

Empowerment of women through participation in self-help groups - A study in tribal area

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ABSTRACT : Self-help group plays an important role in empowering tribal women by improving their socio-economic condition, decision making power and capacity building. The objective of the research was to study the demographic profile of the tribal women, reasons for joining SHGs and activities undertaken by them and achievements in terms of benefits and level of satisfaction. Data was collected by stratified random sampling method with the help of pre-tested questionnaires from one hundred tribal women working in 7 different SHGs. The study was carried out at Jashipur Block of Mayurbhanj district, Odisha. The results of study revealed that majority of the respondents belongs to age group of 31-40 years and were Agricultural labourers. None of them were illiterate and 70 per cent of them had primary school education. Joint family system was found to be prevalent in that area. All respondents had income less than 50,000/- per annum before joining SHG, but after joining SHG their level of income raised up to 1 lakhs in most of the cases. To enhance income of the family, easy availability of loan, feeling secured financially, working in a group and simple and easy procedure of SHGs were the main reasons for respondents to join SHGs. Majority of the respondents were engaged in vegetable cultivation followed by 'Sattu' Preparation. Most of the SHG members paid their loan regularly and were involved in health and Sanitation programme of their village. Decision making capacity of the respondents related to personal and family matter was also enhanced after joining SHGs. Thus, it can be concluded that SHGs plays an important role in changing status of the tribal women in rural areas in every spheres of their life.

KEY WORDS : Women empowerment, Self-help group, Tribal women, Sattu

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