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Dr. Sidhartha Sankar Laha, Associate Professor, Department of Lifelong Learning & Extension, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling, West Bengal
E-Mail: sidharthasankar09@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The main focus of the study is the role of co-operative in empowerment benefits. A Case Study of districts of the North Bengal region is based on primary information collected from a field survey. This study analyses the socioeconomic condition of members and non-members who are involved in co-operative. A descriptive research design has been used to fulfil the objective of the study. This research has been carried out in rural and urban areas about members of cooperation through co-operative. A questionnaire, interviews, FDGs, and observation methods are employed as the main research instruments. A disproportionate stratified random sampling technique is adopted and data are collected from the study area. It is found that cooperatives were established as a strategy to sustain the livelihoods of rural communities. With the adoption of cooperatives, people in rural communities managed to generate employment, boost food production, empower the marginalized, especially women, and promote social cohesion and integration, thereby improving their livelihoods and reducing poverty. This study is an attempt to analyse the socio-economic effect of co-operative on male as well as females and their roles and participation in the women empowerment process. The study found that members were found to have been socially and economically empowered through the cooperative and were able to change their own status in the family, be involved in discussions in family matters with members, and feel stronger and more confident. Hence Cooperative movement is very essential to improve the socio-economic condition of the target population.

KEY-WORDS: Co-operative, Cooperation, Empowerment, FDG and Linear Multiple Regression Model

INTRODUCTION

Empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think, behaves, take action and control work in an autonomous way. It is the state of feeling of self-empowered to take control of one's own destiny. Empowerment is the process by which the powerless gain justice, but in India it was introduced in 2006 through the amendment act of 2005 in Criminal procedure code & a new chapter XXI A containing provisions was inserted. It has been around 17 years since the Indian criminal procedure code included the revolutionary tool of plea bargaining. greater control over the circumstances of their lives. It includes both controls over resources (physical, human, intellectual and financial) and over ideology (beliefs, values and attitudes) (Batliwala, 1994). It is not merely a feel of greater extrinsic control, but also grows intrinsic capacity-greater self-confidence and an inner transformation of one's consciousness that enables one to overcome external barriers to accessing resources or changing traditional ideology (Ambrose Pinto, 2001).

Empowerment involves a participatory approach and transforms the basic structure of subordination. It, therefore, is a social process that aims at changing the nature and the direction of the systematic forces (Sinha, 1999). Empowerment can be viewed as a means of creating a social environment in which one can take decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation. It strengthens innate ability by way of acquiring knowledge, power and experience. Some of the best examples of empowerment from many countries have used group process to break the isolation and seclusion of individuals. Group processes have also been used in credit programs to ensure individual accountability for the loans taken (Hashemí, Schuler and Riley, 1996). Thus, its