

# ROLE OF SELF HELP GROUPS ON WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

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## **Abstract**

*SHGs are the voluntary organizations that play a vital role for the growth of socio-economic conditions of the poor, particularly the women. The fundamental aim of assist cluster is to administer funding to the poor within the society. In reference to micro-finance, assist teams are enjoying a crucial role for the advance of socio-economic conditions of the poor. The NABARD initiated a project to link assist cluster with banks and therefore the real effort was taken from 1991 for the linkage of five hundred assist teams with the banks. Currently in India, the assist teams are promoted by the agricultural banks, co-operatives and non-governmental organizations. The main aim of this study is to advance a new understanding of the impact of SHGs on the empowerment of women in the Tribal area of MP. Findings suggest that SHGs have positively impact on women empowerment but it is negatively contributed in terms of economic development on the ground reality. Although SHGs has increase the awareness level of tribal women in many terms but still most of them have poor awareness level regarding government scheme and financial literacy*

**Keywords:** Self Help Groups (SHGs), Women Empowerment, Tribal District, Economic Condition, Madhya Pradesh

## **Introduction**

SHGs are the voluntary organizations that play a significant role for the growth of socio-economic conditions of the poor, particularly the women. The fundamental aim of assist cluster is to administer funding to the poor within the society. In reference to micro-finance, assist teams are enjoying a crucial role for the advance of socio-economic conditions of the poor. The origin of assist cluster is that the inspiration of Grameen Bank of Bangladesh based by Mohammad Yunis in 1976. India has additionally seasoned the role of assist teams in society. The NABARD initiated a project to link assist cluster with banks and therefore the real effort was taken from 1991 for the linkage of five hundred assist teams with the banks. Currently in India, the assist teams are promoted by the agricultural banks, co-operatives and non-governmental organizations. The primary objective of this research is to advance a new understanding of the impact of SHGs on the women empowerment in the Tribal area of MP.

### Literature Review

**Sarania (2015)** analyses that women empowerment is significant for the development and growth of every country in the world. Empowerment can be achieved with help of SHGs or micro credit and evidence across the country also suggests the same. The main aim of this study is to examine the effect of SHGs on the empowerment of women in terms of economic condition in Assam. Findings suggest that SHGs members have started activities which generate income for them when they join the SHGs in Assam. The result proved that after joining the SHGs there is a significant change in indicators of economic empowerment, in terms of savings, income and employment. When it compared to the pre SHGs joining with post SHGs joining, it is found that that most of the respondent's amount of savings income and employment days. It can be concluded from this study that SHGs are playing a significant effect in the empowerment of women in the study rural area. **Henriques and Gaonkar (2011)** from their study, it can be revealed that micro credit (poor) clients availed micro credit for the activities or productive reasons that generated income for them as compared to micro credit (non-poor) clients, for income generating activities. The age of the SHGs member plays a significant role in the usage of micro credit. It has been revealed that the SHGs have a tendency to use their funds more towards awareness or skill development program than income generating activities from their early days to till date. It is also inferred from the findings of the study that the SHG members for their credit requirement not only dependent on SHGs but they are also dependent on other formal or informal financial institutions. **Hunt & Kasynathan (2002)** finds that microfinance has a play a positive role on the mobility of women and also helps in decreasing the rate domestic violence against women. In order to build their path in the society women only need a small opportunity. Because of micro credit facilities women's are now more actively participate in their house related decision and also strengthen their financial stability. **Rajasekhar (2002a)**, study suggest that SHG has develop the habit of saving in the rural people behavior and also providing them needed loan or credit at reasonable interest rate through financial institutions or formal monetary and bringing a positive impact on the economy of people in the rural area, up the financial gain levels and assembly levels, improving food security and standard of living and increasing income generating activities and the stability of surroundings and contributive for the abundant required ladies authorization. Financial institutions, NGOs, SHGs, the public, micro credit and the governments plays a vital role over a period of last 15 years, the SHGs has become a movement for increasing the economy in the rural areas (Shrivastava, 1987).

### Statement of the Problem

In the present scenario the concern for tribal women empowerment has attract the attention of many sociologists because of its social relevance. Many studies have been done in India on the women empowerment and their status in society in general. Most of the studies have deal with the women's socio-economic conditions, employment and their education status. Various studies on tribal women condition are available now. Findings of these studies most of the time concentrated on tribal women problems and their sufferings in the society. Studies on factors affecting the economical and social condition of tribal women in particular are rarely found. For this purpose, a systematic study is the need of the hour. This necessitates an empirical study on tribal women in the context of impact of self help groups on their empowerment.

### Significance of the Study

The following are the significance of the study:

- The result of the study will reveal that SHGs impact on economical aspects of the tribal women in Madhya Pradesh.
- This research will also find the tribal woman's participation in SHGs has increase their economic resources or not and their participation in financial and household decision making.
- The SHGs functioning in tribal area of Madhya Pradesh will provide economic power to tribal women or not.
- Is SHGs bringing any change in the attitude of the tribal community /household/ husband regarding tribal women's empowerment?

### Objectives of the Study

- To study the awareness level of tribal women regarding their influence over economic resources and participation in economic decision making.
- To study the role and impact of SHGs for economic development of tribal women's of Tribal area of MP.

### Hypothesis of the Study

The guiding hypotheses for the study are:

- Ho1: There is no significant association between Demographic Variable and Awareness Level of Tribal Women.
- Ho2: There is no significant impact of demographic variable on Tribal Women Economic Empowerment.
- Ho3: There is no significant difference in the Economic Condition of Tribal Women before and after becoming members of the SHGs.
- Ho4: SHGs decrease the woman's influence over economic resources and participation in economic decision making.

### Research Methodology

This study is descriptive -cum- exploratory in nature mainly depend on the primary source of information, and the related information is gathered with the help of structured questionnaire. The sample of study comprises of individuals, having stake in the Self Help Groups and their members (Tribal women's). When the population is of such a large size consideration of time and cost almost invariably leads to the selection of respondents i.e. selection of items. The selected respondent will be representative of total population. This survey is based on samples of 400 female respondents in selected Tribal district of Madhya Pradesh. Dhar, Barawani, Jhabua, Chhindwara and Khargone District (selected as per the census, 2011 maximum number of tribal habitat district in Madhya Pradesh) for the study. Primary data is obtained through questionnaires, personal interviews, and discussion. The Secondary data for the study is obtained from various published and unpublished sources, like Government website and newspaper, Journals and articles. After collection the data was systematically arranged tabulated and appropriate analysis is carried out with the help of research-based statistical software i.e. SPSS-17. It has been used to generate tabulated reports and also provide descriptive statistics. Certain statistical analyses like Mean, Standard deviation, chi-square test, Wilcoxon Sign Test and ANOVA are used.

**Results**

**Ho1:** There is no significant association between Demographic Variable and Awareness Level of Tribal Women.

**Table No.1: Frequency Test for Demographic Variables (DV) and Awareness Level of Tribal Women**

S.No.	Variables	Chi-Square Value	DF	Asymp. Sig	Accept/Reject	Level of Association
						Cramer's V
1	Age and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	6.618	05	0.300	Accept	0.129
2	Marital Status and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	2.406	02	0.000	Reject	0.078
3	Family Type and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	0.222	02	0.000	Reject	0.024
4	House Type and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	1.318	02	0.517	Accept	0.570
5	Qualification and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	3.860	06	0.000	Reject	0.098
6	Occupation and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	7.886	04	0.000	Reject	0.140
7	Income and Awareness Level of Tribal Women	3.808	03	0.283	Accept	0.098

**Demographic Variables and Awareness Level of Tribal Women:** The chi square test shows the relationship between nominal variable marital status, family type, qualification, occupation and awareness level of tribal women by taking it to the frequency of different groups. From the result it can be easily depicted that we have to reject the null hypothesis as the P-value is less than the significant level of 0.05. Thus, we conclude that there is a significant association between marital status, family type, qualification, occupation and awareness level of tribal women. But demographic variables like age, house type and income and awareness level of tribal women by taking it to the frequency of different groups. From the result it can be easily depicted that we have to accept the null hypothesis as the P-value is more than the significant level of 0.05. Thus, we conclude that there is no significant association between age, house type and income and awareness level of tribal women. There is a difference in demographic variables with awareness of level of tribal women. To measure the magnitude of association Cramer's V test is applied and the level of association is very low (0.3) level for the all the variables except house type.

**Ho2:** There is no significant impact of demographic variable on Tribal Women Economic Empowerment.

**Table No.2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.106a	.011	-.006	.50863	.011	.634	7	392	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Income, Marital Status, Occupation, Age, Educational Qualification, House Type, Family Type

**Table No.3: ANOVAb**

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.147	7	.164	.634	.000
	Residual	101.413	392	.259		

Total	102.560	399		
a. Predictors: (Constant), Income, Marital Status, Occupation, Age, Educational Qualification, House Type, Family Type				
b. Dependent Variable: Economic Empowerment				

**Table No.4: Coefficientsa**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.465	.157		22.072	.000
	Age	-.018	.023	-.040	-.788	.431
	Marital Status	.049	.074	.033	.659	.510
	Family Type	.038	.046	.051	.841	.000
	House Type	-.031	.027	-.061	-1.119	.000
	Educational Qualification	.017	.019	.045	.889	.000
	Occupation	-.003	.037	-.004	-.074	.000
	Income	-.036	.030	-.060	-1.189	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Economic Empowerment

**Table No.5: Result of ANOVA for Demographic Variables (DV) and Economic Empowerment Tribal Women**

S.No.	Variables	Accept/ Reject
1	Age and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Accept
2	Marital Status and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Accept
3	Family Type and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Reject
4	House Type and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Reject
5	Qualification and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Reject
6	Occupation and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Reject
7	Income and Economic Empowerment of Tribal Women	Reject

As per the above table -02 and 03 of ANOVA showed that Economic Empowerment has a direct relation with demographic variables. They have positive relation as the ANOVA is 0.634. The significant level is .000, which is less than 0.05, so that ANOVA statistically significant. So we rejected null hypothesis, and accepted the alternate hypothesis that is demographic variables have significant impact on Economic Empowerment of tribal women. Result from the table 04 depicts the individual impact of demographic variables on Economic Empowerment of tribal women. Except age and marital status all the other demographic variables have a significant impact on Economic Empowerment.

**Ho3:** There is no significant difference in the Economic Condition of Tribal Women before and after becoming members of the SHGs. In order to test the null hypothesis that there is ‘no significant difference in the economic conditions before and after becoming members of the SHGs, sign test was used. The result of the sign test for economic variables is shown in Table- 06

**Table No.6: Result of Wilcoxon Sign Test for Economic Condition Variables**

S.No.	Variables	Z Value	Level of Significant	Result
1	Increases the expenditure capacity	-14.755	0.000	Sig.
2	Value of Asset has improved	-10.989	0.000	Sig.
3	Increases in Monthly Income	-8.471	0.000	Sig.
4	Increases the Saving amount	-16.775	0.000	Sig.
5	Offers Employment Opportunity	-12.072	0.000	Sig.

From Table 06, it is evident that the calculated values of Z for all variables are negative at the 5% level and p-value for all the variables is 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence it is concluded that there is significant difference in the economic conditions of members before and after their becoming members of SHGs.

**Ho4:** SHGs decrease the woman's influence over economic resources and participation in economic decision making.

**Table No.7: Result of ANOVA**

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.838	3	.279	1.087	.000
Within Groups	101.722	396	.257		
Total	102.560	399			

As per the above table 07 of ANOVA showed that woman's influence over economic resources and participation in economic decision making. It has a positive relation as the ANOVA is 1.087. The significant level is .000, which is less than 0.05, so that ANOVA statistically significant. So we rejected null hypothesis, and accepted the alternate hypothesis that is SHGs increase the Woman's Influence over Economic Resources and Participation in Economic Decision Mak

### Findings and Discussion

Most of the respondents are of the age of 31-40 (44.50%) and it is very good for this type of research as most of them are matured enough to take decision and most of them are married (88%) as in tribal areas, women or young girls are used to married in their young age. Most of the respondents (46.75%) are having the family members between 4-6 or more than 6, because in tribal areas tribal people generally live in joint family. It is also important to state that the respondents are spread across the selected tribal district of Madhya Pradesh. As per the perception of tribal women in the selected tribal district of Madhya Pradesh the awareness level regarding banking transaction, health and family welfare, legal aspects and political issues has increased after joining the SHGs. Now the tribal women are more confident and self reliance because of their SHGs participation. Most of the respondents are having a kaccha ghar (house type) (49.25%) which shows the quality of their living standard. Most of the respondents (38%) can just sign only, this shows the literacy level in the tribal areas in Madhya Pradesh. 43.25% of the respondents are daily wages earner and as there were no employment opportunities in other areas in tribal areas. Almost 43% of the respondents having a monthly income between Rs.3, 000 – 5,000. SHGs have negatively

contributed to the economic development of tribal women. SHGs have positively impact on women empowerment but it is negatively contributed in terms of economic development on the ground reality. Although SHGs has increase the awareness level of tribal women in many terms but still most of them have poor awareness level regarding government scheme and financial literacy SHGs not have a significant impact on the tribal women economic stability and participation in decision making.

Most of the respondents are the member of SHGs for more than 3 years. It means self help groups have properly working in the selected tribal district of Madhya Pradesh at least more than three years. Samples are having good number of tribal women who have experienced the role of SHGs in their life. Reason for joining the SHGs for most of the tribal women is to maintain their daily expenses, which shows their poor financial and economical condition. Another important reason is the economic benefit which attracts the tribal women towards the SHGs. Some of them are also join SHGs for getting loan for their personal or business reason. From the above data, it is clear that the most of women in the tribal area are joined the self help groups for economical or financial reasons.

On the saving in the each SHGs meeting 52.25% of the respondents having the saving of Rs.100 and 44.75% of the respondents having the saving of Rs.100- Rs.300. The result is very positive as it shows saving habits in the tribal women which is important for the economic and the financial stability of any household growth in the country. All the respondents have availed the credit facilities provided by their SHGs. It is clear from the data that most of them have joined the SHGs for their financial and credits needs. 46% of the respondents are availing the loan of Rs.3,000 to Rs.10,000 from the SHGs to maintain their financial and other daily needs. 31% of the respondents are availing the credit of Rs.10,000 from their SHGs. It shows the role of self help groups in fulfilling the financial needs of the tribal women in the Madhya Pradesh.

The main benefit of joining the SHGs is no mortgage/ no loss of land, jewelry & other articles, as the credit availed from the self help group does not required any mortgage or collateral for loan. Easy access and free from the humiliation of local lenders or financial institutions are also major benefits for the SHGs members. Less interest on the loan availed is also one of major reason or benefit of joining the self help groups in the tribal district of Madhya Pradesh. Individual business and goat farming are the major economic activities covered by the SHGs members. Goat farming and dairy is also covered by the SHGs members in the economic terms. Credit facilities, freedom from debt, promoting networking, habit of savings and economic independence are the major benefits derived by the SHGs member from their groups. Most of the tribal women joined SHGs for their financial needs on the initial stage but on later stage their financial debts are minimizing and also developed a saving habit in them. Because of SHGs their monthly income and savings has increased. Value of their assets has also increased and it shows the positive impact of SHGs on the economic empowerment of the tribal women in Madhya Pradesh.

### **Conclusion**

In India, Self-Help Groups have been continuously applauded for their significant impact on the women empowerment and their economic condition. But in reality the more focused is needed on tribal women empowerment in the Madhya Pradesh. Although the awareness level regarding financial activities, their social status and participation in household and economic decision making has improved a bit. From the present study it can be said that the tribal women in the selected district of Madhya Pradesh are more credit constrained, have restricted

access to wage labour market and plays a very limited role in bargaining and decision-making power in the household. Real women empowerment takes place only when the tribal women realize their strength and challenging the existing norms and culture, to effectively improve their well being. Overall there is an average impact of self help groups on tribal women empowerment and the policies/programme of government are not reaching them properly and it is the biggest reason for the slow economic and social development of tribal women in the selected district of Madhya Pradesh. SHGs have to work more honestly in the right direction for the empowerment of tribal women, then only a positive impact can be bring on the life tribal women and this will bring the real empowerment.

### **Implication of the Study**

From the findings of this study the central and state government can reframe their policies and the implementation part. The results will also help the other researchers to conduct more intensive study in the future on the tribal women. SHGs can also improve their performance, identifying and overcome their weakness to work more effectively towards the betterment and empowerment of tribal women.

- The training programme needed in the tribal area of Madhya Pradesh from self help groups and local government which will tribal women to think independently and can challenge unequal gender relations and exploitation's.
- Although government is working very hard to raise the level of tribal people but they fail to aware them regarding the importance of education. So government should monitor their schemes related to tribal people very seriously.
- Self help groups should concentrate on tribal community and make more serious efforts to bring some positive change in the attitude of the husband and tribal community on the empowerment of tribal women.
- Tribal women awareness regarding the financial, economical and banks services are very poor. So both the government and self help groups should take care of this point very seriously.
- The state government should start development oriented schemes rather than program orientated. Several development intermediations are to be mandated.

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