



IMPACT OF MICRO CREDIT (SELF HELP GROUP) TOWARDS THE TRANSFORMATION OF SOCIO – ECONOMIC LIVES AND EMPOWERMENT OF THE RURAL WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES IN THE RURAL AREA OF GURUGRAM DISTRICT, HARYANA

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Abstract

The Self help Groups (SHGs) have become extensive, successful component of both rural and urban development in India. The SHGs in India has come extensive way, since its origin in 1992. The Self- Help Groups play vital role in poverty eradication in Indian villages. The spread of SHGs in India has been extraordinary. More than 90% of these groups are only women groups. The system of SHG has proven to very suitable to the poor and vulnerable women community in the society and this system breaks the exploitation and isolation of women from men. According to NABARD the Self Help Groups are formed comprising 10 - 20 women members who are homogeneous in character with respect to socio economic background, religion culture etc. A Self Help Group is community based financial group which deals to improve the quality of life through economic development and social development of an individual and family as well. Members make small regular savings aid over a few months until there is enough capital in the group to begin lending. Funds may then be lent back to the members or to others in the village for any reason. Each SHG has an office bearer - President, Secretary and Treasurer which are selected by group members in democratic manner.

Key Words : *Self Help Group (SHG), NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development), Community Based Financial Group, Office Bearer.*

Introduction

The Micro credit Programme was introduced under Women Empowerment Programme by the Department of Community Health and Development of St.Stephen's Hospital, a Non Government Organization (NGO), in the Year of 2001. Earlier, between the year 1990 - 2000, "Mahila Mandal"(MM) or women councils were formed by the programme team of Community Health Department in every target villages as community based organization (CBO) represented the face of Women Empowerment in the rural communities. The "Mahila Mandal" in the target villages were involved in some Significant and important activities such as improving the Mother and Child Health Services (Breast Feeding, Immunization, Weaning, Growth Monitoring of <3 years of Children, Care of Pregnant, Promotion of NSV -No-Sculpel Vasectomy - Male Sterilization etc.), promotion of Village sanitation , sanitary latrines and tree plantation, organizing cultural and sports events for village women , enhancing children education and its extracurricular activities like "Ankur Workshop" a summer vacation camp etc. under the guidance and supervision of the Community Health Department.

Moreover, all village Mahila Mandal jointly constituted an apex body with the representation of 2-3 Members of each village Mahila Mandal, which was called "Kendriya Mahila Mandal" (KMM), The Kendriya Mahila Mandal had a separate Office Bearers comprising 22 -25 members, and they would meet every quarterly in the of office of Community Health to monitor and evaluate the work of every village Mahila Mandal. In the Process of evaluation, some points were awarded to each Mahila Mandal on the basis of their work, and on the basis of the merit best three Mahila Mandal were felicitated once in a year. This initiative brought unity, sense of responsibility and feeling of working to gather among the community women.

In late year 2000, a concept of Self Help Group (SHG) or Micro Credit was introduced in every village Mahila Mandal in order to switch over Mahila Mandal programme into SHG or Micro Credit Programme. However, as Micro credit Programme involved monetary contribution by the group members, so some kind of lack of trust and lack of self confidence started prevailing among the women. But, due to our constant motivational meeting with the members of Mahila Mandal in cooperation with the official of Gurgaon Gramin Bank, Now it is called "Serve



Haryana Gramin Bank”, we were able to form one - one SHG in our few target villages (Dhankot, Kaliwas and Ikbalpur) in the early year of 2001, then gradually the other *Mahila Mandal* attracted and adopted the concepts of SHG and some Women came forward and formed the SHGs under the guidance of programme team. Subsequently, Over the Period of 5-6 years the formation of SHGs multiplied in every villages and the numbers grew drastically. Having seen the benefits of women SHG some men form our target communities also attracted with the concept and formed the SHG for them self. Presently, there are 84 Women SHGs and 2 SHG Federations. All the SHGs have been linked with bank account.

Review of Literature

During the course of the study, the study of several authors were referred but here I find it worth to mention some highlights of the research work of few authors which has been mentioned under reference.

Jayanta Das (Feb.2016) in his study concluded that The study concludes that SHGs brought psychological and social empowerment than economic empowerment. Impact of SHG is appreciable in bringing confidence, courage, skill development and empowerment. The SHG members feel free to move with their groups and leaders. It leads them to participate on various social welfare activities with good co-operation. The SHG can contribute to changes in economic conditions, social status, decision making and increases women in outdoor activities.

Mrs.Eli kumari Das, Ms. Dharitri Baishya, (Mar.-Apr. 2015) From the study, it is found that micro finance through self-help group is helping the poor and upgrading women empowerment by making them financially strong. SHGs have increased their habit of savings and investment in some developmental activities.

Dr. M. Nandhini, Dr.M.Usha, Dr.P.Palanivelu,(April - 2017) It is found that the income of the women has been increased after joining the SHGs. So that they can manage the monthly house hold expenditure which has risen to a considerable level. But the savings is increasing at slow rate, because the incremental expenditure is higher.

Dr.M.Aruna, Ms.Rema Jyothirmayi, (May 2011) The empirical findings of the study suggests that micro finance has a profound influence on the economic status, decision making power, knowledge and self worthiness of women participants of self help group linkage program in Hyderabad.

Importance of Study

The study has crucial aspects to assess the growth and perceptions of micro credit programme in terms of socio economic development. The study has brought out many success stories, views and perceptions of women, change of attitude etc. that has enabled the programme team the potential of out come of micro credit programme and got an opportunity to address those relevant issues in the SHG meetings for the improvement of micro credit programme.

Moreover, the study will be helpful for the researchers of the similar field for learning and knowledge building and use it as secondary data as well.

Objective

The present paper aims to study the following aspects of SHGs functioning in the rural pocket of Gurgaon .

1. To find out the practice of rules and norms of SHG by the SHG members.
2. To assess the awareness level of SHG members about the good governance of micro credit programme.
3. To analyze the utilization of credits amount by SHG members for productive and domestic purpose.
4. To study the number of micro enterprise set up by the SHG member and their family.
5. To evaluate the socio economic change and women empowerment occurred in the villages due to introduction of SHG.



Methodology

Type of Research: The Study is based on descriptive type of research. The research work is conducted on the on going women empowerment and micro credit programme which was initiated in the project area in the year 2001.

Source of Data: The study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data are collected through a field survey in the study area. A structured interview schedule is prepared and used for collecting data from women members of self help groups. Secondary data are collected from various journals, annual reports, articles, working paper etc. Primary data are collected through a field survey in the study area. A structured interview schedule is prepared and used for collecting data from women members of self help groups. Both open ended and close ended questions are included in the schedule.

Area of Study or Research Work: This study is conducted in the rural pocket of Gurgaon and farukh nagar block of Gurgaon District through a field survey to get an insight of the transformation and empowerment achieved by rural women through an initiative of micro credit Programme (SHG).

Survey Team: The survey work was conducted with the help of structured interview schedule by Mrs Asha and Mrs Anita, Women Development Assistant under guidance of Mrs Seema Shivappa, Sr. Women Development Organizer of the Community Health & Development Department of St. Stephen's Hospital.

Population and Sample Size: There were 84 SHGs, out of those 69 SHGs were existing in the rural area which was approximately one or two decades old and 15 SHGs existing in the urban area were only three to four years old. There were approximately 1142 SHG members in the rural area and around 275 members in the urban area.

We selected only 135 respondents (SHG members) from 45 SHGs from rural area for the research work. These SHGs were selected and identified from five villages - Dhankot, Kherki mazara, Budhera, Kaliawas, and Chandu. The maximum number of respondents was selected from these villages where maximum number of SHGs were existing. The SHGs and respondents were selected by random sampling method.

Tools and techniques of data analysis: The data collected is representing the empirical evidence reveals the glimpse of transformation pertaining to women empowerment. All the questionnaire and data were coded, edited, tabulated and interpreted in a scientific manner.

Result and Analysis

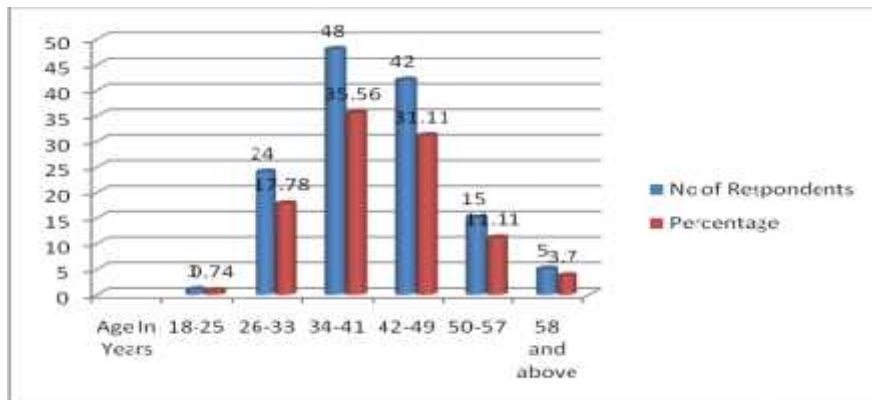
Table -1 : Showing Demographic Status of SHG Members

Category	No of Respondents	Percentage
Age In Years		
18-25	1	0.74
26-33	24	17.78
34-41	48	35.56
42-49	42	31.11
50-57	15	11.11
58 and above	5	3.70

Category	No of Respondents	Percentage
Education		
Primary Level	17	12.59
Middle level	37	27.41
Higher Secondary Level	37	27.41
Senior Secondary Level	14	10.37
Graduate	9	6.67



Above Graduate	0	0.00
Others	0	0.00
Illiterate	21	15.56
Family Size		
2 - 4 Members	64	47.41
5 - 7 Members	59	43.70
8 - 10 Members	8	5.93
11 - 13 Members	2	1.48
13 and Above	2	1.48
Occupation of HOF		
Govt Job	9	6.67
Private Job	49	36.30
Temporary Job	10	7.41
Self Employment	48	35.56
Agriculture	16	11.85
No Job/Work	2	1.48
pension	1	0.74
Self Occupation		
Yes	98	72.59
No	37	27.41
Family Income		
3000 - 8000	4	2.96
8001 - 13000	19	14.07
13001 - 18000	32	23.70
18001 - 23000	15	11.11
23001 - 28000	21	15.56
28000 and above	44	32.59
BPL Category Family		
No of BPL Families	25	18.52
No. Of Non BPL Families	110	81.48





The above table clearly explains the demographic details of the respondents.

Table 2:

Category	Respondents	Percentage
Benefits of SHG		
We can become Rich	15	11.11
We can become self reliant	133	98.52
One get loan from SHG and utilize in Domestic needs	11	8.15
How SHG Helps		
By giving loan	42	31.11
Helps in children education	3	2.22
Helps in starting self employment	63	46.67
In time of need one can get loan easily instead of out side money lender.	27	20.00

There are two segments of the above table in these segments the members well understand the SHG financial aid can help them to start up some business activities or enterprise which will lead them towards self reliance.

Table - 3

Awareness Level About Following of Rules for the Ideal SHG		
Category	Percentage	
Aware about corpus, rules of SHG, Good Governance	100	

The above table shows that SHG members are aware about the rules, guidelines and bylaws of SHG and follow it to make the SHG ideal.

Table - 4

SHG Support Extended to Self and Family Members		
Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
For Self	63	52.07
For Husband	36	29.75
For son	3	2.48
For Self and Husband	19	15.70

The above table explains that SHG not only provide financial support to its members but the family members too in setting up business activities and promoting self employment.

Table - 5

Women Empowerment and Socio economic change Witnessed		
Category	Percentage	Rank
Self Satisfaction Level and Change occurred in economic Status	100	I
My Respect in the Family Stepped Up	83.70	V
My Advice and Suggestions taken by my family for any work in the family	85.93	IV
My Decision in the family is Accepted	57.78	VIII



Self reliance increased	90.30	III
Self Confidence improved	72.59	VI
My family expect money arrangement from me at the time of need	90.37	II
Record Keeping and Bank Operations	70.00	VII

The above table the witness the feeling of empowerment, leadership and change of attitude among the SHG members in different forms. This significant reform has changed the status of rural women in the society.

Table 6

Decision Making Authority		
Category	No of Respondents	Percentage
By Self	11	8.15
By Husband	2	1.48
By Self and Husband	121	89.63
By Self and Son	1	0.74

The above table shows that majority of SHG Women take decision in the family with her husband

Table 7

Utilization of Funds for Domestic and Productive Purpose		
Category	No of Respondent or Users	Mean Value of Funds (Rs)
Domestic Purpose	126 /135	1697304
Productive Purpose	119 /135	3734375

The above table explains that every member borrows money for domestic and productive purposes as well. The domestic purpose means house hold purpose, under which members borrow money from SHG for house hold expenditures which includes purchase of any house hold items, educational expenditures of school children, social ceremonies etc. And the productive purpose means use of funds for any income generation/value added activity by member for her self and for the family members. Any productive activities generate money which enhance the family income.

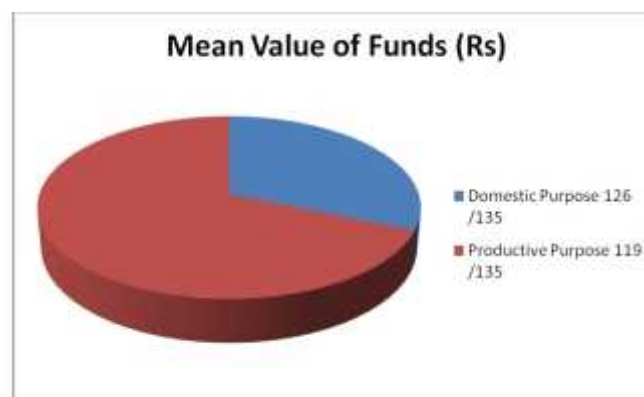


Table 8

Amount disbursed by SHGs for Self Employment for Self			
Category - Amount (Rs)	No. of. Respondents	Amount	Mean (Rs)
30000.00	4	120000.00	8,53,611.11
50000.00	3	150000.00	
75000.00	6	450000.00	
100000.00	5	500000.00	
125000.00	11	137500.00	



150000.00	6	900000.00
175000.00	7	1225000.00
200000.00	4	800000.00
200000.00 above	17	3400000.00

The above table gives details about the utilization of SHG funds for self employment by self. In the survey 63 or 47% respondents were found to utilize funds for income generation activities for self. The minimum amount they borrowed between Rs 30000 to Rs 200000 and above and the mean value of borrowed amount was Rs 8,53,611.00

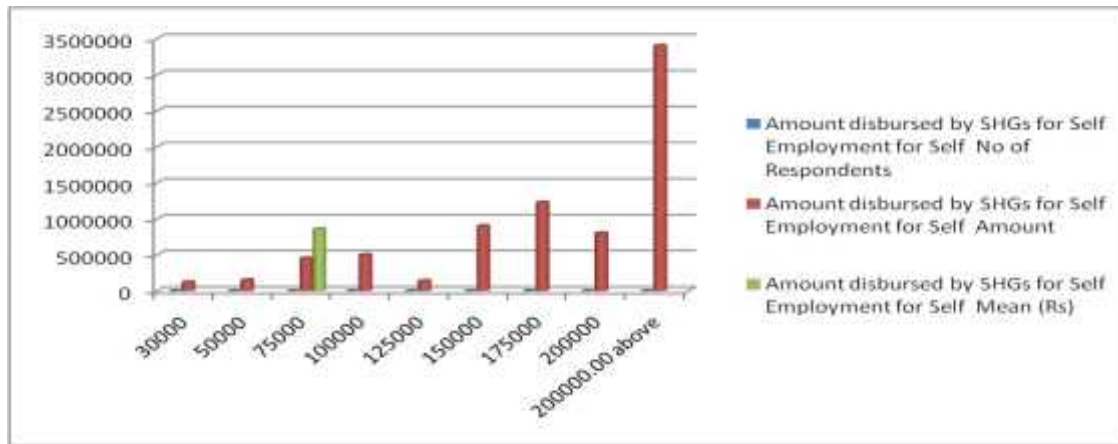


Table 9

Various Activities of Self and Family Members Supported By SHG			
Category	Activities	Total Amount (Rs)	Mean (Rs)
Self	Selling Buffalo Milk, Dairy, Cloth Shop, Sewing and Tailoring, Cosmetic Shop, Grocery Shop, Agriculture Work, Beauty Parlor, Rent From Room and factory Premises etc.	7682500.00	8,53,611.11
Spouse /Husband	Agriculture Work, Dairy, Paint and Brush Shop, Electrical Goods Shop, Gift Gallery and Stationary Shop, Hardware Shop, Photo Frame lamination Shop, Purchase of Loading Tempo and Auto Rickshaw, Grocery Shop, Tailoring and Ready made Garment Shop etc.	2000000.00	222222.22
Self & Spouse	Agriculture Work, Dairy Business, Grocery Shop, Tea Stall etc.	4880000.00	610000.00
Son	Purchase of cab and Taxi, Barber Shop, Hukka shop, Bakery Shop etc.	375000.00	125000.00
Children	Education Loan : For Graduation and Post Graduation, B.Tech, B Pharmacy , Computer Course etc.	4880000.00	610000.00



Table 10

Women Enterprise Before and After Micro credit Programme Introduction in the Rural Communities	
% Women Enterprise or Self Employment Before 2001	% Women Enterprise or Self Employment Before 2001
20%	80%

Apart from survey, to find out the micro enterprise activity in the communities before and after introduction of micro credit programme(SHG), a focus group discussion was conducted with the SHG office bearers and members. It was assumed and revealed that about 80% micro enterprise or livelihood activity supported by SHG funds have increased in the post SHG era.

Findings

- 36% respondents belongs to 34-41 years of age group.
- 27% respondents were educated up to middle and higher secondary level, 7% studied up to graduation level and 16 % respondents were illiterate.
- As far as occupation of head of the family of SHG members are concerned 7% in government job, 36% are in private job, 35% are engaged in self employment and 12% are in agriculture work.
- As far as self occupation is concerned 73% respondents were self employed.
- 3% respondents were having family income of Rs 3000- Rs 8000, 24% respondents were having family income of Rs13001 - Rs 18000 and 33% were having family income Rs 28000 and above.
- 19% respondents belonged to BPL (Below Poverty Line)
- 100% respondents were well aware about the rules of SHG and good governance.
- 47% respondents strongly agreed that SHG encouraged them to start self employment activities, 42% said that SHG gave us loan which developed liquidity in the community, 27% said that they can easily get loan from SHG instead of getting from the outside money lender on higher interest rate. And finally 98% said that SHG play vital role in making them self reliance.
- The decision making is an important aspect of empowerment, 8% respondents took self decision in the family matters and 90% respondents jointly took the decision with her husbands on family matters.
- SHG funds were utilized by members in domestic and productive purposes, domestic purpose means utilization of funds for house hold expenditures and productive purpose means income generation activity, entrepreneurship work for self and for the family members. over a period of 19 years the older SHGs members borrowed maximum amount of loan for domestic and productive purposes.
- 47% respondents were found to utilize funds for income generation activities for self and the mean value of borrowed amount was Rs 8,53,611.00.
- The dairy business was very much popular and lucrative among the SHG members, most of the respondents were engaged in this business either by self or with her husband. 38% respondents were her self engaged in cattle (buffalo and cow) rearing and selling milk business and 63% respondents were engaged in dairy business with her spouse/husband to supplement the family income.
- It has been assumed and revealed that about 80% micro enterprise or livelihood activity supported by SHG funds have increased in the post SHG era with the involvement of large number of women.

Conclusion

Women in the rural communities were not treated equally socially and economically due to male dominance and gender disparity. All though Haryanavi women are much hard worker then men folk and the volume work they do in the field of agriculture and animal husbandry are most commendable. They are dedicated to their family as well and always busy in household chores. They are one of the economic asset for the family and society yet their contribution is under estimated and devalued. In rural Haryana, men have much leisure time then women and they take all the decision of the family.



The Study was undertaken in one of the rural pocket of Gurgaon District. It was found that due to SHG or in post SHG era, cash flow or liquidity was available for the women through the SHG corpus and bank linkage for the domestic and productive purpose as well. This has enabled them to improve their standard of living, quality of life and promote the livelihood activities. The study revealed that 52% women have started their own self employment and 48% of their family members - husband and son, involved in different livelihood activities in the farming and non farming sectors. As a result of it their income was increased and they were able to take loan in multiple times to upgrade their livelihood activities. Moreover, the amount of dividend which included loan interest, fines etc. were paid back equally among the SHG members once in a year as an "Annual Gift" during diwali season, which caused the deep satisfaction, raised their self esteem and also status in their family. They were not only considered as an economic asset of the family but they also participated in the decision making (85%) in the family matters with their male counterpart. A very encouraging part of the study was that there was 0% defaulter, the reason was periodically organized capacity building and good governance training programmes of office bearers and members. Here we can conclude that the impact of SHG has transformed the lives of SHG members in the form of confidence, courage and skill.

Limitation

This study has been confined to some SHGs formed and nurtured by our organization in the project area of Gurgaon and Farrukhnagar blocks of Gurgaon District as no other SHGs formed by government or other NGOs are existed in the project area. Therefore, data for comparative study are not available in this research paper. The data collected in this study however, can be used as secondary data for the future study.

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