

Motivational factors influencing women to be the members of self-help groups

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Self-help groups play a tremendous role in empowering women through providing an excellent platform to improve the self-confidence, leadership, communication skills, decision making capacity, social recognition, standard of living etc. The glorious side of the coin reflects that SHGs are very powerful tool for empowerment but the other side imbibes a lot of many constraints and threats which affect the sustainability, remunerativeness and suitability of SHG activities to the local conditions. There were total 8 SHG associated with College of Home Science, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand with the strength of 90 members working therein. A purposive sampling technique was used with combination of deliberate random sampling for the selection of total sample. The data were collected personally through interview technique with the help of pre-structured questionnaire. All the groups were working at least since five and more years and contributed a lot to its members. Majority of members enjoyed decision making power in functioning of their SHG. They were not having membership of any group or organization before joining the self-help group. All the SHG members maintained attendance register and kept the records and were able to give their contribution regularly as well as make extra savings. The inspirational sources for joining SHG include NGOs, banks, friends, neighbours, university staff and students. Among these factors, university staff and students and other successful working SHG had been reported as major sources of inspiration. The major primary motivational factors to join self-help groups included desire to work independently, to spend time fruitfully, to be self-dependent and to improve financial condition of the family. Being the members of self-help groups, majority of respondents reported an increase in self-confidence, self esteem and participation in decision making, capacity building, improvement in psychological and social aspects.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Empowerment, Sustainability, Remunerativeness, Motivational factors

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