

Impact of women self-help groups in empowering tribal farming communities of Gajapati district of Odisha

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Women especially from the small and marginal farming families perform over 60 per cent of on-farm activities and almost all off-farm activities. It is also noticed that the poorer tribal families, the greater is the dependency on women's economic productivity. The study addresses impact of women empowerment through self-help-groups in Gajapati district of Odisha. Three of the tribal blocks *i.e.* Nuagada, Rayagada, R.Udayagiri consisting of 150 SHG members among tribal farming community were selected for the study. Respondents were selected based on the criteria such as rural women only who are involved in agricultural activities having land holding of their own. The required information was obtained with the help of pre-tested schedule using personal interview method. The mean age of respondents was 33 years and among them 45.33 per cent were functionally literates. Around 48 per cent from Nuagada, 50 per cent from Rayagada and 56 per cent respondents of R.Udayagiri block have only thatched houses and rest respondents have hut, semi-pucca and pucca houses whose percentage were very low. The Chi-square values were found to be 14.414 and was found to be highly significant ($P < 0.01$) in case of occupation. It can be concluded that, the respondents had substantial income. Unless the women have substantial income and contribute significantly to the family income, empowerment of rural women among farming communities in Gajapati district is not possible.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Empowerment, SHG, Farming community, Substantial income

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