
**LIVESTOCK AS A MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD: A CASE STUDY OF
“SAMAGRA PASU VALARTHATHAL PADHADHI”**

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ABSTRACT

Livestock and livelihood is much interlinked in a country like India as well as in a state like Kerala. In Kerala half of the population is residing in rural areas where livestock or cattle rearing form a major source of income to the people especially to the women folk. Realising the role it played in rural life, many of the local bodies has incorporated schemes associated with livestock in the Women Component Plan (WCP) of the Panchayath. One such scheme from the WCP of Mattathur Grama Panchayath associated with cow rearing (Samagra Pasu Valarthathal Padhadhi) is taken as a case study to examine how far it improved the condition of women and empowered them socially, economically and politically.

Key words: Live Stock, Women Empowerment, Panchayath, WCP, Cow rearing

Introduction

Women empowerment has a significant role in the developmental planning of every nation. One of the main goals of women empowerment is to create a society with gender equality having equitable access to resources. Women empowerment is thus vital to sustainable development and the realization of human rights for all. There are many dimensions for women empowerment like social, economic and political. Each of these is complimentary to one another. But in Indian situations economic empowerment is a prerequisite or means for achieving the remaining proportions of empowerment. It is thus a process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Therefore it is imperative to explore to what extent these new arrangements and initiatives have contributed to change the position and status of women in Kerala and how far the actions of the local bodies have generated the desired outcome. Therefore a detailed examination is necessary to find out whether the spending of the local bodies is potential enough to improve the quality of life of the women folk. A scheme level impact evaluation is undertaken by selecting a cow

rearing scheme in the WCP of Mattathur Panchayat in Thrissur district. India as well as Kerala has vast livestock resources and about 20.5 million people in India depend upon livestock for their livelihood and the livestock sector contributes 4.11 per cent of GDP and 25.6 per cent of total Agriculture GDP (2012 Livestock Census). A close watch at the production of live stock in India 2016-17 reveals that how far it is significant for an economy like India (Table 1)

Table 1
Production of Live stock in India 2016-17

Product	Quantity	Ranking in the World Production
Milk (in million tonnes)	165.40	I
Eggs (in billion numbers)	88.14	III
Meat (in million tonnes)	7.40	NA
Wool (in million Kgs)	43.50	NA
Fish (in lakh tonnes)	114.09	II

Source: Annual Report 2017-18, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Govt. of India.

A narrowing down to cow rearing alone shows that, it has been accepted as a profitable business since ancient times. Milk and milk products have a huge demand throughout the world. This is the main advantages of starting dairy cow farming business. Demands of milk will never go down and it will increase gradually in accordance with current population growth. Dairy farming doesn't pollute the environment, its eco-friendly. Along with profits through cow rearing we can ensure nutrition for our family members. Mattathur Grama Panchayat in Kodakara Block, Thrissur district Kerala is selected as the sample panchayath from where the case study of Samagra Pasu Valarthathal Padhadhi is taken for in depth analysis.

To gain a detailed analysis of women empowerment through the panchayath, samples of 35 beneficiaries (which form 50 per cent of the beneficiaries during 2014-15) are selected randomly and a detailed interview schedule is administered among them. Mattathur Panchayath is basically agrarian in nature and the schemes like cow rearing or those schemes which are more associated with nature will surely produce a positive impact upon the beneficiaries. The main reason is that the expense incurred on food and fodder for cows to an extent can be reduced if they have sufficient land and fresh grass which can be provided to the cows. Availability and proximity of fresh grass and fodder is considered by the veterinary surgeon while providing cow to the beneficiaries selected. Not only proximity and availability of food, but also this venture in fact requires the cooperation of the entire family labours in milking, collecting food, cleaning the cow and cow shed, marketing the milk, cow dung and other manures etc. Nearly 55 per cent of the

sample beneficiaries revealed that they have joint families and such a family gives them the real strength to continue cow rearing as a profitable business. Time use of women is so much discussed and debated across the world by national and international agencies, economists, sociologists, psychologists etc. The domestic work performed by women consumes a major chunk of their time; if she gets the support of the family members she can make a more productive use of her time. With the support of the family members 85 per cent revealed that they can easily manage household chores with cow rearing. Even fresh grass is a good food for cow, more than 90 per cent of the beneficiaries purchase Kerala feeds as a special feed for the cow. The cost of Kerala feed per bag is nearly 950 rupees and it is one of the important expenses that they have to meet under this scheme of cow rearing. Price of milk per liter is not uniform according to the sample reports and it is different for the labour society or to the households in the neighboring area. Before going into the details of cow rearing, basic information related to the educational qualifications of the sample respondents are given in the table 2

Table 2
Percentage distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of educational qualification

Educational qualification	Per cent
Illiterate	2.9
Primary	31.4
SSLC	25.7
Pre-degree	25.7
Graduate	11.4
Post graduate	2.9

Source: Sample Survey

One important fact revealed that even graduate and post graduate women shows a more positive attitude towards cow rearing. An open interview with them reveal that they consider the health of their family members as well as such a job made them more attached to the nature and their family. They point out that the real empowerment is developing an attitude to work for the entire community in a friendly manner. An occupational classification as well as land ownership pattern of the beneficiaries is taken into consideration. One important requirement for granting cow is that the applicants should possess land at least of 5 cents or above. Table 3 represents percentage distribution of the respondents on the basis of land ownership.

Table 3
Percentage distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of land ownership

Land ownership in cents	Percentage
5-10 cents	11.4
10-20cents	34.3
20-30cents	17.1
30-50 cents	17.1
50 cents and above	20

Source: Sample Survey

When a question is asked related to the awareness generation gained by the beneficiaries relate to cow rearing, they revealed that grama sabhas and the information gained from the ward member are the main sources. This information revealed that more and more social interference help women to come forefront in the income generating schemes provided by the panchayath. Table 4 gives a percentage wise distribution of the respondents on the basis of awareness gained from different sources associated with the income generating schemes like Samgra Pasu valarthal Padhadhi

Table 4
Percentage distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of awareness source

Awareness gained from:	Percentage of the respondents
Panchayath secretary	0
Panchayath president	0
Ward member	57.1
Friends	31.4
Relatives	20
Other source(especially grama sabha)	48.6

Source: Sample Survey

Land area as well as cow rearing has a positive relationship because for the disposal of cow dung and related waste land is very essential. And those who had more area utilized for vegetable cultivation, banana cultivation or nutmeg in this concerned area utilize the waste of cow rearing in a more sustainable and eco friendly manner. Therefore the advantages from cow rearing is not a single dimensional phenomenon, 86 per cent reveled that it is profitable venture and out of the total sample 68 per cent point out that it is advantageous in a multi facet manner. A detailed examination of the economic empowerment is undertaken in the table 5. How the income earned from cow rearing has been utilised is also so significant in the study, because it will clearly

reveal how far the women have freedom and decision making power to utilize the money they earned. Table 5 clearly gives a picture on the utilisation of earnings by the sample women.

Table 5
Percentage distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of utilisation of earnings from the scheme Samagra pasuvalarthal padhadhi

Sl No:	Type of utilization	Always (%)	Frequently (%)	Never (%)
1	To buy clothes	28.6	68.6	2.9
2	To buy food items	80	20	0
3	Savings	34.3	54.3	11.4
4	Education of children	82.9	11.4	5.7
5	Health matters	62.9	34.3	2.9
6	Gold purchase	11.4	65.7	22.9
7	Repair or construction of home	11.4	28.6	60
8	Purchase of household equipments	57.1	28.6	14.3

Source: Sample Survey

A detailed discussion with the beneficiaries revealed that after entering into this particular scheme, they gain more economic empowerment in the sense that the resources and power they gained help them to make major decision making in the households. They are also able to spend the amount of money they earned for basic necessities like food, clothing, shelter, health matters etc. Not only they spend money for these necessities but also they use their own savings for the future and for the education of their children, purchase of gold ornaments for themselves as well as an asset for the marriage of their daughters. Thus it is quite clear that a real change in different spheres of life of the beneficiaries take place as a result of their involvement in this particular scheme. Table 6 explains the percentage wise distribution of the respondents on the basis of changes they realized in life as a result of being a beneficiary under this scheme.

Table 6
Percentage distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of changes realized in life

Type of changes	Percentage of the respondents
Improved financial status	94.3
Increased role in decision making	100
Increased role in family matters	100
Improved self confidence	100
Improved will power	97.1

Source: Sample survey

From the table 6 a detailed picture of the different types of changes which cause a real start of empowerment can be noticed. Nearly 95 per cent of the beneficiaries revealed that they realise an improvement in their financial position. And such an improvement will help them to improve their standard of living and gain changes in different fields. Hundred per cent of the beneficiaries revealed that they have more role in decision making within and outside the family. Even in the basic family matters they gain more role and such a role they have never gained before when they don't have any income of their own. Being a beneficiary of the scheme cent per cent of them enjoy self confidence to come in front of the public and also engage in different tasks in the social arena.

Table 7 Percentage distribution of the sample respondents on the basis of presence and participation in decision making bodies at the local level

Participation in decision making bodies	Percentage of the respondents
Ayalkkuttom	100
Grama sabha	100
Focus group discussion	88.6
Standing committee meeting	37.1
Steering committee meeting	37.1

Source: Sample Survey

A detailed picture of presence and participation of women in the different local bodies of the panchayath is given in table 7. Hundred per cent of the beneficiaries participate in gramasabhas and ayalkootam meetings and nearly 90 per cent participate in different focus group discussions of the panchayath. But as far as the number and participation of women in the standing and steering committee of the panchayath revealed that the participation is comparatively low. This is not a good sign as far the empowerment of women concerned. Because more than a mere presence and participation in different local bodies, those women who are participating in the real decision making bodies of the panchayath is comparatively less. A change in the concerned field is essential to make women empowerment politically and socially strong in its sense.

To check the effectiveness of Samagra Pasu valarthal Padhadhi of Mattathur Panchayth and its impact on empowering women

To test the effective working of the samagra pasuvalarthal Padhadhi *paired t-test* is applied. In order to carry out test procedure we follow certain assumptions. Mainly the population assumed to be normal. Paired t- test is applied in the case with monthly income, monthly expenditure, monthly savings, monthly food expenditure and monthly non food expenditure. A detailed examination is made to find out whether there exists any difference between the above cited variables before and after entering into the scheme.

1. Test based on Monthly Income

H₀: Monthly income of respondent before and after joining the scheme is not different.

H₁: Monthly income of respondent was increased after joining the scheme .

To test H₀ we make use of t-statistic, which is given by

$$t = \frac{(\bar{u} - 0) \times \sqrt{(n-1)}}{S_u} \sim t_{(n-1)}$$

Where $u_i = x_i - y_i, i = 1, 2, \dots, n, \bar{u}$ is the mean and S_u is the standard deviation of differences. Test reject H₀ at $\alpha\%$ level of significance if $t > t_{\alpha}(n-1)$. $t_{(n-1)}$ obtained from student's t-table for (n-1) degrees of freedom. By analysing the data we obtain $\bar{u} = 5247.143, \sqrt{(n-1)} = 5.830, S_u = 1799.40$ and the t-statistic as $t = 17.000$. From table we get, $t_{(34)}(0.05) = 2.032244$ Since $t > t_{\alpha}$ we reject H₀.

The test results revealed that monthly income of respondent *was increased after joining the scheme*, which shows that working of samagra pasu valarthal padhadhi is effective. It is thus

clear that the panchayath initiative in programs like this will surely create a positive impact upon the economic side of the beneficiaries.

2. Test based on Monthly Expenditure

H₀: Monthly expenditure of respondent before and after joining the scheme is not different.

H₁: Monthly expenditure of respondent was increased after joining the scheme.

To test H₀ we make use of t-statistic and by analysing the data we obtain $t = 16.790$

From table we get, $t_{(34)}(0.05) = 2.032244$ Since $t > t_{\alpha}$ we reject H₀.

That is monthly expenditure of respondent *was increased after joining the scheme*, which shows the scheme is effective. It clearly reveals that along with income, expenditure of the beneficiaries too improve which is a good sign as it implicitly reveals an improvement in the standard of living of the members. A sub divisional analysis of the total monthly expenditure of the family into the food and non food expenditure is also carried out to in the next section to gain a clearer picture.

3. Test based on Food expenditure

H₀: Food expenditure of respondent before and after joining the scheme is not different.

H₁: Food expenditure of respondent was increased after joining the scheme .

To test H₀ we make use of t-statistic and by analysing the data we obtain the t-statistic as $t = 14.742$. From table we get, $t_{(34)}(0.05) = 2.032244$, Since $t > t_{\alpha}$ we reject H₀. That is Food expenditure of respondent *was increased after joining the scheme*, which shows the scheme is effective.

4. Test based on Non- Food expenditure

H₀: Non-Food expenditure of respondent before and after joining the scheme is not different.

H₁: Non-Food expenditure of respondent was increased after joining the scheme.

To test H₀ we make use of t-statistic and analysing the data we obtain the t-statistic as $t = 12.171$. From table we get, $t_{(34)}(0.05) = 2.032244$ Since $t > t_{\alpha}$ we reject H₀. That is Non- Food

expenditure of respondent *was increased after joining the scheme*, which shows the scheme is effective.

5. Test based on Monthly savings

H₀: Monthly savings of respondent before and after joining the scheme is not different.

H₁: Monthly savings of respondent was increased after joining the scheme.

To test H₀ we make use of t-statistic. and the t-statistic as $t = 8.210$, From table we get, $t_{(34)}(0.05) = 2.032244$, Since $t > t_{\alpha}$ we reject H₀. That is monthly savings of respondent *was increased after joining the scheme*, which shows the scheme is effective in increasing the savings of the beneficiaries.

Conclusion

A detailed examination the scheme “ Samaga Pasu Valarthal Padhadhi” revealed that cow rearing now too form a main thread in the rural livelihood enhancement, especially it created vast changes in the lives of women folk. If the panchayath or other local bodies select the programs which are more close to the existing environment and the existing living conditions it will surely produce a significant influence upon the women folk in the particular area and helps to empower them in all aspects. The results of this case study leads to the conclusion that if the panchayath adopt regional specific and demand oriented programmes under women component plan, it will definitely helps in women empowerment and leads to sustainable development of the nation.

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