

## Profile and Correlates of Conflict Resolution Behaviour of Pragathi Bandu SHGs Members in Wasteland Development Programmes

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in purposively selected Shivamogga district of Karnataka. Out of seven taluks, two taluks *viz.*, Shivamogga and Bhadravathi were selected based on maximum number of Pragathi Bandu SHGs formed by Shree Kshetra Dharmastala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP). From each taluk, the villages having maximum number of Pragathi Bandu SHGs were listed and three villages were selected by using the same criteria. From each Pragathi Bandu SHG, three members were selected randomly thus making a total sample of 108. The results revealed that majority of respondents belonged to young age, illiterate, nuclear family, small family size, agriculture labours, received medium training, low mass media participation, low social participation, low credit orientation, high risk orientation and received medium programme incentives. The variables like land holding, mass media participation, social participation and programme incentives had negative and significant relationship with Conflict Resolution Behaviour of Pragathi Bandu SHG members. These findings implied that, strategic manipulation of variables such as credit orientation and risk orientation of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members through extension educational activities will motivate them to take up the wasteland Development activities. Care should be taken by the NGOs to provide rights for Pragathi Bandu SHG members to utilize benefits of wasteland with proper rules and regulations to avoid conflicts. Further, the NGOs should communicate various project activities through mass media and social participation and distribute programme incentives equally to all the members to avoid and /or resolve conflicts.

HUMAN interaction results in several processes like co-operation, accommodation, assimilation and negative processes like competition and conflict. Conflict has become inseparable part and parcel of our lives. It is the opposite of co-operation and peace, but, it is most commonly associated with violence and threat. It can occur between individuals, groups, organizations and even nations. "Conflict exists in all human relationships: it always has and probably will" (Landu, 2001). Conflict is natural and necessary the problem is not the existence of conflict but how we resolve it (Mayer, 2008).

Conflict resolution is a highly prized skill in any community development programmes. Getting into the conflict is easy, but getting out of it is difficult. Resolution of conflict refers to the variety of ways by which people resolve the grievances or disagreements by drawing an end to conflict. The concept of conflict resolution is a relational approach to solve conflicts. It is a process in which interpersonal communication is used to resolve a conflict to reach an amicable and satisfactory point of agreement (Omoluabi, 2001). Scholars such as Fisher (1996) and Wertheim (1998) revealed that,

conflicts are resolved by focusing on interests rather than on position or person. Conflict resolution behaviour refers to specific behavioural patterns or styles adopted by an individual to mitigate or to overcome the conflict situation. The key for conflict prevention or resolution mainly depends on the choice of an appropriate conflict resolution styles. Sayaddin (1995) indicated that, the leader is an appropriate person to resolve conflicts. According to him there are five styles of conflict resolution *viz.*, avoidance, accommodation, compromise, competition and collaboration. Avoidance style is adopted when one thinks that, needs of both parties involved in conflict are not satisfied. Accommodation style is adopted when one accepts the view points of others. Compromise style is used when it satisfies the needs of both the parties involved in conflict. Competition style is preferred by an individual when one tries to dominate over others by ignoring other's needs. Collaboration style is preferred when the needs and desires of both the parties are given due consideration when they are involved in conflicts.. Conflicts in organizations are documented, studied and managed. But, conflicts are inevitable in rural communities and Self Help Groups

(SHGs) which are often neglected due to the presence of multiple stakeholders with varied interests in implementing development projects. Pragathi Bandu SHGs having male members, formed by Shree Kshetra Dharmastala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP) centre around Wasteland Development, are no exception to conflicts. Such groups organize and empower small farmers, marginal farmers and agricultural labourers through the governance at village level. Pragathi Bandu SHGs provide micro-credit assistance for implementation of community managed wastelands.

The Pragathi Bandu SHGs utilize the Common Property Resources (CPRs) of the village such as wastelands, degraded lands, gomalas and gundutopus. While utilizing these resources they often face conflicts by other members of the village which leads to disagreement and non co-operation with the project activities or violent clashes in extreme cases. Ashby (1998) identifies that, inequalities in access to scarce or degrading resources, inequitable or lack of clarity over the boundaries, conflicts over rights and responsibilities were the general causes to raise conflicts in natural resource management projects. The conflicts results in an outcome which may be functional or dysfunctional. If conflicts are mismanaged, the result is dysfunctional conflict, which creates stress, instability, wastage of resources and negative climate. If conflicts are resolved in a best possible way, the result is functional conflict, which leads to positive consequences by acting as a major stimulant for change, fosters creativity and innovation. Resolution of conflicts in natural resource management projects will bring all actors together so that, they come to an agreement on contentious issues.

Conflict resolution will help the SHG members and others concerned to understand themselves and their situations which leads to better communication and creates healthy environment for carrying out group activities. Unless the profile of Pragathi Bandu SHGs members and its relationship with conflict resolution behaviour of wasteland development activities the development programmes can not be implemented successfully. With this background, the present study is planned with the following specific objectives.

1. To know the profile of Pragathi Bandu SHG members

2. To find out the relationship between personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of respondents with conflict resolution behaviour.

#### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in purposely selected Shivamogga district of Karnataka state. Out of seven taluks, two taluks viz., Shivamogga and Bhadravathi were selected based on the maximum number of Pragathi Bandu SHGs formed by Shree Kshetra Dharmastala Rural Development Project (SKDRDP) to implement wasteland development activities. From each taluk, the villages having maximum number of Pragathi Bandu SHGs were listed and three villages from each taluk were selected by using the same criteria. All the Pragathi Bandu SHGs (36) formed by the SKDRDP in the selected villages were purposively considered for the study. From each Pragathi Bandu SHG, three members were selected randomly thus making a total sample size of 108. The conflict resolution styles was measured by using the scale developed by Sayaddin (1995) with slight modification. The data were collected through personal interview method using structured, pre-tested interview schedule which was analyzed by using frequency and percentage.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data from Table I revealed that, 41.7 per cent of the respondents were belonged to young age followed by old (36.1%) and middle age (22.2%) categories. The predominance of young age group might be due to their existence in large number. They were enthusiastic to do something more than their middle aged counterparts. The aged men being more responsible, played an important role in suggesting other SHGs members to resolve conflicts patiently. These findings are in line with the findings of Jakob Braun (2009).

The results pertaining to education reveals that, majority (58.3%) of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members belonged to illiterate group followed by high school (20.4%), literates (11.1%), middle school (6.5%) and graduate (3.7%). It might also be the resultant of

TABLE I  
*Distribution of respondents according to their personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics*

(n=108)

Characteristics	Categories	Number	Per cent
Age (year)	Young (up to 35)	45	41.7
	Middle (35 to 50)	24	22.2
	Old (above 50)	39	36.1
		X = 42.75	SD=14.52
Education	Illiterate	63	58.3
	Literate	12	11.1
	Meddle school	7	6.5
	High School	22	20.4
	Graduate	4	3.7
Family type	Nuclear	83	76.9
	Joint	25	23.1
Family size	Small (2-4)	59	54.6
	Medium (5-7)	30	27.8
	Big (>10)	19	17.6
Land holding	Agricultural labourers	59	54.6
	Marginal farmers (<2.5ac)	30	27.9
	Small farmers (2.5 to 5ac)	15	13.8
	Big farmers (>5ac)	4	3.7
Annual income	Low (Rs. <35186.15)	41	38.0
	Medium (Rs. 35186.15-53591.65)	40	37.0
	High (Rs. >53591.65)	27	25.0
		X =44388.9	SD= 18405.5
Training received	Low	37	34.2
	Medium	38	35.2
	High	33	30.6
		X= 3.657	SD= 2.200
Mass media participation	Low	39	36.1
	Medium	38	35.2
	High	31	28.7
		X=2.712	SD=2.50
Social participation	Low	63	58.3
	Medium	32	29.6
	High	13	12.1
		X=0.97	SD=1.32
Credit orientation	Low	41	37.9
	Medium	23	21.3
	High	44	40.8
		X=4.19	SD=2.82
Risk orientation	Low	34	31.5
	Medium	24	22.2
	High	50	46.3
		X=12.12	SD=2.90
Programme incentives	Low	37	34.2
	Medium	42	38.9
	High	29	26.9
		X=1.74	SD=1.80

common belief that, education is meant for people of elite class or rich people. As the education level decreases among the Pragathi Bandu SHG members their capacity to understand the conflict situation decreases which leads to disagreement between the conflicting parties. Thus, the higher educated Pragathi Bandu SHG members are non conflicting and look for strategies to resolve the issues under conflict. The presence of educated men in the community play a significant role in resolving conflicts. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

The results revealed that, majority (76.9 %) of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members belonged to nuclear family. The reason might be due to realization of the advantages of nuclear families in terms of running the family, comparatively with less responsibilities, more freedom for decision making etc. Another reason might be due urbanization, the joint family system is withering away even in rural areas and emergence of nuclear families is a common feature. Today's generation would prefer to live in nuclear family for the sake of close contact and satisfaction of basic needs under one roof, might be possible reasons to find nuclear families in large number. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

It is clear from the table that, majority (54.6 %) of Pragathi Bandu SHG members belonged to small family size. This might be due to their awareness regarding the increased cost of living and difficulties in maintenance of big family. Further, they might have found it beneficial to have medium families to lead a better and comfortable life. Hence, many joint families are split into nuclear families that has decreased the size of the family. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

Results regard to the land holding revealed that, majority (54.6 %) of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members were agricultural labourers. This is because as many members selected under Pragathi Bandu SHGs of SKDRDP were land less labourers, rural artisans and marginal farmers. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

Data regarding annual income revealed that, majority of respondents had low (38.00 %) to medium

(37.0 %) level of annual income. The probable reasons for varied income categories might be due to the size of the land holding, asset possession and practicing of subsidiary occupations by the respondents. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

Data regarding the training received revealed that majority of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members received medium (35.2 %) to low (34.2 %) level of training. The probable reasons might be due to less extension work by the developmental departments or lack of interest among the group members to undergo training. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

With respect to mass media participation, majority of Pragathi Bandu SHG members had low (36.1 %) to medium (35.2 %) level categories. The probable reason for this might be due to poor literacy rate, poor social participation and inconvenient timings contributed as major factors. There were no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

Regarding the social participation it was observed that, majority of the respondents belonged to low (58.3 %) group. The main reason for this might be their poor socio - economic status, lack of interest and self - confidence, inability to devote their time because they work as daily wage labourers and lack of awareness about activities of various social institutions. The findings are in line with the findings of Subba Rao (2001).

It is revealed from the data that majority of the respondents belonged to high (40.8 %) and low (37.9 %) level of credit orientation categories. As credit is the basic necessity for initiating income generating activities, members of the Pragathi Bandu SHG seek more assistance from 'Pragathi-nidhi' an official account created by SKDRDP. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

Majority of Pragathi Bandu SHG members belonged to high (46.3 %) risk orientation. This might be due to the risk bearing capacity of Pragathi Bandu SHG members depends upon the personal, psychological and socio-economic characteristics of

the persons. The Pragathi Bandu SHG members with marginal land holding might have exhibited high risk orientation. There are no studies available either to support or contradict the above findings.

Majority of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members in wasteland development project received medium (38.9%) to low (34.2%) level of programme incentives. This might be due to the unequal distribution of incentives by sangha leaders. The findings are in line with the findings of Subba Rao (2001).

*Relationship between personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of Pragathi Bandu SHG members with conflict resolution behaviour:* The results of the Table II reveals the correlation coefficient between the independent variables and conflict resolution behaviour of Pragathi Bandu SHG members. The variables like land holding, mass media participation, social participation and programme incentives had negative

TABLE II

*Relationship between personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of Pragathi Bandu SHG members with conflict resolution behaviour*

Independent Variables	'r' Value
Age	0.125 NS
Education	-0.14 NS
Family type	0.038 NS
Family size	0.006 NS
Land holding	-0.278 **
Annual income	-0.058 NS
Training received	0.129 NS
Mass media participation	0.207 *
Social participation	-0.338 **
Credit orientation	0.180 NS
Risk orientation	0.027 NS
Programme incentives	-0.428 **

\* Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

NS - Non-Significant

and significant relationship with conflict resolution behaviour of Pragathi Bandu SHG members. This is because as land holding, mass media participation and social participation decreases, the Pragathi Bandu SHG members will have scope to involve in wasteland development activities. Further, they work as daily wage labourers and they don't find time to participate in mass media and social organization activities. As a result the Pragathi Bandu SHG members with no other options left other than resolving the conflicts. The results are in conformity with the findings of Subba Rao (2001).

*Multiple regression analysis of personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of Pragathi Bandu SHG members with conflict resolution behaviour:* The multiple regression analysis in Table III revealed that 12 variables included in the study have contributed to an extent of 75.20 per cent to the variation in conflict resolution behaviour of the

TABLE III

*Multiple regression analysis of personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of Pragathi Bandu SHG members with conflict resolution behaviour*

Characteristics	Multiple regression coefficient values (b)	Std. Error of regression coefficient SE (b)	't' Value
Age	0.023	0.158	0.145 NS
Education	-0.43	1.671	-0.258 NS
Family type	-3.328	5.465	-0.608 NS
Family size	0.839	2.729	0.307 NS
Land holding	-3.755	1.550	-2.422 *
Annual income	4.4035	4.564	0.964 NS
Training received	0.827	0.562	1.471 NS
Mass media participation	-1.262	0.510	-2.479 *
Social participation	-2.334	0.965	-2.418 *
Credit orientation	0.761	0.448	1.698 NS
Risk orientation	0.183	0.432	0.423 NS
Programme incentives	-3.057	0.720	-4.245 **

R<sup>2</sup> = 0.7521

F=15.87

\* Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level

NS - Non-Significant

Pragathi Bandu SHG members. The variables such as land holding, mass media participation, social participation and programme incentives had negative and significant relationship with conflict resolution behaviour of Pragathi Bandu SHG members. The possible reasons might be due to majority of respondents were agricultural labourers, illiterates and they can't read books, newspapers etc. They may not find time to participate in organizational activities. The unequal distribution of programme incentives increases the conflict raising situations. As a result Pragathi Bandu SHG members will try to resolve the conflicts at the earliest by adopting different styles rather than continuing in conflicts which benefits no one.

The study revealed that majority of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members belonged to high credit orientation and high risk orientation categories. And also belonged to young age, illiterate group, nuclear family, small family size, agricultural labourers, received medium programme incentives, received medium level of training, low income group, low mass media participation, and low social participation. Further, characteristics such as land holding, mass media participation, social participation and programme incentives were negative and significantly related with conflict resolution behaviour of Pragathi Bandu SHG members. These findings implied that, strategic manipulation of variables such as credit orientation and risk orientation of the Pragathi Bandu SHG members through extension educational activities will motivate them to take up the wasteland development activities. Care should be taken by the NGOs to provide rights for Pragathi Bandu SHG members to utilize benefits of wasteland with proper rules and regulations to avoid conflicts. Further, the NGOs should communicate

various project activities through mass media and social participation and distribute programme incentives equally to all the members to avoid and / or resolve conflicts.

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