

# Women Empowerment Through Self-Help Groups (SHGs): A Critical Review

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**Abstract-**The purpose of this study is to study the role of Self Help Group in social, economic and psychological empowerment of women in Haryana. The study is based on primary data. 278 questionnaire were filled from rural Haryana i.e. 156 from Kaithal District and 122 from Ambala District through non-probability convenience sampling technique. Cronbach's alpha test is conducted to check the reliability and internal consistency of collected data. The statistics involved quantitative data so table, frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation are used to analyse the data and t-test/F-test (Analysis of Variance) is used to interpret the data. The results show that there exists no statistically significant difference in social, economic and psychological empowerment of women with respect to demographic variables. The findings of the study can help Government and National Rural Livelihood Mission to adopt appropriate policy and encourage women to participate in Self Help Group activity. The researcher provides the primary data from the State of Haryana.

**Keywords:** empowerment, microfinance, self-help group (SHG)

## INTRODUCTION

Women are indispensable part of the society. No society or country can flourish unless their women are in prosperity. Therefore, micro finance can only give desired results when they involve women in their operations. SHGs mainly involve women as they are considered more trustworthy when it comes to saving money. In this manner they have helped in attaining self-sufficiency for women and helped in their economic and social empowerment. Microfinance acts as a catalyst to organize the unorganized for social change. With the help of microfinance, unbanked women are able to mobilise their saving for credit to the noble group members for self-employment. As a result, millions of household women today have admittance to services to manage household finance more efficiently.

Self Help Group is a group of 10-20 members having similar social and economical background from a connecting area who work on the assertion of self-help and common interest. Thus, SHG were considered communal owned, self-managed, informal savings and credit delivery system at doorstep. NABARD after accomplishing its experiment with Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA) in 1987, launch a pilot project in 1992 with a pilot base of just 500 SHGs with policy backing from the Reserve Bank of India advising banks to open savings accounts in the name of SHG Groups.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Manimekalai and Rajeswari (2004) conducts a study on "Grass roots entrepreneurship through Self Help Groups (SHGs)". Their aim was to find out the factors which motivated women to join Self-Help Groups. This study analyzed the various enterprises, performance of Self-Help Groups in terms of growth of investment, turnover, capacity utilization, profit etc. It is understood from their analysis that, the Self-Help Group entrepreneurs have improved a lot with respect to their enterprises and performances.

Joshi (2019) study factors involve in SHG women members for their Social and Economic Empowerment. Area of the study is Nanital District of the State Uttarakhand. Primary Data is collected and multistage purposive and stratified random sampling method is used. The results of the study are women empowerment has increased manifolds after joining SHGs.

Aggarawal, Kumar and Garg (2020) study SHGs women empowerment. Primary data is collected in the State of Uttar Pradesh. Factors studied are economic development, improvement in family matters, political empowerment and public resources. Tools used are

ANOVA and t-test. The findings of the study are education has positive impact on SHG Women empowerment.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the impact of microfinance on economic empowerment of the SHG member beneficiary in Haryana.
2. To study the impact of microfinance on social empowerment of SHG member beneficiary in Haryana.
3. To study the role of microfinance in psychological empowerment of the member beneficiary in Haryana.

#### HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

The hypotheses based on the study are framed below.  
Null hypothesis H01 – There is no statistically significant difference between economic empowerment of women with respect to socio demographic variables.

Null hypothesis H02 – There is no statistically significant difference between social empowerment of women with respect to socio demographic variables.

Null hypothesis H03 – There is no statistically significant difference between psychological empowerment of women with respect to socio demographic variables.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Present study is based on women empowerment through SHG-BLP. Research is quantitative in nature and based on primary data. Questionnaire method is used to collect data and is based on descriptive research design. Multiple Choice questionnaire are framed to collect data. Both open ended and close ended are used. Questions are general to specific in nature. Five likert scale method is used starting from strongly agree, agree, neutral, Disagree and at the last strongly disagree. Secondary data was gathered from

books, magazines, research reports, journals, banks, NABARD, MFIs, NRLM, DRDA. Primary data was collected with the use of pretested structured questionnaire from the women member of SHG beneficiaries. Non-probability sampling technique is used to collect data and SPSS software is used to analyse and interpret the data.

#### VALIDITY OF THE DATA

The content validity of the test was determined by comparing the items in a test with the content and objective of the test. The face validity of the scale was established by having the reaction of SHG Members for whom the test was meant.

#### RELIABILITY OF THE DATA

On the basis of the rule of thumb, Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.818, the questionnaire which is adopted by the Researcher is “good” to use for data collection.

#### SAMPLE

The study was carried out in rural areas of two districts Ambala and Kaithal of Haryana State. A representative sample of 278 SHG member beneficiaries 156 from Kaithal and 122 from Ambala is categorized according to age groups, marital status, education, caste, religion, income and size of the family etc.

#### TOOLS

The statistics involve quantitative data. In the first phase Descriptive Analysis is used. This is done by using frequency, percentage for categorical data. Mean, Standard Deviation for rating scales. The second phase of analysis is carried out by relationship between variables. To establish the significant difference between or among the independent variables on dependent variables, independent t test and one way ANOVA is used to interpret the data.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Socio Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic variables	N	%AGE
18-25	24	8.6%

Age	25-35	138	49.6%
	35-45	92	33.1%
	above 45	24	8.6%
Marital Status	Married	256	92.1%
	Widow	22	7.9%
Education	Illiterate	18	6.5%
	Primary	88	31.7%
	Secondary	116	41.7%
	Graduation	41	14.7%
	Post-Graduation	15	5.4%
Family Size(members)	Below 4	87	31.3%
	4-6	171	61.5%
	Above 6	20	7.2%
Religion	Hindu	260	93.5%
	Muslim	8	2.9%
	Sikh	8	2.9%
	Other	2	0.7%
Caste	General	88	31.7%
	SC/ST	73	26.3%
	BC/OBC	106	38.1%
	Others	11	4.0%
Source of Income	Agriculture	80	28.8%
	Small Business	47	16.9%
	Labour	127	45.7%
	Transport	13	4.7%
	Other	11	4.0%
Monthly Income	Less than 10,000	214	77.0%
	10,000-20,000	53	19.1%
	20,000-30,000	6	2.2%
	Above 30,000	5	1.8%

Source: Primary Data

*Above table shows the socio demographic profile of the respondents. Findings of the table are that 49.6% respondents in Haryana are in the age group of 25-35 years, 92.1% SHG members are married, 41.7% respondents are educated up to secondary level, 61.5% respondents family size is 4-6 members, 93.5% are Hindu, 38.1% respondents are BC/OBC, 45.7% respondents has their source of income as labour, 62.9% respondents does not have their farming land and 77% respondents have less than Rs.10 000 as their monthly income.*

#### FINDINGS

Major findings of the demographic profile of the respondents are that 49.6% respondents in Total (Kaithal and Ambala) are in the age group of 25-35 years, 92.1% SHG members are married, 41.7% respondents are educated up to secondary level, 61.5% respondents family size is 4-6 members, 93.5% are Hindu, 38.1% respondents are BC/OBC, 45.7% respondents has their source of income as labour, 62.9% respondents does not have their farming land

and 77% respondents have less than Rs.10,000 as their monthly income.

#### CONCLUSION

SHGs are playing an important role to empower women not only within the family circle but also society at large. However, the process is slow and would take some time to bring visible results. There is enhanced awareness, improved standard of living, increase in self-confidence, communication skill, qualification, mobilization and they are making use of the various public amenities such as using hospitals, access to market, banking facility is a sign of betterment of rural women. Taking loan from banks has now become simpler. Further, there is a change in the current status of women regarding literacy, health and nutrition, labour force participation, contraceptive use and mobility. Domestic violence has reduced and they can take the independent decision to some extent depicting the empowerment of SHG women socially, economically and psychologically. Further, it can be suggested that to move to the state of complete

empowerment of the rural woman, there is a need for the government and NGOs to take steps to educate woman and help them in providing skill training education to develop an atmosphere for sustainability.

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