

Role of Krishi Vigyan Kendras in Women Empowerment: A Study of Haryana State

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Abstract

Development of a country cannot be fully achieved as long as its women are confined to subordinate positions. The talents of women remain unexplored without their empowerment. It is also true that poverty in both developing and developed countries has a predominantly female face. Hence, empowerment of women plays a vital role in the progress of community and nation and particularly towards their families. The Government of India has formulated various training and development cum employment generations programmes. Majority of such schemes/programmes provide more assistance to the women regarding starting their own ventures. One such programme is Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) that provides vocational training to the rural women for making them self-dependent which ultimately help to empower them. Therefore, four KVKs of Haryana viz. Rohtak, Hisar, Kurukshetra and Mohindergarh district KVKs have been studied. The data have been collected from those trainees who participated in 'Cutting & Tailoring' and 'Fruit & Vegetable Preservation' trainings with the help of schedule method. The responses so gathered are that majority of the respondents stated their knowledge and skill developed after getting vocational training from KVKs. Furthermore, only less than two-fifth of the total respondents replied that KVKs vocational training was helpful in improving their status.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Vocational Training, Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

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Introduction

Development of a country can't be fully achieved as long as its women are confined to subordinate positions. The talents of women remain unexplored without their empowerment. It is also true that poverty in both developing and developed countries has a predominantly female face. Hence, empowerment of women plays a vital role in the progress of the nation community and especially in their families. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which provides different opportunities to a group or an individual to work in various spheres of life. It helps to create the ability of knowledge and resources, provides autonomy in decision making that enable them to enrich their lives (Gupta, 2008). Thus, women empowerment helps to control over the circumstances that influence their lives and free from limit that are imposed over them through custom, tradition, belief and practice. Therefore, greater emphasis needs to be over the active involvement of women in all the spheres of societal activities. It is known fact that the women are kept out of all the domains. In this context, women empowerment is much great need. It is not limited to power but it is a much broader concept. It is a process that is facilitated by creating awareness about their rights regarding to social, economical, educational and political. The women empowerment is an outcome of achieving gender equality, gaining self-confidence, building productive capacity, getting power in taking decisions, and gaining control over resources (Uplaonkar, 2005). Entrepreneurship is success key for the socio-economic development of the women. Self-employment is a way for becoming self-dependent in form of finance that leads to economic empowerment of women (Bhagyalakshmi, 2004). The developing countries like India have assigned greater importance for the development of entrepreneurship and encouraged the establishment of small scale industries to tackle the most burning problem of unemployment. Entrepreneurship has been considered as the solution for many socio-economic problems faced by the country. Small enterprises provide productive outlets to the talents, independent people and many of those who may not fulfill their potential in large organizations. They enhance community stability, stimulate personal savings, promote industrial linkages, improve rural welfare and generally raise the level of popular participation in the economy (Sathibama, 2010). The Government of India has formulated various training and development cum employment generations programmes. Majority of such schemes/programmes provide more assistance to the women regarding starting their own ventures. One such programme is Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) that provides vocational training to the rural women so that they (women) could start their own professional activity at micro or small level. KVKs' efforts through vocational training help women to make them self-dependent and ultimately empower them. In this regard, the first KVK was established at Pondicherry on pilot basis in 1974 on the recommendation

of the Kothari Commission (1964-66) (Krishi Vigyan Kendra Telephone Directory-2016). With the passage of time, the government has been extended the number of KVKs with the help of economic five year plans. At present 710 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) exist all over India (<http://www.icar...>). It provides vocational training in various areas such as cutting & tailoring, fruit & vegetable preservation, mushroom cultivation, bee-keeping, dairy farming, horticulture, etc (Krishi Vigyan Kendra Telephone Directory-2016). The researcher makes an attempt to know the role of KVKs in women empowerment through vocational training especially in cutting & tailoring and fruit & vegetable preservation with the help of following objectives.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the role of KVKs in the development of knowledge and skill among the women trainees.
2. To find out whether women trainees initiated professional activity after getting training from KVKs.
3. To study whether status of the women trainees improved after getting training from KVKs.

Research Methodology

The study has been conducted in Haryana state. Thus, four districts have been taken with the help of lottery method. Among the various vocational training programmes imparted by KVKs, two training programmes viz. 'cutting & tailoring' and 'fruit & vegetable preservation' have been taken purposively. These training programmes were provided by all the selected KVKs. A list of trainees who participated in the vocational training programmes from 2015 to 2017 has been taken from the KVKs of selected districts. Scientifically, out of total population (720 women trainees), thirty percent (216) sample has been taken for the study purpose. The data have been collected with the help of well structured schedule method. In addition to this, the secondary data have also been considered for the present study.

Analysis of Data

Data shows that an overwhelming majority (97.68 percent) of the respondents belongs to Scheduled Castes. Age wise, 86.10 percent respondents lie between 18 years to 37 years of age. In case of education, 77.78 percent respondents are educated either up to elementary or secondary level. In case of annual income, 62.96 percent respondents have no income because either they are students or housewives, while 37.04 percent respondents earn up to Rs. 75,000 per annum (based on primary data).

1. Role of KVKs in Development of Knowledge

Knowledge means understanding and awareness regarding particular subject. It helps in realisation of the goals of an individual. Furthermore, performance level of a person may be enhanced by acquiring knowledge through training. Hence, researcher tried to know the role of KVKs in women empowerment through development of knowledge especially in case of trainees. The responses of the trainees have been recorded in the Table 1 given below.

Table 1
Role of KVKs in Development of Knowledge N=216

Vocational Training	Total	Did KVKs help in increasing your knowledge through vocational training?		If yes, to what extent your knowledge has been increase?		
		Yes	No	A Little Bit	Moderate	A Lot of
Fruit & Veg. Preservation	72 (100%)	72 (100%)	00	16 (22.22%)	26 (36.11%)	30 (41.67%)
Cutting & Tailoring	144 (100%)	138 (95.83%)	06 (04.17%)	11 (07.97%)	79 (57.25%)	48 (34.78%)
Total	216 (100%)	210 (97.22%)	06 (02.78%)	27 (12.86%)	105 (50.00%)	78 (37.14%)

Source: Primary Data.

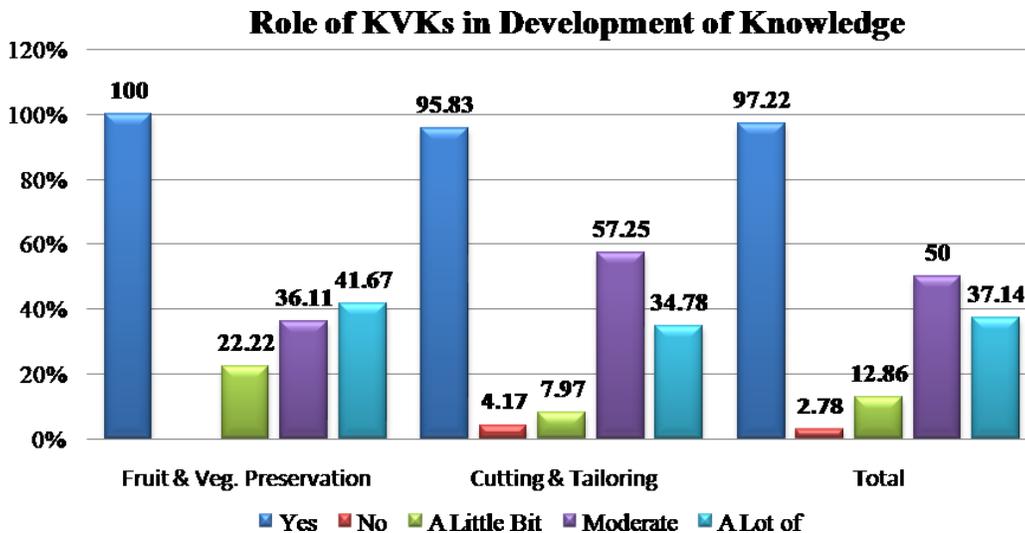


Table & bar graph 1 reveal that an overwhelming majority (97.22 percent) of total respondents stated that vocational training helped them in increasing their knowledge because of lecture and demonstration methods used by the trainers. The trainers played a significant role in explaining scientific term in local language. Being expert in their field, they helped in raising the knowledge level of the trainees. While a very few respondents (02.78 percent) responded that the vocational training was not helpful to increase their knowledge. Those respondents who answered affirmatively were enquired further in terms of extension of their knowledge level. In this regard, out of 210 respondents, exactly one half (50.00 percent) of respondents expressed that their knowledge has been increased to 'moderate' level whereas, 37.14 percent of positively answered respondents claimed that 'a lot of knowledge has been increased. More than one-tenth (12.86 percent) of positively replied respondents informed that only 'a little bit' knowledge has been increased after getting vocational training. In other words, a vast majority of those beneficiaries who answered in positive were benefited either to moderate level or to a high level. This observation was regarding the development of knowledge concerning women beneficiaries.

2. Role of KVKs in Skill Development

Skill is the ability to achieve results with the help of optimum utilization of resources. A person can achieve excellence in his profession on the basis of practice. It helps in improving the ability of a person so that he could utilize skills in the particular field and ultimately get success in his professional work. Accordingly, the researcher made an attempt to know the role of KVKs in skill development of the trainees. The responses have been recorded in Table 2 given below.

Table 2
Role of KVKs in Skill Development **N=216**

Vocational Training	Total	Did KVKs help in improving your skills through vocational training?		If yes, how much did your skills improve?		
		Yes	No	Low	Moderate	High
Fruit & Veg. Preservation	72 (100%)	62 (86.11%)	10 (13.89%)	46 (74.19%)	16 (25.81%)	00
Cutting & Tailoring	144 (100%)	129 (89.58%)	15 (10.42%)	102 (79.07%)	23 (17.83%)	04 (03.10%)
Total	216 (100%)	191 (88.43%)	25 (11.57%)	148 (77.49%)	39 (20.42%)	04 (02.09%)

Source: Primary Data.

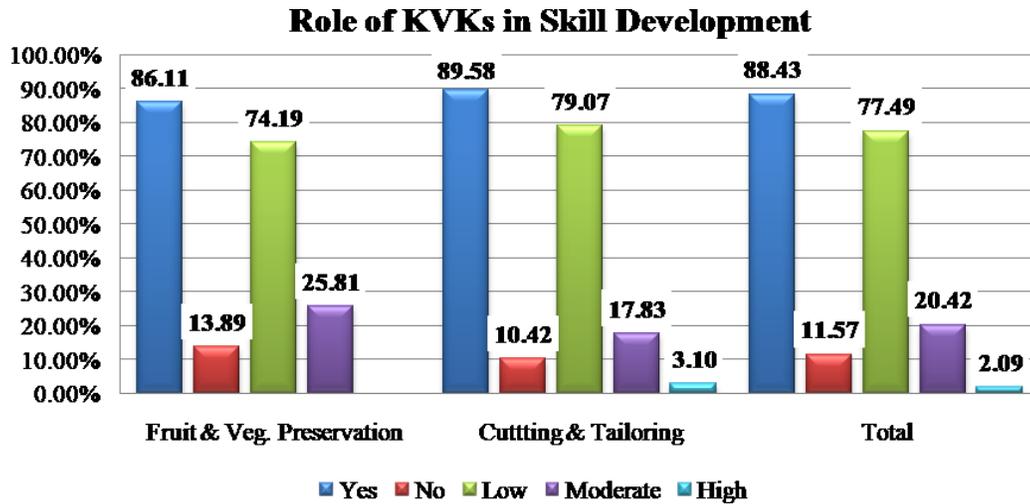


Table & bar graph 2 describe that a high majority i.e. 88.43 percent of total respondents answered that vocational training helped in improving their skills while 11.57 percent of total respondents did not support this view. Training-wise, more than four-fifth respondents of 'cutting & tailoring' (89.58 percent) training as well as of 'fruit & vegetable preservation' training (86.11 percent) answered positively and claimed that vocational training proved helpful in enhancing their skills. Those respondents who answered positively were further enquired. Thus, out of 191 respondents, slightly more than three-fourth (77.49 percent) of respondents stated that vocational training could help in improving their skill up to 'low' level. Whereas, 20.42 percent respondents replied that their skills improved up to 'moderate' level.

3. Commencement of Professional Activity

Commencement of professional activity is usually a dream of almost every unemployed person. Vocational training by KVKs is an attempt in the direction of the fulfillment of dreams of the unemployed. Therefore, the researcher made an attempt to know how many women trainees initiated their professional activity after getting vocational training. Those respondents who replied in negative were enquired further about the reason for not initiating professional activity. The collected data has been illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3
Commencement of Professional Activity N=216

Vocational Training	Total	Did you start any professional activity after seeking vocational training?		If no, what was the reason for not initiating professional activity?	
		Yes	No	Finance	Domestic Work
Fruit & Veg. Preservation	72 (100%)	14 (19.44%)	58 (80.56%)	17 (29.31%)	41 (70.69%)
Cutting & Tailoring	144 (100%)	66 (45.83%)	78 (54.17%)	24 (30.77%)	54 (69.23%)
Total	216 (100%)	80 (37.04%)	136 (62.96%)	41 (30.15%)	95 (69.85%)

Source: Primary Data.



Table & bar graph 3 exhibits that more than three-fifth (62.96 percent) of the total respondents feels that KVKs' vocational trainings are not helpful in improving their status. They stated that women are still struggling to find their footing in man's world and starting professional activity is not different from it. As per particular training, slightly more than four-fifth (80.56 percent) respondents of 'fruit & vegetable preservation' training and more than fifty percent (54.17 percent) of 'cutting & tailoring' trainees did not start professional activity after seeking vocational training. While more than one-third (37.04 percent) of the total respondents replied in positive and stated that they started professional activity at

micro level. As per particular training, less than one-half (45.83 percent) respondents of the 'cutting & tailoring' training started professional activity after seeking vocational training from KVKs.

Those replied in negative were enquired further about the reason for not initiating professional activity. Out of these 136 respondents, more than two-third (69.85 percent) respondents stated that 'domestic work' is the main cause of not initiating professional activity. They stated that they engage in taking care of their children, parents and livestock. Less than one-third (30.15 percent) of these respondents replied that lack of 'finance' is the main cause of not initiating professional activity. They defined that women do not have any access to funds and even their family do not support them in this regard.

4. Role of KVKs in Improvement of Women's Status

Status discloses the condition of a person at a particular period of time. It describes the position, respect, importance, admiration, etc. of an individual. Thus, the researcher studied whether the trainees find KVK's vocational training helpful in improving their status or not. Those respondents who answered positively were further enquired whether their socio-economic status improved or not. The responses have been collected and incorporated in Table 4 given below.

Table 4

Role of KVKs in Improvement of Women's Status

N=216

Vocational Training	Total	Do you feel that KVKs' vocational training is helpful in improving your status?		If yes, which type of your status improved?	
		Yes	No	Social	Economic
Fruit & Veg. Preservation	72 (100%)	14 (19.44%)	58 (80.56%)	09 (64.29%)	05 (35.71%)
Cutting & Tailoring	144 (100%)	66 (45.83%)	78 (54.17%)	20 (30.30%)	46 (69.70%)
Total	216 (100%)	80 (37.04%)	136 (62.96%)	29 (36.25%)	51 (63.75%)

Source: Primary Data.

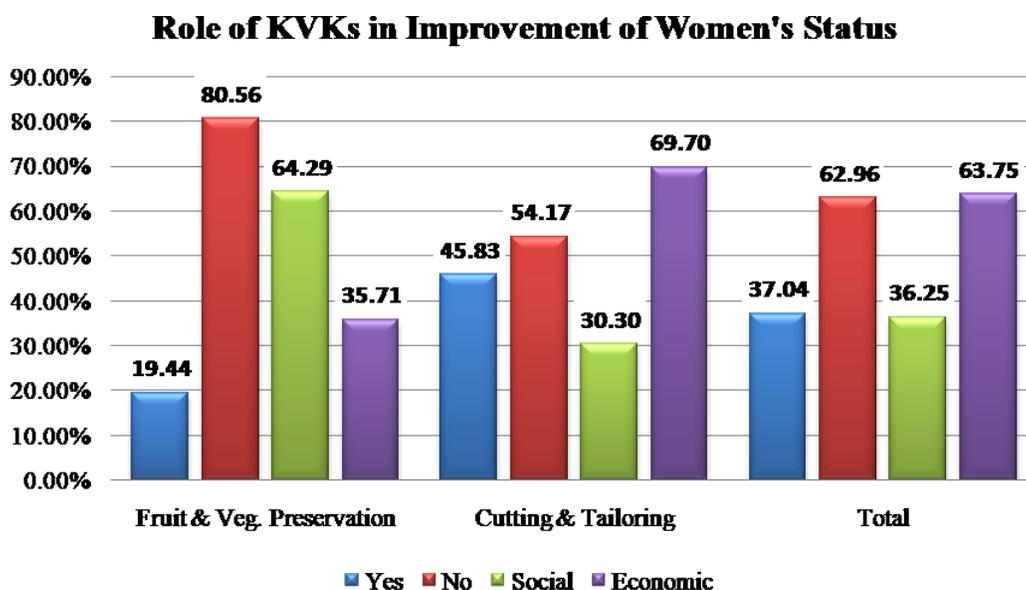


Table & bar graph 4 depict that more than three-fifth (62.96 percent) of the total respondents feels that KVKs' vocational trainings are not helpful in improving their status. The similar percent of total respondents did not start professional activity as mentioned above in Table 3. Whereas, less than two-fifth (37.04 percent) of the total respondents answered in positive way that vocational training imparted by KVKs are helpful in improving their status. In addition to that, more than three-fifth (63.75 percent) of those respondents who answered affirmatively replied further that their economic status improved after getting vocational training from KVKs because they started professional activity and became self-reliant. Moreover, less than two-fifth (36.25 percent) of those respondents who replied positively stated that their social status improved after getting vocational training from KVKs. They defined that their relatives, natives and neighbouring villagers learn skills from them and also take advice regarding to initiation of such kind of professional activity. Consequently, it shows that the socio-economic status of these respondents is highly impacted by the vocational training. Further their self-belief and aspiration are also encouraged.

Main Findings

An overwhelming majority (97.22 percent) of the total respondents stated that vocational training helped them in increasing their knowledge. (Table 1)

A vast majority (87.14 percent) of those beneficiaries who answered in positive has been benefited either to the moderate level or high level regarding the development of knowledge concerning women beneficiaries. (Table 1)

A high majority (88.43 percent) of respondents answered that KVKs training helped in improving their skills. (Table 2)

Slightly more than three-fourth (77.49 percent) of those respondents who replied in positive regarding their skill improvement stated that their skills improved only to a 'low' level. (Table 2)

More than three-fifth (62.96 percent) of the total respondents did not start any professional activity after seeking vocational training from KVKs. They stated that lack of finance and engagement in domestic work are the main reasons for not initiating professional activity. (Table 3)

Less than two-fifth (37.04 percent) of the total respondents feel that KVKs vocational trainings are helpful in improving their socio-economic status. They stated that they could become economically self-reliant as they started professional activity. Furtherer their initiative impacted highly in encouraging other women. (Table 4)

Suggestions

There is a need to launch awareness programmes such as visual films and street plays for illiterate rural women. Whereas, workshops and seminars can be conducted for literate rural women regarding entrepreneurship. Local level representatives, social workers, teachers and retired army personnel can take active steps in this regard.

Awareness programmes for micro, small and medium level entrepreneurship can be promoted through various means such as radio, television, newspaper, etc.

There is a need to create awareness in rural people through educational institutions regarding the safe and nurturing environment for the holistic growth of women.

KVKs can built several inherent qualities such as multi-tasking, team work and high moral values in women during vocational training.

The local level representatives can share success stories of women entrepreneurs with the rural women so that they could be inspired and motivated for entrepreneurship.

In order to remove patriarchal culture from the society, women should be treated equally to men. Hence, there is a need to educate rural men about right to equality through 'prodh sikhsa', 'nukkar natak', 'sarva sikhsa abhiyan', etc. so that men could help women in their domestic work, taking care of their children and parents and raring livestock.

Home management is a key for success to those persons who want to uplift their socio-economic status. Thus, both husband and wife need to help each other in their performing professional activity and family duty.

Government through KVKs can aware women trainees about various financial assistance schemes such as Mudra Yojana, Udygini Scheme Mahila Udyam Nidhi Scheme, Dena Shakti Scheme, Annapurna Scheme, Stree Shakti Package for Women Entrepreneurs, Bhartiya Mahila Business Bank Loan, Trade Related Entrepreneurship Assistance and Development (TREAD), Cent Kalyani Scheme, etc.

Social group and co-operative learning can help in the growth of women empowerment. Basically, a supportive group and similar mind set encourage them to discuss any matter openly so that they could understand the complexities of professional activities.

Conclusion

The union government with the help of Krishi Vigyan Kendras is playing important role not only in women empowerment but also in the growth of agriculture and its allied activities. The study shows that knowledge and skills of the women trainees have improved through KVKs. Yet, there are some hurdles due to which rural women are unable to initiate professional activity. A universal truth is that beginning is always hardest but it cannot break the spirit. Therefore, there is a need to focus on removing hurdles so that women could empower themselves by initiating professional activity. With the help of above suggestions, it may be possible that KVKs can help in empowerment of women as well as society.

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