

Status of Self Help Groups in terms of Women Entrepreneurship in Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in three districts of Andhra Pradesh viz., Chittoor (from Rayalaseema region), East Godavari (from Coastal region) and Srikakulam (from North Coastal region) during 2016-18. The status of SHGs in terms of women entrepreneurship was assessed, out of 1,103 SHGs nearly two-fifth (38.53%) of the SHGs were having 11 to 15 years of existence and only 2.63 per cent of SHGs had more than 20 years of existence. More than two-fifth (43.79%) of the SHGs had savings of Rs. 50,001 – Rs. 1,00,000 and only 3.9 per cent with more than Rs. 2,00,000 savings. More than one-fourth (27.83%) of the SHGs have taken a loan amount of Rs. 10,00,001 – Rs. 15,00,000 and only 4.08 per cent with more than Rs. 25,00,000. Nearly two-third (60.60%) of the SHG members converted as women entrepreneurs and the remaining 39.4 per cent of the members have used SHG amount for other purposes. The 'savings' of the SHGs and 'loan amount received' by the SHGs have positively significant association with the 'number of years of existence' of SHGs.

Key words: *Empowerment, Loan amount received, Savings, Women entrepreneurs*

'Woman' is the key for success of any human being because of their excellent qualities such as hard-working nature, patience, cordial affiliation, convincing capacity, communication etc., in handling multifaceted activities. On the other hand women in rural areas are comparatively less educated, economically poor, confined to limited geographical boundaries and live under rigid structural constraints. Entrepreneurship is one of the prospective options to uplift rural women by generating self employment opportunities. The concept of Self Help Group (SHG) acts as a driving force for the rural women with the ultimate objective of converting household women as enterprising women and encouraging them to enter into entrepreneurial activities.

In India, there is a silent revolution made by the SHGs to uplift the economic condition and empowerment of women. In Andhra Pradesh, there are 7,05,487 SHGs in the state with 71,30,385 women members. There are 13 Zilla Parishads and 698 Mandal Samakhyas in the state. The finance for SHGs increased from Rs. 45,000 per SHG in 2004-05 to Rs. 3.69 lakh in 2016-17. Andhra Pradesh tops in the country with regard to SHG-bank linkage. The state's share is 37 per cent of total bank linkages to SHGs.

These were characterized in empowerment of women through focusing attention on women below the poverty line to provide self employment and establishing different cottage enterprises by imparting training in different activities and improving the

available local skills, improving the status of women in the family as well as in the society. It offers not only economic opportunities but also a change to learn new skills, make wider social contacts and experience. It creates an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential. Thus the SHGs certainly play an important role in women empowerment.

Since the overall empowerment of women is crucially dependent on economic empowerment, these SHGs could generate income and employment to build their empowerment (Sowjanya, 2007). But the rate of success is an issue to be thoroughly analysed to assess the performance and to identify the scope for strengthening the role of SHGs towards upliftment of rural women. So, it is necessary to study the status of women entrepreneurship achieved through SHGs. The present status of the SHGs in terms of women entrepreneurship mainly indicates the number of beneficiaries converted as women entrepreneurs and it could be useful to take necessary steps to convert all the SHG beneficiaries into entrepreneur's essentially large scale entrepreneurs.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The status of SHGs in terms of women entrepreneurship was assessed through four important criteria viz., number of years of existence, savings, loan amount received and number of beneficiaries

converted as women entrepreneurs. All the 1,103 SHGs in the selected 24 villages of the study were considered for assessing the status of SHGs in terms of women entrepreneurship. The secondary data was collected, by consulting the Assistant Project Managers (APMs), Community Coordinators (CCs) and Village Organization Assistants (VOAs) of SHGs. The items included in the schedule to collect data pertaining to status of SHG were, number of years of existence of SHG, saving amount of each SHG, total amount received by the SHG and number of entrepreneurs emerged out of SHGs. Cross tabs were used where ever necessary.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Number of Years of Existence of SHGs

A glance at table 1 shows that, nearly two-fifth (38.53%) of the SHGs were having 11 to 15 years of existence followed by 27.2 per cent were in between 6-10 years and 20.94 per cent with 16-20 years of existence. About 10.7 per cent of the SHGs were having less than 5 years of existence and only 2.63 per cent of SHGs had more than 20 years of existence.

Table 1. Number of years of existence of SHGs

Number of years of existence	Frequency	Percentage
5 and below	118.00	10.70
06-Oct	300.00	27.20
Nov-15	425.00	38.53
16-20	231.00	20.94
21 and above	29.00	2.63
Total	1103.00	100.00

The probable reason for such distribution might be that, even though the concept of SHG was initiated in India during 1986-87 gained its importance during 1990's and there is a big boon for the establishment of SHGs in the vicinity of second millennium year. There was a wide network of SHGs in India in general and Andhra Pradesh state in particular. Evolutionary developments were documented in the structure and functioning of SHGs during the past two decades.

Savings of the SHGs

An overview of the table 2 shows that, more than two-fifth (43.79%) of the SHGs had savings of Rs. 50,001 to Rs. 1,00,000 followed by 27.74 per cent with Rs. 1,00,001 to Rs. 1,50,000 and 13.87 per cent with Rs. 50,000 and below. About 10.7 per cent of SHGs had savings of Rs. 1,50,001 to Rs. 2,00,000 and only 3.9 per cent with more than Rs. 2,00,000 savings.

Table 2. Savings of the SHGs

Savings (in Rs.)	Frequency	Percentage
50,000 and below	153.00	13.87
50,001 – 1,00,000	483.00	43.79
1,00,001 – 1,50,000	306.00	27.74
1,50,001 – 2,00,000	118.00	10.70
More than 2,00,000	43.00	3.90
Total	1103.00	100.00

The probable reason for the above trend might be that, majority of the SHGs were with economically poor women and operating their micro or cottage businesses with very low income range. On the other side very few SHGs were having small to medium businesses run by their members due to acquisition of ancestral property or with the financial support of their family members.

Loan Amount Received by the SHGs

The data given in table 3 illustrated that, more than one-fourth (27.83%) of SHGs have taken a loan amount of Rs. 10,00,001 to Rs. 15,00,000 followed by 23.12 per cent with Rs. 5,00,001 to Rs. 10,00,000. Almost equal (18.22% and 17.41%) percentage of the SHGs has taken a loan of Rs. 5,00,000 and below and Rs. 15,00,001 to Rs. 20,00,000 respectively. About 9.34 per cent of SHGs have taken a loan amount of Rs. 20,00,001 to Rs. 25,00,000 and only 4.08 per cent with more than Rs. 25,00,000.

Table 3. Loan amount received by the SHGs

Loan amount received (in Rs.)	Frequency	Percentage
5,00,000 and below	201.00	18.22
5,00,001-10,00,000	255.00	23.12
10,00,001-15,00,000	307.00	27.83
15,00,001-20,00,000	192.00	17.41
20,00,001-25,00,000	103.00	9.34
25,00,001 and above	45.00	4.08
Total	1103.00	100.00

The above trend might be an indication of effective financial transactions by the SHGs since their inception. The date of inception as well as the progressive growth of each SHG also might have contributed to the above trend. It could also be interpreted that more number of SHG members might have utilized the benefits of SHGs in terms of varying degree of loan amounts for their economic development.

Number of Beneficiaries Converted as Women Entrepreneurs

The data depicted in table 4 revealed that, three-fifth (60.60%) of the members converted as women entrepreneurs and invested the SHG loan amount in income generating activities and only two-fifth (39.40%) of the members used the SHG loan amount for other purposes like children education, medical expenses, marriage, personal requirements, construction of house and purchase of vehicles etc.

Table 4. Number of beneficiaries converted as women entrepreneurs

S.No.	Entrepreneurs	Frequency	Percentage
1	Converted as women entrepreneurs	7,174	60.6
2	Not converted as women entrepreneurs	4,664	39.4
	Total members in SHG	11,838	100

Association between number of Years of Existence and Savings

It is noticeable from the table 5 that, there was a significant association between the number of years of existence and savings at 1 per cent level, since the p value was less than 0.01(0.000<0.01) for the corresponding chi square value 232.609. Further, it was also found that, there is association between the number of years of existence and the savings at 1 per cent level, since the p value was less than 0.01 (0.000<0.01) for the corresponding spearman correlation value 0.320.

The probable reason for the above trend might be due to the fact that, the SHG members might be utilizing the loan amounts over a period of time for productive purposes and might be repaying the instalments regularly, that helped to enhance the savings of a SHG. The awareness on the importance of savings of an SHG for their economic development might have motivated them to utilize the loan amounts for the establishment of different cottage industries. Hence in the course of time the numbers of years of establishment have contributed towards enhancing the savings of each SHG.

Association between number of years of existence and loan amount received

Perusal of the table 6 indicated that there was a significant association between number of years of existence and loan amount received at 1 per cent level, since the p value was less than 0.01 (0.000 < 0.01) for the corresponding chi square value 477.054. Further, it was also found that, there was positively significant association between the number of years of existence and the loan amount received at 1 per cent level, since the p value was less than 0.01 (0.000<0.01) for the corresponding spearman correlation value 0.446.

This trend might be due to the fact that, each SHG might be receiving, utilizing and repaying the loan amounts from the banks without any misappropriation. Hence the bankers might have given the loans on priority basis for the best performing SHGs. The existence of such SHGs over a period of time improved their financial transactions in turn led to excellence in their growth and development.

Table 5. Association between number of years of existence and savings

Number of years of existence	Savings (Rs.)					Total
	50,000 and below	50,001-1,00,000	1,00,001-1,50,000	1,50,001-200000	2,00,001 and above	
5 and below	57.00	52.00	8.00	1.00	-	118.00
	(5.17)	(4.71)	(0.73)	(0.09)		(10.70)
06-Oct	24.00	175.00	65.00	24.00	12.00	300.00
	(2.18)	(15.87)	(5.89)	(2.18)	(1.09)	(27.20)
Nov-15	50.00	182.00	132.00	48.00	13.00	425.00
	(4.53)	(16.50)	(11.97)	(4.35)	(1.18)	(38.53)
16-20	19.00	70.00	89.00	41.00	12.00	231.00
	(1.72)	(6.35)	(8.07)	(3.72)	(1.09)	(20.94)
21-30	3.00	4.00	12.00	4.00	6.00	29.00
	(0.27)	(0.36)	(1.09)	(0.36)	(0.54)	(2.63)
Total	153.00	483.00	306.00	118.00	43.00	1103.00
	(13.87)	(43.79)	(27.74)	(10.70)	(3.90)	(100.00)
Chi-Square Value 232.609**					p value 0.000	
Spearman Correlation value 0.320**					p value 0.000	

Table 6. Association between number of years of existence and loan amount received

Number of years of existence	Loan amount received (Rs.)						
	5,00,000 and below	5,00,001-10,00,000	10,00,001-15,00,000	1500001-2000000	2000001-2500000	2500001 and above	Total
5 and below	94.00	15.00	8.00	1.00	-	-	118.00
	(8.52)	(1.36)	(0.73)	(0.09)			(10.70)
06-Oct	41.00	105.00	84.00	55.00	10.00	5.00	300.00
	(3.72)	(9.52)	(7.62)	(4.99)	(0.91)	(0.45)	(27.20)
Nov-15	53.00	99.00	141.00	76.00	45.00	11.00	425.00
	(4.81)	(8.98)	(12.78)	(6.89)	(4.08)	(1.00)	(38.53)
16-20	12.00	36.00	65.00	53.00	37.00	28.00	231.00
	(1.09)	(3.26)	(5.89)	(4.81)	(3.35)	(2.54)	(20.94)
21-30	1.00	-	9.00	7.00	11.00	1.00	29.00
	(0.09)		(0.82)	(0.63)	(1.00)	(0.09)	(2.63)
Total	201.00	255.00	307.00	192.00	103.00	45.00	1103.00
	(18.22)	(23.12)	(27.83)	(17.41)	(9.34)	(4.08)	(100.00)
Chi-Square Value 477.054**						p value 0.000	
Spearman Correlation value 0.446**						p value 0.000	

Figures in parentheses are percentages

** : Significant at 0.01 level of probability

CONCLUSION

SHG is a novel and innovative organizational setup in India for the welfare and upliftment of women. All women in India are given a chance to join any one of the SHGs for obtaining training and achieve development so as to be prospective entrepreneurs and skilled workers. The SHGs are promoted by the government to make the women in India resourceful enough to be entrepreneurs. The findings of the study revealed that only sixty per cent of the SHG members were turned up as women entrepreneurs and the remaining forty per cent of the members have used SHG amount for other purposes. There is every need

to motivate on the remaining forty per cent of the women by gap identification to become women entrepreneurs through appropriate incubation services.

LITERATURE CITED

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