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### Constraints perceived by women self-help groups in horticultural enterprises and suggestions to overcome it

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#### Abstract

Considering the constraints perceived by horticultural enterprises the current study was conducted in Khordha district of Odisha in the year 2022. A total number of 100 respondents were taken for the study from four villages; it is Umadeibrahmapur and Nagapursasan of Baliana block and Rajas and Garia village of Balipatna block. Around twenty Four specific constraints perceived by horticultural enterprises which were broadly categorised into six broad constraints it is resource, technological, marketing, financial, extension, social constraints. Analysis was done by using Garrette's ranking method where mean scores of specific constraints ranged from 39.80 to 56.60 for resource constraints, 41.92 to 57.69 for technological constraints, 41.26 to 58.36 for marketing constraints, 41.83 to 58.17 for financial constraints, 34.70 to 64.80 for extension constraints, 41.59 to 59.93 for social constraints. Some of the major suggestions obtained from respondent was due to lack of proper marketing channel as a result of which majority of respondents were selling their produce at lower price in village and were not getting much profit out of it. This research paper may provide a better insight into the grassroot level constraints faced by women self help group for horticultural enterprises in rural villages of India.

**Keywords:** Constraints, grass, enterprises

#### Introduction

Women play a significant role in horticulture enterprises, contributing in various ways that are crucial for the success and sustainability of the industry. Women contribute a substantial portion of the labour force in horticulture enterprises. They are involved in various tasks such as planting, weeding, harvesting, and post-harvest handling etc. Many women have inherited traditional knowledge about plant cultivation, pest management, and soil conservation practices, which are invaluable for sustainable agriculture. They establish their own farms, nurseries, and small-scale businesses related to horticulture, contributing to economic growth and rural development. They are involved in activities such as packaging, branding, and marketing of produce, enabling them to reach consumers locally, nationally, and even internationally. Their participation in horticulture enterprises empowers them economically and socially. It provides them with opportunities for income generation, skill development, and decision-making, thereby contributing to gender equality and women's empowerment. However despite of crucial role of women in horticultural enterprises, there exist a pressing need to understand and address constraints faced by women due to various factors. Women ranked such constraints as lack of access to land, lack of capital and credit facilities, non-provision of information by agricultural officers on horticultural production technologies, ineffective extension services are some of the major hindrances to effective achievement of

the set objectives of improving socio-economic well-being of women farmers according to Sulo *et al.*, (2012) <sup>[9]</sup>. Gender-based discrimination and social norms may limit women's participation in decision-making processes, access to resources, and opportunities for leadership within horticulture enterprises. Stereotypical perceptions about women's roles and abilities may undermine their confidence and agency in the sector. Nikam *et al.*, (2019) <sup>[10]</sup> revealed that due to under developed market structure women are not getting proper price for their produce. Therefore, marketing systems needs to improve. Women in horticulture enterprises may encounter challenges in accessing markets, negotiating fair prices, and establishing market linkages. Limited market information, inadequate market infrastructure, and gender-based discrimination can hinder women's ability to market their products effectively. However constraints can be categorized into resource, technological, marketing, financial, extension and social constraints. Unavailability of land, unavailability of seeds, unavailability of herbicides, lack of irrigation, high cost input perceived as some of the resource constraints. More expenditure on technology management is due to technological constraints; Lack of transportation to distant market is due to marketing constraints; Lack of sufficient funds due to financial constraints; lack of proper demonstrations due to extension constraints and political interference due to social constraints.

## Materials and Methods

Ex-post facto design was used for the study which is also known as after the fact research. District, blocks and GPs were selected purposively while respondents were selected through disproportionate random sampling. The study was conducted using a structured interview schedule. Questions were asked to respondents and scores were obtained on different categories of questionnaire such as resource constraints, technological constraints, marketing constraints,

financial constraints, extension constraints, social constraints. The responses were recorded on 3 point continuum of very severe, severe, less severe with corresponding score of 3, 2, 1 respectively. Further scores of each problem were aggregated to calculate the mean score of each problem. Higher the mean value of the problem, more its importance is.

## Results and Discussion

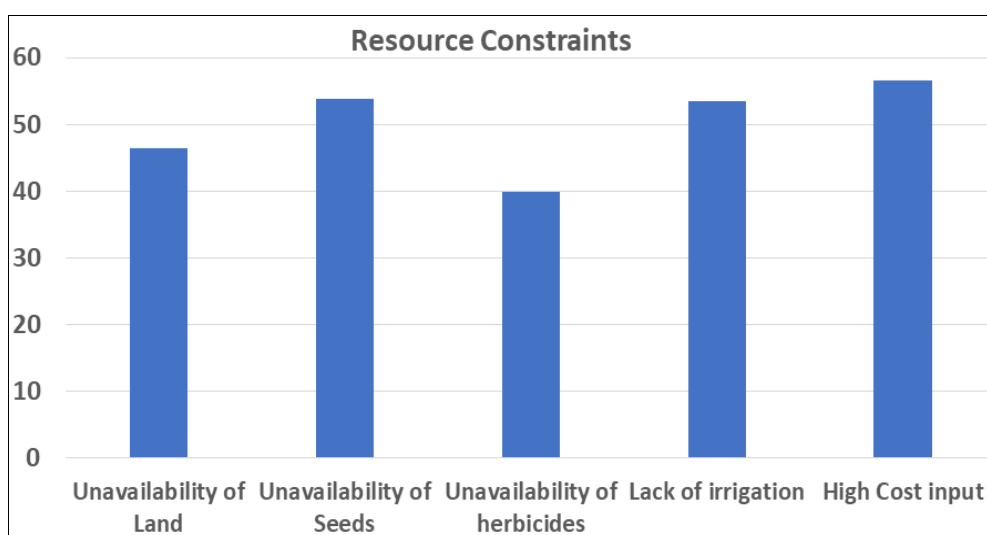
**Table 1:** Distribution of women self-help group according to constraints faced by them (n=100)

Sr. No.	Constraints		Mean Score	Rank
1.	Resource Constraints	Unavailability of Land	46.40	IV
		Unavailability of Seeds	53.80	II
		Unavailability of herbicides	39.80	V
		Lack of irrigation	53.40	III
		High cost input	56.60	I
2.	Technological Constraints	Poor knowledge on technical know-how	48.21	III
		Technology Complexity	52.18	II
		More expenditure on technology management	57.69	I
		Poor soil testing facility	41.92	IV
3.	Marketing Constraints	Lack of inadequate marketing channel	41.26	III
		Lack of transportation facility	58.36	I
		Preservation faults of value added products	50.38	II
4.	Financial Constraints	Lack of sufficient funds	58.17	I
		High expenditure in managing enterprise	41.83	III
		Complicated process to avail loan	50.00	II
5.	Extension Constraints	Lack of training facility	57.75	II
		Lack of demonstrations	64.80	I
		Inadequate technical advice	42.65	IV
		Lack of information	50.10	III
		Inadequate supply of farm publication	34.70	V
6.	Social Constraints	Multiple ownership of land	46.66	III
		Political interference	59.93	I
		Protest from application of organic manure	41.59	IV
		Groupism	51.82	II

## Resource Constraints

High cost input ranked I as the most severe resource constraints followed by unavailability of seeds, lack of irrigation, unavailability of land and unavailability of herbicides ranked as II, III, IV, V respectively. Women in

horticultural enterprises face a myriad of resource constraints that significantly impede their ability to thrive and expand their businesses. Furthermore, societal norms and cultural barriers, coupled with legal and policy shortcomings, exacerbate these challenges.

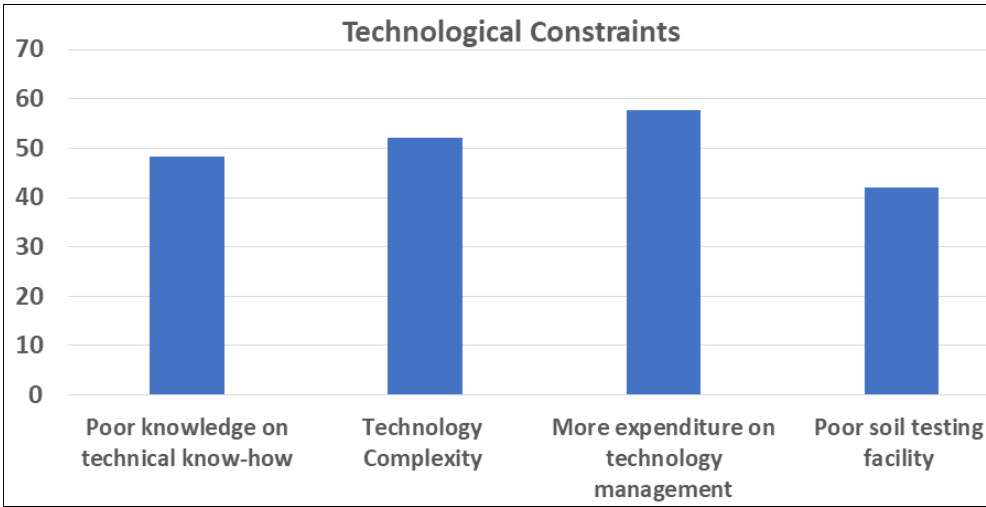


**Fig 1:** Distribution of women self-help group according to resource constraints

**Technological Constraints**

More expenditure on technology management ranked I as the most severe constraints followed by technological complexity, poor knowledge on technical know-how, poor soil testing facility ranked as II, III, IV, V respectively. Technological constraints pose significant challenges to the success and growth of horticultural enterprises. Limited access to modern farming equipment, advanced agricultural

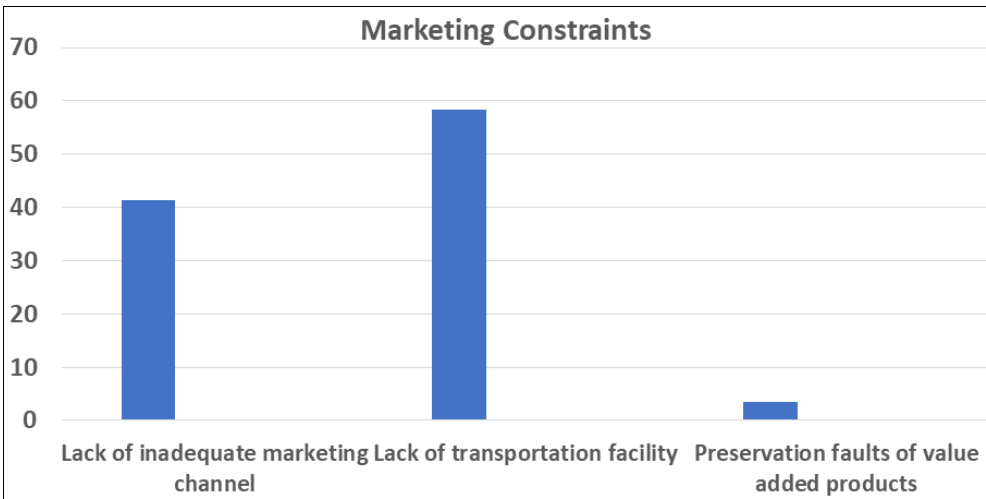
inputs, and cutting-edge technologies hampers productivity, efficiency, and competitiveness. The gap in technological adoption is further widened by inadequate training and education, financial barriers, and insufficient infrastructure support. Investing in agricultural extension services and training programs can equip horticulturists with the necessary skills to utilize modern technologies effectively.



**Fig 2:** Distribution of women self-help group according to technological constraints

Lack of transportation facility ranked I followed by lack of inadequate marketing channel, preservation faults of value added products ranked as II, III respectively. These constraints, including limited market access, high competition, seasonal demand fluctuations, and stringent regulatory requirements, pose significant challenges. Effective strategies to overcome these obstacles involve

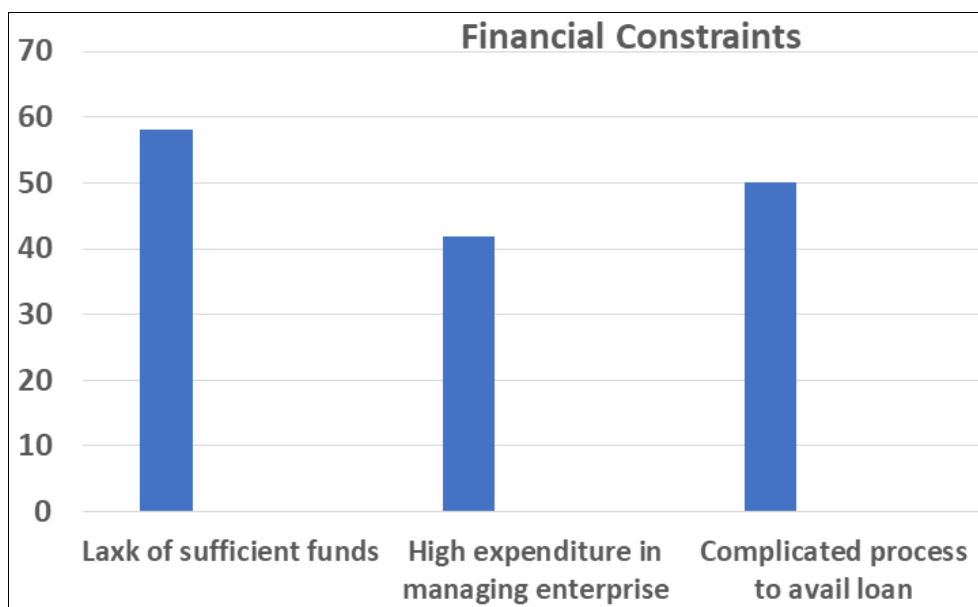
diversification of marketing channels, adoption of advanced technologies, investment in market research, and strategic partnerships. By addressing these constraints proactively, horticultural enterprises can optimize their market reach, enhance profitability, and ensure long-term sustainability in a competitive marketplace.



**Fig 3:** Distribution of women self-help group according to marketing constraints

Lack of sufficient funds ranked I followed by complicated process to avail loan, high expenditure in managing enterprise ranked II, III respectively. To address these challenges, horticultural businesses should explore diverse financing options, including government grants, agricultural

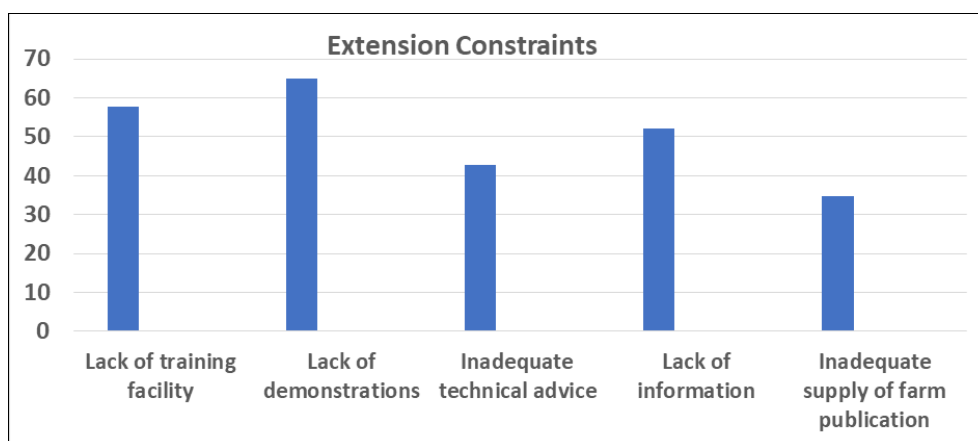
loans, and private investments. Implementing cost-efficient practices, improving financial literacy, and leveraging technology for better financial management can also make a substantial difference.



**Fig 4:** Distribution of women self-help group according to financial constraints

Lack of demonstrations ranked I followed by lack of training facility, lack of information, inadequate technical advice, inadequate supply of farm publication ranked as II, III, IV, V respectively. Demonstration is a practical method of transferring new technologies to increase productivity of SHG members. Demonstration provides hands-on experience without demonstration members might be hesitant to adopt new practices to avoid failure. Overcoming these challenges requires enhancing the availability and quality of extension

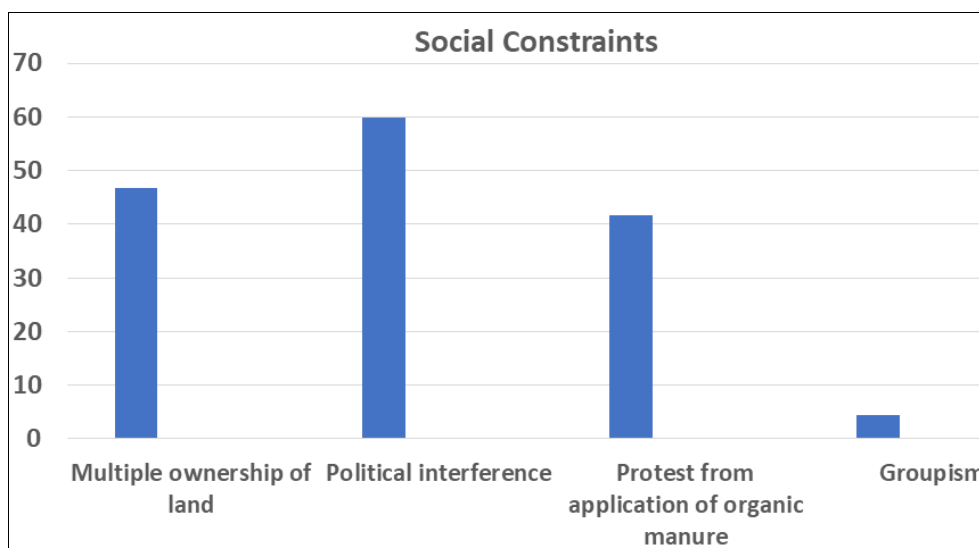
services, fostering stronger collaboration between research institutions and farmers, and leveraging digital tools to improve knowledge transfer. Additionally, tailored extension programs that consider the specific needs of different horticultural enterprises can significantly boost productivity and innovation. By effectively managing extension constraints, horticultural enterprises can enhance their practices, increase productivity, and achieve long-term success in a competitive agricultural landscape.



**Fig 5:** Distribution of women self-help group according to extension constraints

Political interference ranked I followed by multiple ownership of land, protest from application of organic manure, groupism ranked as II, III, IV respectively. Political interference is a major concern because it interferes in the fair distribution of various resources that includes land, subsidies, funding etc. Political interference often leads to corruption that diverts the funds to intermediaries or political figures. Due to frequent changes in policies, it creates an unstable environment and SHGs struggle a lot for long-term planning of a project. Overcoming these challenges involves

implementing inclusive policies, promoting gender equality, fostering community engagement, and improving labour conditions. Additionally, educational initiatives and community outreach programs can raise awareness and build support for horticultural activities. By addressing social constraints proactively, horticultural enterprises can create a more inclusive and supportive environment, leading to enhanced productivity, innovation, and long-term sustainability in the sector.



**Fig 6:** Distribution of women self-help group according to Social Constraints

### Conclusions

In conclusion, addressing constraints faced by women self-help groups in horticultural enterprises is vital for their empowerment and the overall success of the sector. These constraints include limited access to resources, gender biases, lack of training and education, inadequate market linkages, and insufficient financial support. Overcoming these challenges requires targeted interventions such as enhancing access to credit and resources, providing tailored training programs, and creating strong market networks. Additionally, fostering an inclusive environment that challenges gender biases and promotes equal opportunities is crucial. By effectively addressing these constraints, women self-help groups can significantly contribute to the growth and sustainability of horticultural enterprises, leading to economic empowerment and improved livelihoods for women.

### Future scope

By focusing on these areas, the future scope for overcoming constraints faced by women SHGs in horticultural enterprises looks promising. Empowering women through targeted interventions and supportive policies can lead to increased productivity, improved livelihoods, and greater gender equality in the agricultural sector.

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