

Household food security and women empowerment: The impacts of “Kudumbashree” in Kerala State of India

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Kudumbashree is considered as a successful poverty eradication programme in Kerala. It provides many services such as microcredit, saving facilities, children's education and microhousing to name a few. Microcredit helps the entrepreneurial poor women by providing loans with which they can start their own microenterprise. This study analyzes the impact of microcredit provision of Kudumbashree on household food security and economic empowerment of the women as well as the factors which are contributing to household food security and economic empowerment of the women as a result of microcredit provision by Kudumbashree. The primary data needed for this study was collected in Kerala through structured interview. The beneficiaries were divided into microcredit beneficiaries and non microcredit beneficiaries. The individual income of a beneficiary is a determinant of her economic empowerment. The results indicate that there is a significant difference between the monthly per capita income of microcredit beneficiaries and non microcredit beneficiaries. The HFIAS method was used to measure household food security. The level of food security was relatively high for households with microcredit beneficiaries and non microcredit beneficiaries. None of the households in the sample was suffering from severe food insecurity. The HFIAS scores were not statistically different between the two groups, and no conclusions could be made on the contribution of microcredit to improve food security levels. In short it is evident that joining Kudumbashree has enabled significant changes in the economic and social empowerment of the women involved.

Biography

I have completed my M Phil in Business Studies from Mahatma Gandhi University, Kerala in 2012. I did my International M.Sc in Rural Development from University of Gent, Belgium (2009) and I am a winner of Erasmus Mundus scholarship of European Union. I have completed my M.Sc in Agricultural Economics from Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi (2007). Currently I am working as Principal of Government Vocational Higher Secondary School, Neriampalam, Ernakulam, Kerala.

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