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A study on the socio-personal, socio-demographic and motivational variables of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries in Udaipur District of Rajasthan

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Abstract

India is a country rich in traditions and rituals. Although women were once treated well, the condition of many has since worsened and some still struggle for basic human rights such as education. The Government of India therefore launched the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) for needy women, and RAJEEVIKA is a sub-component of NRLM. Udaipur district of Rajasthan was selected because it had the maximum number of SHGs during 2023. A total of 240 RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries were selected through the proportionate random sampling method from three activities, namely Udaan, Van Dhan Vikas Yojana (VDVY) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). Sanitary napkins are produced under Udaan; herbal gulal, dwada gond, white musli, wild honey and custard apple pulp under VDVY; and a refined mustard oil unit, daal and spices and dairy and honey under FPOs. The majority of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries were middle-aged, belonged to the ST caste, had 5–10 members in their family, used a tubewell as their main source of irrigation and showed a medium level of aspiration and economic motivation.

Under economical and skill development aspiration, “Women beneficiaries aimed to start and expand their own business with the support of RAJEEVIKA” was assigned the first rank. For awareness, education, social and personal empowerment, “Women beneficiaries aimed to educate themselves about financial literacy and business management” was ranked first. For long-term vision, self-confidence and growth, “Women beneficiaries aimed to secure better education and healthcare for their children through increased income” secured the first rank. In economic motivation, “A woman beneficiary should seek to utilise technology or digital platforms to enhance her economic opportunities” was ranked first, while for leadership ability, “Village people regard women beneficiaries as a good source of information on RAJEEVIKA” secured the first rank.

Keywords: RAJEEVIKA, age, caste, family size, source of irrigation, aspiration, economic motivation and leadership ability

1. Introduction

Currently, India is a country where the difference in the status of women is wide. Some women are so empowered that they work in politics, multinational companies and the armed forces; on the other hand, the majority of women are still fighting for their existence. There are many social evils that hinder women’s empowerment and a woman faces them in her day-to-day life from birth to death. Women face discrimination from their families at a very early age; even in today’s modern world, many Indian families want their first child to be a boy.

In this patriarchal society, the Government of India has tried to empower women by launching various programmes, one of which is the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM). The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) was initiated in 1999. It was later reorganised into the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) in 2010–2011 to create the time-bound and targeted delivery of the scheme’s results. NRLM was renamed the Deendayal Antyodaya

Yojana–National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY-NRLM) on 29 March 2016. The mission’s main objective is to eradicate poverty by promoting sustainable livelihoods for the rural poor. The scheme provides access to credit, helps diversify and strengthen livelihoods and enhances access to public services (Kour and Neena, 2025) ^[6]. NRLM is a national-level programme; for better implementation, a state-level programme was also initiated, namely the Rajasthan Rural Livelihood Programme (RRLP), also known as RAJEEVIKA.

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) were formed for better implementation of the programme and various activities are conducted by RAJEEVIKA officials on the basis of available resources. In this paper, the researchers present the personal profile of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries. Variables such as age, caste, family size, source of irrigation, aspiration, economic motivation and leadership ability have been assessed.

2. Methodology

The present investigation was conducted in Udaipur district of Rajasthan, as it had the maximum number of SHGs formed under RAJEEVIKA (Annual Report of RAJEEVIKA, 2023). Out of fourteen major activities, three were selected because of the maximum number of beneficiaries enrolled in them, namely Udaan, Van Dhan Vikas Yojana (VDVY) and Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs). Within these activities, the selected sub-activities were the production of sanitary napkins under Udaan; herbal gulal, dwada gond, white musli, wild honey and custard apple pulp under VDVY; and a refined mustard oil unit, daal and spices and dairy and honey under FPOs. A total of 240 RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries were selected through the proportionate random sampling method, with 12, 110 and 118 beneficiaries selected from Udaan, VDVY and FPOs, respectively.

Pre-testing of the interview schedule was carried out on 50 non-sampled RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries. For validity assessment, the interview schedule was sent to 30 subject experts. For reliability analysis, Cronbach's alpha technique was used for the aspiration variable; the scales for the other variables were adopted with slight modifications. Mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, Mean Per cent Score (MPS) and rank were computed.

3. Results and Discussion

The personal profile comprises the socio-personal, demographic and motivational characteristics that were assessed to understand the background of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries. These would be useful for analysing policy implications and for future studies.

A. Age

Age is a crucial parameter that may influence participation in RAJEEVIKA. The age of the beneficiaries also affects their level of involvement in the enterprise. Considering its importance, age was selected as a variable and the beneficiaries' actual chronological age was recorded during the interview.

The age categories were determined using the mean and standard deviation. Thus, three categories were formed, namely young (< 30 years), middle (30–47 years) and old age (> 47 years). Their frequencies were counted and then converted into a percentage of beneficiaries. The distribution of beneficiaries by age is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of beneficiaries on the basis of their age (n = 240)

S. No.	Age Category (Years)	Beneficiaries	
		f	%
1.	Young (< 30)	27	11.25
2.	Middle (30–47)	165	68.75
3.	Old (> 47)	48	20.00
Total		240	100.00

Mean = 38.88 S.D. = 08.39

Table 1 shows that the majority of the beneficiaries (68.75 per cent) were in the middle age group (30–47 years), while 20.00 per cent were in the old age group (> 47 years) and the remaining 11.25 per cent were in the young age group (< 30 years).

The results are in line with Kumar *et al.* (2023) ^[7], who observed that the majority of women SHG members (61.00 per cent) were middle-aged (34 to 60 years), while 21.00 per cent belonged to the old age group and the remaining 18.00 per cent were young. The results are also supported by Sahoo (2020) ^[12], Tejaswini and Panigrahi (2021) ^[14] and Waigaonkar *et al.* (2024) ^[15].

B. Caste

Caste is an inevitable factor in Indian society. It is predetermined by society and is associated with a person from birth to death. It is very deeply rooted in our society; people are bound to work, marry and socialise according to their caste. It is also area-specific, with some castes dominating others.

RAJEEVIKA particularly focuses on poor and needy women for their upliftment, so it mostly includes SC, ST and OBC women as beneficiaries; however, the researcher considered four major castes, viz. ST, SC, OBC and General.

Table 2: Distribution of beneficiaries on the basis of their caste (n = 240)

S. No.	Caste Category	Beneficiaries	
		f	%
1.	ST	103	42.92
2.	SC	86	35.84
3.	OBC	50	20.83
4.	General	01	00.41
Total		240	100.00

Table 2 shows that the majority of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries belonged to the ST category (42.92 per cent), followed by 35.84 per cent SC, 20.83 per cent OBC and merely 00.41 per cent (i.e. one woman) from the General category.

The findings are in line with Banjare and Singh (2025) ^[2], who concluded that the overwhelming majority (82.50 per cent) were Scheduled Tribe (ST), while OBC women comprised just 17.50 per cent; interestingly, no women from the Scheduled Castes (SC) were involved in SHGs in Balrampur. The findings are inclined towards ST and SC because RAJEEVIKA seeks to empower them and the study area was also predominantly occupied by ST and SC castes.

C. Family Size

The researcher selected this independent variable because the number of family members could affect a RAJEEVIKA beneficiary's professional life. Based on the number of family members, beneficiaries were categorised into three groups, namely up to 4 members, 5–10 members and 11 and more members in a family.

Table 3: Distribution of beneficiaries on the basis of their family size (n = 240)

S. No.	Family Size	Beneficiaries	
		f	%
1.	Up to 4 members	60	25.00
2.	5–10 members	156	65.00
3.	11 and more	24	10.00
Total		240	100.00

Table 3 shows that 65.00 per cent of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries had 5–10 members in their family, followed by 25.00 per cent with up to 4 members and 10.00 per cent with 11 and more members.

The findings are in line with Rani and Gouda (2025) ^[11], who concluded that the majority (52.00 per cent) of SHG beneficiaries had 3–6 family members, reflecting typical rural family structures. The findings are also supported by Deepshikha *et al.* (2024) ^[13] and Suresh *et al.* (2025) ^[13].

D. Source of Irrigation

Source of irrigation is an important variable related to assured farm production; therefore, it was considered in the study. Beneficiaries were divided into five categories based on the available source of irrigation, namely canal water, tubewell, both canal and tubewell, open well and landless beneficiaries.

Table 4: Distribution of beneficiaries on the basis of their irrigation source (n = 240)

S. No.	Irrigation Source	Beneficiaries	
		f	%
1.	Canal water	01	00.42
2.	Tubewell	123	51.25
3.	Both canal and tubewell	22	09.16
4.	Open well	52	21.67
5.	Landless beneficiaries	42	17.50
	Total	240	100.00

Table 4 shows that slightly more than half of the RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries (51.25 per cent) had a tubewell as their main source of irrigation, followed by open well (21.67 per cent). About 17.50 per cent of beneficiaries were landless, 09.16 per cent had both canal and tubewell as their source of irrigation, and only a single beneficiary (00.42 per cent) had canal water as the main source.

The findings are in conformity with Kurabatalli and Hanagodimath (2025) ^[8], who stated that groundwater-based irrigation is clearly dominant. Tubewells, accounting for 47.23 per cent of the total irrigated area (36.80 million hectares), have emerged as the principal source of irrigation,

reflecting farmers' increasing reliance on individual and decentralised irrigation systems. The results are also aligned with Hossain and Oliver (2024) ^[4] and Mavi (2024) ^[9].

E. Aspiration

Aspiration was an important factor for the present investigation. It is a crucial psychological phenomenon through which the mindset of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries can be analysed. The level of aspiration relates to the desired performance and past experience of an individual. The aspiration categories were determined based on the mean and standard deviation. Thus, three categories were formed, viz. low (< 56.38), medium (56.38–67.22) and high (> 67.22). Their frequencies were counted and then converted into a percentage of beneficiaries. The distribution of beneficiaries by aspiration level is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of beneficiaries on the basis of their aspiration (n = 240)

S. No.	Aspiration	Beneficiaries	
		f	%
1.	Low (< 56.38 score)	41	17.08
2.	Medium (56.38–67.22 score)	156	65.00
3.	High (> 67.22 score)	43	17.92
	Total	240	100.00

Mean = 61.90 S.D. = 5.32

Table 5 indicates that the majority of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries (65.00%) were in the medium aspiration category, followed by the high (17.92%) and low (17.08%) categories.

The findings are supported by Rani (2022) ^[10], who concluded that 77.00 per cent of students reported a medium level of entrepreneurial aspiration, followed by 20.00 per cent and 03.00 per cent with high and low levels of entrepreneurial aspiration, respectively.

Furthermore, the aspirations of beneficiaries towards their personal lives were analysed using MPS and ranks, and are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Aspiration of beneficiaries towards their personal lives (n = 240)

S. No.	Factors	Beneficiaries	
		MPS	Rank
1.	Economical and skill development		
a.	Women beneficiaries aspired to contribute financially to their household income	86.50	II
b.	Women beneficiaries aimed to start and expand their own business with the support of RAJEEVIKA	90.67	I
c.	Women beneficiaries were motivated to save and invest money for their family's future needs	74.25	IV
d.	Women beneficiaries were eager to learn new skills to improve their livelihood opportunities	70.42	VI
e.	Women beneficiaries aspired to attend training sessions to enhance their capabilities	73.58	V
f.	Women beneficiaries aimed to use their skills to create sustainable income sources	74.42	III
2.	Awareness, education, social and personal empowerment		
a.	Women beneficiaries wanted to gain respect and recognition in their family and community	81.92	II
b.	Women beneficiaries aspired to overcome societal barriers and stereotypes that limit women's opportunities	81.17	III
c.	Women beneficiaries aimed to educate themselves about financial literacy and business management	85.42	I
d.	Women beneficiaries wanted to be more informed about government programmes and opportunities for women	74.50	IV
e.	Women beneficiaries aspired to guide and mentor other women in understanding the benefits of livelihood projects	69.50	V
3.	Long-term vision, self-confidence and growth		
a.	Women beneficiaries aimed to secure better education and healthcare for their children through increased income	77.92	I
b.	Women beneficiaries wanted to improve their family's standard of living through sustained participation in RAJEEVIKA	77.50	II
c.	Women beneficiaries aspired to leave a legacy of self-reliance and confidence for future generations	75.50	III
d.	Women beneficiaries were motivated to take risks and try new ventures to achieve success	71.58	V
e.	Women beneficiaries believed that they had the potential to achieve their personal and professional goals	73.08	IV

Under economical and skill development, “Women beneficiaries aimed to start and expand their own business with the support of RAJEEVIKA” was assigned the first rank with 90.67 MPS. The second rank was assigned to “Women beneficiaries aspired to contribute financially to their household income” with 86.50 MPS. It was followed by “Women beneficiaries aimed to use their skills to create sustainable income sources” (74.42 MPS), “Women beneficiaries were motivated to save and invest money for their family’s future needs” (74.25 MPS), “Women beneficiaries aspired to attend training sessions to enhance their capabilities” (73.58 MPS) and “Women beneficiaries were eager to learn new skills to improve their livelihood opportunities” (70.42 MPS), which were ranked third, fourth, fifth and sixth, respectively.

It can be concluded that “Women beneficiaries aimed to start and expand their own business with the support of RAJEEVIKA” was assigned the first rank and “Women beneficiaries aspired to contribute financially to their household income” the second rank. This may be because RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries want to support their family financially by starting and expanding their business with the help of RAJEEVIKA.

Further examination of Table 6 shows the aspirations of women beneficiaries for awareness, education, social and personal empowerment. The statement “Women beneficiaries aimed to educate themselves about financial literacy and business management” was ranked first with 85.42 MPS. The statement “Women beneficiaries wanted to gain respect and recognition in their family and community” secured the second rank with 81.92 MPS, followed by “Women beneficiaries aspired to overcome societal barriers and stereotypes that limit women’s opportunities” (81.17 MPS), “Women beneficiaries wanted to be more informed about government programmes and opportunities for women” (74.50 MPS) and “Women beneficiaries aspired to guide and mentor other women in understanding the benefits of livelihood projects” (69.50 MPS), which were ranked third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

It can be concluded that “Women beneficiaries aimed to educate themselves about financial literacy and business management” and “Women beneficiaries wanted to gain respect and recognition in their family and community” secured the first and second ranks, respectively. This might be because they lived in a society where they were treated as submissive and so they wished to become financially literate and to gain respect and recognition in their family and society.

Table 6 also elucidates the long-term vision, self-confidence and growth related aspirations of beneficiaries, and shows that “Women beneficiaries aimed to secure better education and healthcare for their children through increased income” was ranked first with 77.92 MPS, followed by “Women beneficiaries wanted to improve their family’s standard of living through sustained participation in RAJEEVIKA”

(77.50 MPS), “Women beneficiaries aspired to leave a legacy of self-reliance and confidence for future generations” (75.50 MPS), “Women beneficiaries believed that they had the potential to achieve their personal and professional goals” (73.08 MPS) and “Women beneficiaries were motivated to take risks and try new ventures to achieve success” (71.58 MPS), which were ranked second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

It can be concluded that “Women beneficiaries aimed to secure better education and healthcare for their children through increased income” was ranked first, followed by “Women beneficiaries wanted to improve their family’s standard of living through sustained participation in RAJEEVIKA” in second place. This might be because, owing to their nurturing nature, the beneficiaries want to provide better education and healthcare facilities to their children and to improve their family’s standard of living.

F. Economic Motivation

In today’s world, money is required for almost every task in a person’s life and beneficiaries also join this programme to improve their lives. Hence, the researcher used this variable to assess RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries.

The economic motivation categories were determined using the mean and standard deviation. Thus, three categories were formed, namely low (< 35.37), medium (35.37–41.33) and high (> 41.33). Their frequencies were counted and then converted into a percentage of beneficiaries. The distribution of beneficiaries by economic motivation level is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Distribution of beneficiaries on the basis of their economic motivation (n = 240)

S. No.	Economic Motivation	Beneficiaries	
		f	%
1.	Low (< 35.37 score)	47	19.58
2.	Medium (35.37–41.33 score)	151	62.92
3.	High (> 41.33 score)	42	17.50
Total		240	100.00

Mean = 38.35 S.D. = 02.98

Table 7 shows that the majority of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries belonged to the medium level of economic motivation (62.92 per cent), while 19.58 per cent belonged to the low level and 17.50 per cent to the high level.

The findings are in conformity with Chaudhary *et al.* (2025)^[2], who concluded that the majority (75.00 per cent) of respondents belonged to the medium level of economic motivation, while 16.66 per cent and 08.33 per cent belonged to the low and high levels, respectively. The findings are also supported by Julme *et al.* (2024)^[5].

Furthermore, other economic motivation statements related to RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries were analysed using MPS and rank and are presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Economic motivation of beneficiaries (n = 240)

S. No.	Statement	Beneficiaries	
		MPS	Rank
1.	A woman beneficiary should seek to utilise technology or digital platforms to enhance her economic opportunities	85.08	I
2.	The most successful woman beneficiary is the one who makes the most profit	85.00	II
3.	A woman beneficiary should work towards greater productivity and economic profit	83.41	III
4.	A woman beneficiary should consider formal or informal financial literacy programmes to improve her decision-making regarding money	77.67	IV
5.	A woman beneficiary must earn for her living, but the most important things in life cannot be defined in economic terms	77.17	V
6.	It is difficult for a woman beneficiary's children to make a good start unless she provides them with economic assistance	74.17	VI
7.	Exploring diverse income-generating activities can create multiple streams of revenue for women beneficiaries	73.33	VII
8.	A woman beneficiary should try new enterprises which may earn her more income	71.75	VIII
9.	A woman beneficiary should save a portion of her income to build financial security for the future	70.75	IX
10.	A woman beneficiary should practise some form of kitchen gardening for home consumption	68.67	X

Table 8 shows that the statement “A woman beneficiary should seek to utilise technology or digital platforms to enhance her economic opportunities” was ranked first with 85.08 MPS, followed by “The most successful woman beneficiary is the one who makes the most profit” (85.00 MPS), “A woman beneficiary should work towards greater productivity and economic profit” (83.41 MPS) and “A woman beneficiary should consider formal or informal financial literacy programmes to improve her decision-making regarding money” (77.67 MPS), which were ranked second, third and fourth, respectively.

Further, the statements “A woman beneficiary must earn for her living, but the most important things in life cannot be defined in economic terms” (77.17 MPS), “It is difficult for a woman beneficiary's children to make a good start unless she provides them with economic assistance” (74.17 MPS), “Exploring diverse income-generating activities can create multiple streams of revenue for women beneficiaries” (73.33 MPS), “A woman beneficiary should try new enterprises which may earn her more income” (71.75 MPS), “A woman beneficiary should save a portion of her income to build financial security for the future” (70.75 MPS) and

“A woman beneficiary should practise some form of kitchen gardening for home consumption” (68.67 MPS) were ranked fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth, respectively.

It can be concluded that “A woman beneficiary should seek to utilise technology or digital platforms to enhance her economic opportunities” was ranked first and “The most successful woman beneficiary is the one who makes the most profit” second. This might be because, in today's modern and digital world, the RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries felt they could utilise technology for their betterment and they also measured success in monetary terms.

G. Leadership Ability

Leadership ability is the characteristic feature of an individual who can guide, influence and motivate others. In entrepreneurship, leadership is an important component, as the beneficiaries of this programme can lead their enterprises. Therefore, the leadership ability of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries was assessed through MPS and ranks and is presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Leadership ability of beneficiaries (n = 240)

S. No.	Abilities	Beneficiaries	
		MPS	Rank
1.	Participate in discussion on a new enterprise in a group or peer-group meeting	65.83	III
2.	On seeing a new enterprise, the woman beneficiary initiates discussion about it with her colleagues	75.63	II
3.	Village people regard women beneficiaries as a good source of information on RAJEEVIKA	80.21	I
4.	The woman beneficiary assigns enterprise work to her family members	59.37	IV
5.	The woman beneficiary generally tries new approaches to problems	58.58	V

Table 9 reveals that “Village people regard women beneficiaries as a good source of information on RAJEEVIKA” was ranked first with 80.21 MPS. It was followed by “On seeing a new enterprise, the woman beneficiary initiates discussion about it with her colleagues” (75.63 MPS), “Participate in discussion on a new enterprise in a group or peer-group meeting” (65.83 MPS), “The woman beneficiary assigns enterprise work to her family members” (59.37 MPS) and “The woman beneficiary generally tries new approaches to problems” (58.58 MPS), which were ranked second, third, fourth and fifth, respectively.

It can be concluded that “Village people regard women beneficiaries as a good source of information on RAJEEVIKA” was ranked first and “On seeing a new

enterprise, the woman beneficiary initiates discussion about it with her colleagues” second. This might be because RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries who could not previously speak up much are now able to lead a team, as RAJEEVIKA improved their self-confidence.

4. Conclusion

On the basis of the major findings of the study, it is concluded that the majority of RAJEEVIKA beneficiaries were middle-aged, belonged to the ST caste, had 5–10 members in their family, used a tubewell as their source of irrigation and showed a medium level of aspiration. Under economical and skill development aspiration, “Women beneficiaries aimed to start and expand their own business with the support of RAJEEVIKA” was assigned the first

rank with 90.67 MPS. Under awareness, education, social and personal empowerment, “Women beneficiaries aimed to educate themselves about financial literacy and business management” was ranked first with 85.42 MPS. For long-term vision, self-confidence and growth, “Women beneficiaries aimed to secure better education and healthcare for their children through increased income” secured the first rank with 77.92 MPS. The majority of beneficiaries had a medium level of economic motivation; in this regard, “A woman beneficiary should seek to utilise technology or digital platforms to enhance her economic opportunities” was ranked first with 85.08 MPS, while for leadership ability, “Village people regard women beneficiaries as a good source of information on RAJEEVIKA” secured the first rank with 80.21 MPS.

RAJEEVIKA should provide training to beneficiaries for better implementation of enterprises and to improve their use of digital platforms and modern technologies related to market linkage. RAJEEVIKA should also provide financial support for starting new businesses, and seminars and workshops should be organised to impart new skills related to communication.

Disclaimer (Artificial Intelligence)

The author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies, such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, Copilot, etc.) and text-to-image generators, have been used during the writing and editing of this manuscript.

Competing Interests

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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