatives [13]. The dairy co-operatives in India have three tier of structure which consists of state level federations, district milk unions and dairy co-operative societies at the village level respectively (Huria V.K. and Achaya K.T., 1980). As a result, dairy co-operative societies have been formed to meet local demand for milk & to eradicate the existing malpractices in the milk marketing. A substantial amount of money has been spent on the formation of dairy co-operatives to provide the infrastructure for dairy co-operatives. The evolution of dairy co-operatives has fuelled empowerment of rural people and promotes rural development (Bandhyopadhyay M.K, 1996).

Uttar Pradesh is a leading state in terms of agricultural productions and dairy farming has a significant contribution to agricultural production. Dairy farming is increasingly more practiced by the small & marginal farmers because these farmers have very small land to fulfill their needs, so they domesticate animals (Bhaskaran S., 1996). Although dairy farming is not a specialized commercial activity in India but it provides regular income for the farmers throughout the year and has a significant role in generating employment for women (Manish S. and Tanaka H., 2007).

Moradabad district is a major producer of milk in Uttar Pradesh and it has a very good network of co-operatives which provide necessary infrastructure for the growth of livestock and milk production in the district. The nearness to the national capital region has further enhanced the growth of milk marketing due to high demand. The present study was undertaken in a sampled village to understand the role of dairy co-operatives in the socio-economic development of dairy farmers at micro level in the study area [13].

Relationship between socio-economic characteristics and group characteristics [3]

The relationship between socio-economic and group characteristics was studied by working out the correlation (r' value). Selected variables with their codes have been presented in Table 1 and these codes have been subsequently used in the relationship of the variables. When we analyze the correlation between socio-economic characteristics (variables) and groups characteristics (variables), age was negatively correlated with group cohesiveness at five percent level of significance [3]. Education had significant correlation with participation, task function, interpersonal trust and group cohesiveness. Out of these, interpersonal trust was at one per cent level of significance and at five percent level of significance with style of influence and group cohesiveness in which group cohesiveness was negatively correlated. Table 3 reveals that type of family was found to have a positive and significant relationship with participation at one percent level of significance whereas size of family did not have any effect on group variables. At one percent level of significance, land holding was positively and significantly correlated with participation

while at five percent level of significance it was positively correlated with style of influence. Family occupation was found to have a positive and significant relationship with participation, task function, interpersonal trust, and group atmosphere and group cohesiveness. Out of these variables, participation, task function and interpersonal trust were related at one percent level of significance while group atmosphere and group cohesiveness were related at five percent level of significance to family occupation. Income was found to have positive correlations with participation, task function, interpersonal trust and group cohesiveness. Out of these, participation and task function showed significant correlation at one percent while the other two had a significant relationship at five percent level of significance. Social participation showed no relationship with group variables [3].

Women's Empowerment Program, Moradabad, U.P.

Asha Deep Foundation believes in the holistic development of the underprivileged community. Considering the status of women and girl children in India, the Empowerment of Women is very important. They are the change agents which can take the country forward. Half the population of the country is female and if they lack behind, the country can never move forward. With this belief Asha Deep Foundation is running Women Empowerment Program with one of the most underprivileged communities in Moradabad U.P. [14].

The most suitable program for the underprivileged women is the formation of Self Help Groups. An SHG is a group of women from the same community/work environment voluntarily coming together to improve their quality of life. Saving SHGs are the most relevant in communities of extremely low economic conditions. The accessibility of easy loan from the group's saving at minimal interest rates is most favorable for these women. The process for formation of 30 SHGs (Saving) have already initiated and will become full-fledged groups within 3 months period [14].

CONCLUSION:

On the basic of major findings, it can be concluded that almost all the group characteristics had positive and significant relationships. The SHGs followed normal patterns of group behavior. A greater percentage of women were impacted positively by being members of SHGs.

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