Original Research Article

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Socio-economic Profile of Cooperative Society Members and Non-members in South Gujarat

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

Socio-economic profile, Socio-economic impact, Cooperative, Gujarat

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The study has examined the socio-economic profile and socio-economic impact of cooperative society on its members and non-members in South Gujarat. For, study primary data were collected on various parameters by using personal interview/enquiry method for the period of 2019-2020 from the selected 28 cooperative societies and 560 respondents (280 cooperative society members and 280 non-members) spread over seven districts of south Gujarat by survey method using interview schedule. It was found that the education level was higher in cooperative society members as compared to the non-members. The average land holding were higher in cooperative society members as compared to non-members. Majority of the cooperative society members (63.57 per cent) were in medium level of social status whereas 40.00 per cent non-members in low social status category. Majority of the cooperative society members (57.86 per cent) were having high annual income whereas 40.00 per cent of the respondent non-members were having low annual income. 43.57 per cent of the cooperative society members were having membership in more than one organization and majority of the respondents (88.57 per cent) were having no membership.

Introduction

Co-operatives occupy an important place in India's rural economy in terms of their membership, business turnover, and contribution to the economic welfare of their members. In some areas and in some sectors, the co-operative societies are serving the masses and playing a vital role in the capacity building and augmenting their income and livelihood.

The co-operative sector in Gujarat has emerged as one of the largest in India with 58459 cooperative societies of various sectors. South Gujarat is the mother land of co-operative sectors with 271 cooperative societies in agricultural sector, 17 cooperative societies in sugar sector and 2278 cooperative societies in dairy sector. The co-operatives have to play an important role in the economy of the country to ensure fair treatment to our farmers in the market. A large majority of small and marginal farmers meet unfair

treatment in the market while procuring inputs and marketing their produce. The market is uncertain and several times the farmers are not able to meet even the variable cost of production of their produce. There is no other option left except ploughing back the crop in the field. The majority of the small and marginal farmers are unable to bear such losses and government does not have a contingency plan to help them. Hence, this is the way out is that farmers get organized and form co-operatives to solve their marketing problems. Keeping the facts in view the present study entitled, "Socio-economic profile of cooperative society members and non-members in South Gujarat" was undertaken.

Materials and Methods

An Ex-post-facto research design was used in the present study. All the seven districts of south Gujarat were selected for present study. And from each selected district two talukas and from each selected taluka two cooperative societies were selected for present study. In this way 14 talukas and 28 cooperative societies were selected. From each selected cooperative society 10 cooperative society members and 10 non-members were selected as respondents following simple random sampling technique. In this way, total of 280 members and 280 non-members were selected for present study. The primary data were collected from each of the selected households by personal interview/enquiry method for the period 2019-20.

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic profile

The important socio-economic characteristics of the respondents. These include education, land holdings, social status and annual income of the cooperative society members and non-members.

The data presented in table 1 indicates that 32.86 per cent of the cooperative society members possessed education up to high school level followed by 21.43, 16.43, 15.00 and 14.28 per cent of the respondent cooperative society members who were having education up to college/post-graduation, primary school, functionally literate and middle school, respectively. With respect to non-members, 28.57 per cent of the respondents were having education up to primary school followed by 20.00, 17.14, 14.29, 11.13 and 8.57 per cent of the respondents who were having education up to middle school, high school, illiterate, functionally literate and college/post-graduation, respectively.

The data presented in table 2 indicates that 47.14 per cent of the cooperative society members were having large land holding followed by 26.43, 15.72 and 10.71 per cent of the respondent cooperative society members who were having medium, small and marginal land holding, respectively. With respect to non-members, 31.43 per cent of the respondents were having marginal land holding followed by 28.57, 20.00 and 20.00 per cent of the respondents who were having small, medium and large land holding, respectively.

The data presented in table 3 shows that majority of the cooperative society members (63.57 per cent) were in medium level of social status category followed by 25.00 and 11.43 per cent of the respondent cooperative society members who were in high and low level of social status categories, respectively. With respect to non-members, 45.71 per cent of the respondents were in medium level of social status category followed by 40.00 and 14.29 per cent of the respondents who were in low and high level of social status categories, respectively.

The data presented in the table 4 revealed that majority of the cooperative society members (57.86 per cent) were having high annual income followed by 31.43 and 10.71 per cent of the respondent cooperative society members who were having medium and low

annual income, respectively. With respect to non-members, 40.00 per cent of the respondents were having low annual income followed by 34.29 and 25.71 per cent of the respondents who were having medium and high annual income, respectively.

Table.1 Distribution of the respondents according to their education

Sr.	Categories	Members(n=280)		Non-members(n=280)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	0	0.00	40	14.29
2.	Functionally literate	42	15.00	32	11.43
3.	Primary school	46	16.43	80	28.57
4.	Middle school	40	14.28	56	20.00
5.	High school	92	32.86	48	17.14
6.	College/post-graduation	60	21.43	24	8.57
Total		280	100.00	280	100.00

Table.2 Distribution of the respondents according to their land holding

Sr.	Categories	Members(n=280)		Non-members(n=280)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Marginal land holding	30	10.71	88	31.43
2.	Small land holding	44	15.72	80	28.57
3.	Medium land holding	74	26.43	56	20.00
4.	Large land holding	132	47.14	56	20.00
Total		280	100.00	280	100.00

Table.3 Distribution of the respondents according to their social status

Sr.	Categories	Members(n=280)		Non-members(n=280)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low level	32	11.43	112	40.00
2.	Medium level	178	63.57	128	45.71
3.	High level	70	25.00	40	14.29
Total		280	100.00	280	100.00
Mean		2.82		0.74	
SD		0.93		0.70	

Table.4 Distribution of the respondents according to their annual income

Sr.	Categories	Members(n=280)		Non-members(n=280)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low annual income	30	10.71	112	40.00
2.	Medium annual income	88	31.43	96	34.29
3.	High annual income	162	57.86	72	25.71
Total		280	100.00	280	100.00

Table.5 Distribution of the respondents according to their social participation

Sr.	Categories	Members (n=280)		Non-members(n=280)	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	No membership	0	00.00	248	88.57
2.	Membership in one organization	56	20.00	32	11.43
3.	Membership in more than one organization	122	43.57	0	0.00
4.	Membership with position in organization	102	36.43	0	0.00
Total		280	100.00	280	100.00

The data presented in table 5 revealed that 43.57 per cent of the cooperative society members were having membership in more than one organization followed by 36.43 and 20.00 per cent of the respondent cooperative society members who were having membership with position in organization and membership in one organization, respectively. With respect to non-members, majority of the respondents (88.57 per cent) were having no membership followed by 11.43 per cent of the respondents who were having membership in only one organization.

In conclusion the cooperative societies are responsible for significant change in socio-economic conditions, income, employment generation, saving/investment. Thus, considering the positive impact, steps should be taken to bring greater cooperative connectivity in tribal rural areas by making the people aware about the benefits of the membership in cooperative societies. Overall,

the findings reveals that cooperative society succeeded up to some extent to increase socio-economic condition of its members in South Gujarat. This will encourage non-members to take benefits from cooperative societies to improve their livelihood.

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