

Training Needs of Rural Women in Hilly Areas for Their Empowerment

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Abstract

The present study was formulated with aim to identify the areas of training needs for rural women empowerment, the constraints faced by rural women's in hilly areas towards their self-employment and suggestions to overcome the problems. The results revealed that two third of the rural women preferred training on handicraft (66.00 percent) and it occupied first rank in the training need. Nearly half of the rural women preferred pickle making (47.00 percent) as one of the training need. Two third of rural women (37.00 Per cent) preferred goat rearing as one of the important areas of training need. Nearly one fourth (24.00 per cent) of the rural women preferred honey value addition as one of the training area in hilly areas and it occupies fourth rank in training needs. The dairy farming area was preferred by 23 percent of rural women and it occupies fifth rank in training need. Majority of the respondents prefer panchayat union office (95 percent) and village school (93 percent) as a convenient training venue followed by farmer's field (78 percent) and research station (67 percent). Most of the rural women preferred demonstration method (87 percent) followed by study tour (63 percent) as training methods. Major constraint felt by rural women was infrastructural constraint. Less hospital facility was seriously felt by majority of the rural women (67 per cent). The electricity problem was felt by 61 per cent of rural women. Followed by lack of drainage facility (50 per cent) and poor sanitary facility (45 per cent) were major constraints. Majority (82 per cent) of rural women suggested creating awareness in government program, training, and entrepreneurship. The most of the rural women (80 per cent) are suggested that providing loans through SHG to overcome their economic constraint and for their self-employment activities.

Key Words: Training needs, rural women, hilly areas, empowerment

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1. Introduction

Women and children, who represent more than two-thirds (67.7 per cent) of the country's total population, constitute the most important target group in the context of the present day developmental planning. Therefore, their concerns are placed on the priority list of the country's developmental agenda. (Census, 2001). Rural women play a key role in supporting their households and communities in achieving food and nutrition security, generating income, and improving rural livelihoods and overall well-being. Their contribution to agriculture and rural enterprises and fuel local and global economies. Yet, every day, around the world, rural women faces persistent structural constraints that prevent them from fully enjoying their human rights and hamper their efforts to improve their lives as well as those of others around them.

Though rural women in hilly areas do not possess much of the social problem as they have on earlier days, they are not supposed to live alone rural areas possess. This is mainly because as they are not economically independent mostly. Women empowerment is an active process and dynamic process that enables them to realize their identity and power in all aspects of life. It enables them to have more access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision-making, greater ability to plan their work, free them from the clutches of irrelevant custom builds and practices.

Entrepreneurship can help women's economic independence and improve their status. Promotion of entrepreneurship among rural women is the major step to increase women's participation in economic development. Women can become competent entrepreneurs for which they need proper training. Training is considered as a useful tool for growth of entrepreneurship. Training is helpful in enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of entrepreneurs. Training on developed technologies empowers women to acquire more relevant qualification and values to meet the demands of entrepreneurship. In hilly areas lot of resources is available for value addition and greater possibility of entrepreneurship development. Rural women in hilly areas have greater interest to establish small entrepreneurship. Identification of areas of training or avenue for entrepreneurship is the first and foremost step in rural women development in hilly areas. Identification of resources available, infrastructure available, areas of possibility of entrepreneurship development and providing training will make changes in their status. Keeping this in view the present study was formulated with aim to identify the areas of training or training needs for their empowerment, to study the relationship of personal factors with training needs, to study the constrains faced by rural women's in hilly areas towards their self-employment and suggestions to overcome the problems

2. Materials and Methods

In Tamil Nadu state, Dindugal district possess two hilly stations with large number of rural population (2.4 per cent) in hilly areas in Tamil Nadu (Census, 2001). Hence Dindugal district was selected for this study. Out of 14 blocks in Dindugal district, only in Dindugal and Kodaikanal blocks have well known hilly areas viz. Kodaikanal and Sirumalai. Dindugal block was selected purposively for this study. In Dindugal block, Sirumalai consists of large population of rural people in hilly areas. Hence, Sirumalai village was selected for this study. A sample size of one hundred rural women was selected randomly from Sirumalai village for this study. Training need in this study has been operationalized as the required level of training by respondents.

Twenty seven areas of training needs were identified in discussion with extension workers, scientist, and previous studies, literature and based on the resources availability in the study area. Each respondent was asked to state the preferred subject matter area of training type of training, venue of training, season of training, duration of training and training methods and their preference was expressed in ranks. The scoring procedure followed by Selvarani (2000) was adopted in this study. The data collection was done with the use of a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Suitable statistical tools like percentage analysis, cumulative frequency, correlation and multiple regression were used to analyze the data. The cumulative frequency method adopted by Selvarani (2000) was used to categorize the respondents.

$$L = K + \frac{[L_2 - C]N}{f} \quad \text{Where,}$$

K = Medium between lower limit of the class in which L_i occurs and the upper limit of the previous class

L_i = Boundary values namely, L_1 and L_2

C = cumulative square root of frequency up to the classes preceding the class in which L_i lies.

n = interval of the class

f = square root of frequency in the class in which the median lies.

Then the three categories were formed as detailed below:

Below L_1 value	-	Low
Below L_1 and L_2 value	-	Medium
Above L_2 value	-	High

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Training Needs for Empowerment of Rural Women:

3.1.1. Subject Matter

The subject matter preferred by the respondents for training are presented in Table 1. It could be observed from the table 1 that two third of the rural women preferred training on handicraft (66.00 percent) and it occupied first rank in the training need. Most of the rural women wanted to do some enterprises in the home itself without affecting their daily routine homework; this might be the reason for handicrafts work occupies first rank in training need. Nearly half of the rural women preferred pickle making (47.00 percent) as one of the training need. Availability raw material and possibility of doing the enterprises in home itself might be the reason for selecting pickle making as second preference in training need. These results are in similar with the results of Sheela (1989) and Rajula Shanthi (2015).

Two third of rural women (37.00 Per cent) preferred goat rearing as one of the important areas of training need. Availability of grassing land in hilly areas might be the reason for selecting goat rearing as one of the training need. Nearly one fourth (24.00 per cent) of the rural women preferred honey value addition as one of the training area in hilly areas and it occupies fourth rank in training needs. Availability of resource material might be the reason for selecting honey value addition as one of the training need.

The dairy farming area was preferred by 23 percent of rural women and it occupies fifth rank in training need. Lack of marketing facilities for milk and dairy products might be the reasons for low percentage of rural women prefers dairy farming.

This was followed by value addition of sirumalai banana (13percent), vermicomposting technique (12 percent), mushroom and spawn production (12 percent), para extension work in pest and disease management(10 per cent), seed production (9percent) , poultry rearing (9 per cent), Forest products value addition (9 percent) , cultivation of medicinal plants (7 percent), paper cup making (7 percent) , post-harvest technology, value addition, grading, storage, export and market the forest product (6 percent), job oriented vocational training (6 percent), ornamental flower production (5 percent), aloe vera cultivation and value addition (5 percent), water management equipment maintenance techniques (4 percent), para extension work in animal husbandry technique(3 percent), spice production, recent technology for package and marketing(3 percent)value addition of minor millets (2 percent), bheedi making(1 percent) and portray nursery production (1 percent).

3.1.2. Training type, training venue, training season and training timings

The training type, training venue, training season and training timings preferred by rural women were collected and presented in Table 2.

Training type

From the table 2, it could be observed that most of the rural women preferred peripatetic training (99 percent) and 37.00 percent rural women preferred institutional training. Prevailing of poor bus facility might be the reasons for high preference over peripatetic type of training. And also they think that institutional training affects their routine home work. The results are similar with the results of Thangachamy (1993).

Training venue

Venue of training is one of the important factors influencing the respondent's participation in training program. It could be seen from the table 2 that majority of the respondents prefer panchayat union office (95 percent) and village school (93 percent) as a convenient training venue followed by farmer field (78 percent) and research station (67 percent). The results are in line with the results of Venkatesan (1997).

Season of training

The season of training supports the success of any training program. From the table 2 it could be seen that in institutional training (30 percent) rural women preferred summer season and 23 percent rural women preferred winter season. In peripatetic training 75 percent rural women preferred summer training and 35 percent preferred winter training. Because of high dew during winter in sirumalai hills people gives less preference to winter season and high preference to summer season.

Timings

The table 2 revealed that in institutional training majority of the respondents prefers full day (30 percent) training program followed by afternoon (7 percent) and forenoon (5 percent). About peripatetic training majority of the respondents prefers full day training (51 percent) followed by afternoon (38 percent) and forenoon (18 percent).

3.1.3. Training methods

The preferred training methods are presented in the Table No 3. It could be seen from the table 3 that most of the rural women preferred demonstration method (87 percent) followed by study tour (63 percent), exhibition (43 percent), field visit (27 percent), video films (12 percent), discussion (10 percent), lectures (5 percent), lecture with discussion (4 percent) and lecture with projected aids (2 percent). The rural women give more preference to demonstration, study tour, exhibition and low preference to lecture and discussion. The rural women not only wanted to know the techniques but also they wanted to see how to do the things might be the reasons for more percentage for demonstration method.

3.2. Relationship and Contribution of Personal factors towards Training Needs of Rural Women for their Empowerment:

Correlation analysis

To find out the relationship between personal factors with training needs simple correlation was performed. The results are presented in the Table 4. It could be seen from the table 4 that out of 16 variables studied four variables namely Educational Status, Communication Status, Farm power status and Economic motivation were positive and significant association with dependent variable at 1 per cent level of probability. Material Status and Occupational Status were positive and significant association at 5 per cent probability. The rest of the variables had non-significant association with dependent variable training need.

Multiple regressions

In order to find out the relative contribution of each personal factor towards training needs multiple regression analysis was performed and results are presented in the Table 5. It could be discerned from the table 5 that R^2 value was 0.42 that indicated that 42 per cent of variation in training needs of rural women was explained by 16 variables selected for this study. The prediction equation for the cause and effect relationship was fitted for the training needs of rural women was given below. There existed linear functional relationship between the personal factors and training needs. Also the table 5 indicated that regression co-efficient of four variables viz., Educational Status, Communication Status, Economic motivation and Scientific orientation were positive significant.

$$Y_1 = 0.001(X_1) - 0.678(X_2) - 0.105(X_3) - 0.470(X_4) - 0.302(X_5) + 0.022(X_6) - 0.113(X_7) - 0.679(X_8) - 0.527(X_9) - 0.059(X_{10}) + 0.003(X_{11}) + 0.049(X_{12}) - 0.288(X_{13}) - 0.457(X_{14}) - 0.929(X_{15}) - 0.407(X_{16}).$$

This includes that a unit increases *ceteris paribus* in Educational Status, Communication Status, Economic motivation and scientific orientation would result in an increase of 0.001, 0.022, 0.003 and 0.049 units respectively. Hence it could be inferred from the study that training needs of rural women for their empowerment was positively influenced by Educational Status, Communication Status, Economic motivation and scientific orientation.

3.3. Constraints faced by rural women:

During the data collection, rural women were requested to express the major constraints they had in their empowerment and results are in the Table 6.

3.3.1. Infrastructure constraints

It is evident from the table 6 that the major constraint felt by rural women was infrastructural constraint. In sirumalai transport facilities were very poor. There was no police station. There was no college and no school for secondary education. Only five sanitary workers were there. Less hospital facility was seriously felt by majority of the rural women (67 per cent). Because there was no hospital facility and only one primary health center was available with less manpower. The electricity problem was felt by 61 per cent of rural women. Followed by lack of drainage facility (50 per cent) and poor sanitary facility (45 per cent) were major constraints. Hence, these constraints got third and fourth ranking. Lack of school (43 per cent), non-availability of police station (41 per cent), non-availability of collage (37 per cent), poor road condition (35 per cent), poor drinking water (32 per cent), inadequate numbers of street lamp (27 per cent), lack of library facilities (17 per cent), non-availability of petrol bunk (15 per cent) were also expressed as constraints.

3.3.2. Extension constraints

Non availability of good extension service (60 per cent) was felt by majority of the rural women respondents and it occupied 1st rank among extension constraints. This might be due to remoteness of Sirumalai village. Followed by unreach of government policies (57 per cent) and lack of technical training (43 per cent) were also expressed as extension constraints.

3.3.3. Communication constraints

The major communication constraint expressed by the rural women was poor circulation of variety of newspaper (65 per cent). Because of remoteness of the village, they seriously felt lack of access of TV channels (33 per cent) and Radio channels (10 per cent).

3.3.4. Economic constraints

High wages to labourers (54 per cent) was the foremost economic constraint reported. Non availabilities of credit facilities (49 per cent) and lack of employment opportunities (43 per cent) were also expressed as important constraints by nearly half of the rural women respondents. This results are similar in line with the results of Dharani (2008).

3.3.5. Personal constraints

Lack of technical knowledge (71 per cent), unawareness (58 per cent) and illiteracy (47 per cent) were the important personal constraints faced by the rural women respondents. Poor extension service is the main reason for their unawareness and lack of technical knowledge.

3.3.6. Agricultural constraints

In Sirumalai wild animal was the major problem to do agriculture. Wild animals destroy their farms and interfere in their farm activities. So it was felt as major agricultural constraint by the majority of rural women (72 per cent). Followed by laborer's problem felt by 45 per cent of rural women. Then undesirable climatic factor (43 per cent) and lack of technology (40 per cent) also expressed as agricultural constraint. The incident of pest and disease was low in hilly areas compare to plains and one fifth (20 per cent) of the respondents felt pest and disease as agricultural constraint.

3.3.7. Marketing constraints

There was no marketing facility in their village. They have to go to Dindugal market to sell their products. So lack of marketing facilities (41 per cent) was the major marketing constraint felt by rural women. Lack of good transport facility (35 per cent) and high transport cost (27 per cent) also expressed as major marketing constraints. Poor road facility might be the reasons for inadequate marketing facilities. This results are in line with the results of Elavarasi (2012).

3.4. Suggestions by rural women to overcome their constraints

The suggestion offered by the rural women to overcome their constraints for their empowerment were collected and presented in the table 7. In Sirumalai, there was lacking in road, hospital, school, college, bus, street lamp, drinking water, drainage and library facilities. Cent percent of the rural women stressed the suggested for overall improvement of infrastructure facilities and it occupies first rank in suggestions.

About 82 per cent of rural women suggested creating awareness in government program, training and entrepreneurship. They mostly prefer awareness in handcraft making as entrepreneurship opportunity. The most of the rural women (80 per cent) are suggested that providing loans through SHG to overcome their economic constraint and for their self-employment activities.

Nearly three fourth (71 per cent) of the rural women suggested periodical technical training therefore more number of training programs has to be organized for them. Due to the remoteness of the sirumalai village they have no market facility in their village itself. The majority of the rural women suggested (70 per cent) to establish market in their village. Three fifth (60 per cent) of the rural women suggested that improving extension facilities in their village as felt needed. Most the rural women suggested that the extension functionaries need to visit them frequently and disseminate the latest technologies. Nearly three fifth (57 per cent) of rural women suggested that creation of alternate job opportunities is most needed. Because most of them were wage earners and they were interested in entrepreneurship.

Conclusion

Women in Sirumalai hills possess rich source for their development. Rural women in hilly areas have greater interest to establish small entrepreneurship. Their rich source can be effectively utilized to their empowerment training can be given for their empowerment. If the women in hilly areas are properly trained by using the resource among the areas could empower themselves meeting their needs and also in developing the country's growth merely.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research:

1. The present study is confined to only one village of a district of Tamil Nadu. The Hilly villages are spread all over Tamil Nadu. Therefore it is suggested to conduct studies at macro level. By this more valid and appropriate livelihood strategies can be formulated.
2. A comparative study of women of different hills of various place among the state and country would bring the real facts of the women in hilly areas.
3. Attitude towards Self Employment among women can be studied.
4. An exclusive study on constraints encountered by women in hilly areas in day-to-day life is required.
5. An exclusive study on Training needs for the women in hilly areas for their empowerment is required.
6. Studies on means of their livelihood support can be undertaken.

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Table 1 Distribution of respondents based training need on subject matter

S. No	Subject matter	Percentage	Rank
1	Handcraft like candle making, soap powder mix, embroidering, tailoring, phenol	66.00	I
2	Pickle making	47.00	II
3	Goat rearing	37.00	III
4	Honey value addition	24.00	IV
5	Dairy farming and value addition	23.00	V
6	Value addition sirumalai banana	13.00	VI
7	Vermicomposting technique	12.00	VII
8	Mushroom and spawn production	12.00	VII
9	Para extension work in pest and disease management	10.00	VIII
10	Backyard poultry rearing	9.00	IX
11	Forest products value addition	9.00	IX
12	Seed production, seedling production	9.00	IX
13	Cultivation techniques of medicinal plants and value addition	7.00	X
14	Paper cup making	7.00	X
15	Postharvest technology, value addition, grading, storage, export and market the forest product	6.00	XI
16	Job oriented vocational training	6.00	XI
17	Ornamental flower production	5.00	XII
18	Aloe vera cultivation and value addition	5.00	XII
19	Water management equipment maintenance techniques	4.00	XIII
20	Para extension work in animal husbandry techniques	3.00	XIV
21	Spice production, recent technology for package and marketing	3.00	XIV
22	Value addition of minor millets	2.00	XV
23	Bheedi making	1.00	XVI
24	Portray nursery production	1.00	XVI

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their training type, training venue, training season and training timings

Sl.No	Particulars	Number	Percent
1.	Training type		
	a. Institutional training	37	37.00
	b. Peripatetic training	99	99.00
2.	Training venue		
	a. Village school	93	93
	b. Panchayat union office	95	95
	c. Regional research station /KVK	67	67
	d. Fellow farmers field	78	78
3.	Training season		
	Institutional training		
	a. Summer	30	30
	b. Winter	23	23
	Peripatetic training		
	a. Summer	75	75
	b. Winter	35	35
4.	Timings		
	Institutional training		
	a. Forenoon	5	5
	b. Afternoon	7	7
	c. Full day	30	30
	Peripatetic training		
	a. Forenoon	18	18
	b. Afternoon	38	38
	c. Full day	51	51

Table No 3: Distribution of respondents based on training methods

Sl. No	Training methods	Number	Rank
1	Demonstration	87	I
2	Study tour	63	II
3	Exhibition	43	III
4	Field visit	27	IV
5	Videos films	12	V
6	Discussion	10	VI
7	Lecture	5	VII
8	Lecture cum discussion	4	VIII
9	Lecture with projected aids	2	IX

Table 4: Association of personal factors towards Training Needs of Rural Women for their Empowerment

Sl. No	Variables	Pearson correlation value
1	Educational Status	0.425**
2	Farming Experience	-0.155
3	Family Status	0.023
4	Occupational Status	0.251*
5	Farm Status	0.142
6	Communication Status	0.279**
7	Farm power status	0.307**
8	Material Status	0.232*
9	Social Participation status	0.108
10	Extension agency contact	-0.068
11	Economic motivation	0.294**
12	Scientific orientation	-0.018
13	Attitude towards self-employment	0.170
14	Entrepreneur orientation	0.090
15	Credit orientation	0.051
16	Norms, mores	0.189

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5: Contribution of personal factors towards Training Needs of Rural Women for their Empowerment

Sl. No	Variables	Co efficient	Std. Error	P Value
	Constant	22.035	22.474	.330NS
1	Educational Status	2.909	.861	.001**
2	Farming Experience	.292	.701	.678NS
3	Family Status	-.926	.564	.105NS
4	Occupational Status	.705	.970	.470NS
5	Farm Status	-.373	.359	.302NS
6	Communication Status	2.392	1.022	.022*
7	Farm power status	.244	.152	.113NS
8	Material Status	0.00492	.120	.679Ns
9	Social Participation status	-.546	.861	.527NS
10	Extension agency contact	-.295	.154	.059NS
11	Economic motivation	.787	.256	.003**
12	Scientific orientation	-.482	.241	.049*
13	Attitude towards self-employment	.207	.194	.288NS
14	Entrepreneurship orientation	2.128	2.848	.457NS
15	Credit orientation	-0.00749	.834	.929NS
16	Norms, mores and taboos	.552	.663	.407NS

$R^2 = 0.42^{**}$

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 6: Constraints based by rural women

S. No	Constraints faced	Number	Per cent	Rank
1.	Infrastructure constraints			
	i. Less hospital facility	67.00	67.00	1
	ii. Electricity problem	61	61	2
	iii. Lack of drainage facility	50	50	3
	iv. Poor sanitary condition	45	45	4
	v. School	43	43	5
	vi. Non availability of police station	41	41	6
	vii. Non availability of collage	37	37	7
	viii. poor Road condition	35	35	8
	ix. Drinking water	32	32	9
	x. Street lamp	27	27	10
	xi. Need of library	17	17	11
	xii. Non availability of petrol bank	15	15	12
2.	Extension constraints			
	i. Non availability of good extension service	60	60	1
	ii. Unreached of government policies			
	iii. Lack of technical training	57	57	2
		43	43	3
3.	Communication constraints			
	i. Non availability of newspaper	65	65	1
	ii. Non availability of TV	33	33	2
	iii. Non availability of radio	10	10	3
4.	Economic constraints			
	i. High wages to labourers	54	54	1
	ii. Non availability of credit facilities	49	49	2
	iii. Lack of employment opportunities	43	43	3
5.	Personal constraints			
	i. Lack of technical knowledge	71	71	1
	ii. Unawareness	58	58	2
	iii. Illiteracy	47	47	3
6	Agricultural constraints			
	i. Wild animal problem	72	72	1
	ii. Lack of labours	45	45	2
	iii. Undesirable climatic factor	43	43	3
	iv. Lack of technology	40	40	4
	v. Incident of pest and diseases	20	20	5
7	Marketing constraints			
	i. Lack of marketing facilities	41	41	1
	ii. Lack of good transport facilities	35	35	2
	iii. High transport cost	27	27	3

Table 7: Suggestions by Rural Women to overcome their constraints

S. No	Suggestions	Per cent	Rank
1.	Overall improvement of infrastructure facilities	100	I
2.	Creating awareness i) Government programs ii) Training iii) Entrepreneurship	82	II
3.	Credit facilities through SHG	80	III
4.	Periodical technical training	71	IV
5.	Establishing market at village level	70	V
6.	Improvement of extension facilities	60	VI
7.	Creating alternative jobs	57	VII