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Empowering women Self-Help Group (SHG) members through trainings on livestock and poultry farming

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Abstract

The present study was conducted in Veterinary University Training and Research Centre (VUTRC), a constituent unit of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu. The study was conducted to know the effect of imparting training to women farmers on livestock and poultry farming. A total of 100 beneficiary women self-help group (SHG) members who underwent the training programme on livestock management under Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission (TNSRLM: 2023-2024) were the respondents. Data were collected from the trainees using structured questionnaires and conducting group discussion methods. Majority of the trainees perceived medium level satisfaction from the training on housing management (51.00%), feeding management (56.00%), health management (61.00%) and breeding management (59.00%). The knowledge score increase was more in Housing management (30.30%) followed by animal or bird selection (26.26%) and stakeholder institution (2.82%). It clearly envisages the gain in knowledge at post-training stage. The results would be useful to develop or strengthen training curriculum on livestock and poultry farming to benefit women farmers.

Keywords: Knowledge, livestock and poultry farming, Self-Help Group, training, women farmers

Introduction

In India, Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) introduced by the Government of India in 1999 has progressed as National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in 2011. The scheme is being implemented in Tamil Nadu as Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihood Mission (TNSRLM). Women also play a crucial and significant role in agriculture and allied activities, which include livestock, poultry, fodder production, horticulture, post-harvest operation, social forestry, fisheries etc. Therefore, women are considered as the backbone of agriculture (Vasanthakumari *et al.*, 2019)^[4]. Animal husbandry and fisheries sector offered around 9.05 per cent of total work force in the country. Women constitute 48.46 per cent of total population in India as per census data 2011 (Jadoun *et al.*, 2021)^[5]. In recent past, the extension system started give emphasising on empowerment of women farmers through frontline extension and advisory services and technology dissemination.

Self-help group members (SHGs) aimed to empower the rural women. SHGs enhances the outreach of extension and advisory services offered by frontline extension service delivery system such as state department of animal husbandry (SDAH) and state veterinary universities (SVUs). SHGs aimed at financial management, skill development, and entrepreneurship among the members. On the other hand, women members who keep livestock and poultry need training on new technologies to enhance the productivity and production in their livestock and poultry farms (Jothilakshmi *et al.*, 2009)^[1]. Such training can cater the

needs of the farmers now and in the near future (Shyam *et al.*, 2024)^[3]. In Tamil Nadu, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS) offers extension and advisory services through its constituent units particularly through its Veterinary University Training and Research Centres (VUTRCs), *Krishi Vigyan Kendras* (KVKs), Farmers Training Centres (FTC) and Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC). Under Tamil Nadu State Rural Livelihoods Mission (TNSRLM), the training programmes on dairy, small ruminant and poultry farming were conducted during 2024. In this background, the study was conducted to know the effect of imparting training to empower women farmers on livestock and poultry farming.

Materials and Methods

A total 100 women SHG members, comprising 33 dairy farmers, 33 small ruminant farmers and 34 poultry farmers, representing the ten blocks of Dharmapuri District, Tamil Nadu were selected randomly after preparing the sampling universe from the registered SHG members. They were imparted one-day training, totally three trainings, on dairy farming, small ruminant farming and poultry farming at Veterinary University Training and Research Centre (VUTRC), a constituent unit of Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (TANUVAS), Dharmapuri district, Tamil Nadu. Questions and statements on knowledge test questions and level of satisfaction perceived by women farmers were structured in discussion with experts and field veterinarians and by referring past

researches. Thus, structured questionnaire, the data collection tool used in the study, was finalized. Data were collected by before and after training programme. A group discussion involving trainees was organized to study about the insights developed from the training among the trainees.

The collected data were analyzed and the salient findings of the study are given below.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Knowledge of trainee women farmers before and after training (n=100)

S. No.	Knowledge test on	No. of questions	Possible score	Before training		After training		Knowledge score increased due to training (%)
				Mean score	SD	Mean score	SD	
1.	Animal or bird selection	3	0 to 6	2.27 (37.88)	1.21	3.85 (64.14)	1.03	26.26
2.	Housing management	4	0 to 8	3.21 (40.15)	1.22	5.64 (70.45)	1.11	30.30
3.	Feeding management	6	0 to 12	6.79 (56.57)	1.88	8.97 (74.75)	1.13	18.18
4.	Value addition and marketing	6	0 to 12	6.06 (50.51)	1.34	7.79 (64.90)	1.17	14.39
5.	Health management	6	0 to 12	7.30 (60.86)	1.45	9.00 (75.00)	1.12	14.14
6.	Breeding management	5	0 to 10	6.45 (64.55)	1.60	7.36 (73.64)	1.54	9.09
7.	Stakeholder institutions	5	0 to 10	4.64 (46.36)	0.86	6.82 (68.18)	1.18	21.82
8.	Overall	35	0 to 70	36.73 (52.47)	6.58	49.42 (70.61)	5.03	18.14

SD – Standard Deviation

*Figures in the parentheses indicate percentage of mean score to maximum score possible on the chosen knowledge test

The trainee SHG members keeping livestock and poultry showed significant increase in their knowledge on housing management, animal or bird selection and stakeholder institutions with a respective knowledge score increase 30.30, 26.26 and 21.82 per cents. Focussed group discussion involving trainee farmers and progressive farmers reveal that the members’ focus and interest on the topics could be the reason behind such knowledge increase. Knowledge score increase in feeding, value addition, marketing and health management witnessed moderate increase, as the farmers might have significant knowledge already on these aspects. Knowledge score increase in breeding management witnessed less increase, as the artificial insemination is familiar among the farmers. The trainees showed 18.14 per cent overall increase knowledge score, which clearly states that the training impacted desirable on the trainees’ know-how knowledge in livestock and poultry farming. The results clearly envisages that training on dairy, small ruminant and poultry farming was effective in enhancing the knowledge of trainee SHG members.

Table 2: Satisfaction perceived by trainee women farmers (n=100)

S. No.	Training on	Level of satisfaction perceived by women farmers		
		Low	Medium	High
1.	Selection of animal or bird	27	48	25
2.	Housing management	44	51	5
3.	Feeding management	26	56	18
4.	Value addition and marketing	57	32	11
5.	Health management	22	61	17
6.	Breeding management	31	59	10
7.	Stakeholder institutions	43	44	13

Among the trainee SHG members, 25, 18 and 17 per cents perceived high level of satisfaction on the training imparted on selection of animal or bird, feeding management and health management. Among the trainees, majority of them i.e., 61, 59, 56 and 51 per cents perceived medium level of satisfaction on the training imparted on health, breeding, feeding and housing management. Significantly, majority of the trainees (57%) expressed low level satisfaction on value addition and marketing. This emphasises the importance of strengthening training curriculum especially on the value addition and marketing component.

Conclusion

The training on dairy, small ruminant and poultry improved the SHG women farmers’ knowledge and they perceived significant satisfaction from the training programme. Knowledge score increase is more in housing management, animal or bird selection and stakeholder institutions. Also, the satisfaction perceived by the trainees varies from low to high level which necessitates the importance of updating training curriculum with suitable modification. As the SHG members can act as a community level livestock promoters, trainings targeting SHG members can be increased to enhance the technology dissemination among the farmers.

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