

RESEARCH ARTICLE :

Impact of women self-help groups (SHGs) on income, employment, investment and saving in south Konkan region

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SUMMARY : The present study entitled, “Impact of women self help groups on income, employment, investment and saving in South konkan Region” was carried out in South Konkan region purposively. From Ratangiri district Dapoli, Khed and Guhagar while from Sindhudurg district Kudal, Devgad and Kankavali tahsils were selected. From each tahsil, ten SHGs and five members of each SHG were selected randomly. Thus, final sample consisted of 60 SHGs, 300 SHG members. The selected SHGs were categorized taking into consideration group activities performed by SHG. The SHGs were classified as farming activities, agro-processing activities, and non-farming activities. This indicated that after joining the SHG, per member income increased to the extent of 13.87 per cent. This increase in income was 14.84 per cent in farming, 12.31 per cent in agro-processing and 14.63 per cent in non-farming category. Within different categories of groups, the increase in employment was 83.18 per cent in farming category, 61.95 per cent in agro-processing category and 77.41 per cent in non-farming category. The investment in different assets increased to the extent of 22.62 per cent after participation in SHG group. Within different categories of groups, the increase in investment was 22.22 per cent in farming category, 16.83 per cent in agro-processing category and 26.82 per cent in non-farming category. After participation in SHG activities per member saving increased by 27.84 per cent.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Micro-credit programmes extend small loans to poor people for self-employment projects that generate income allowing them to care for themselves and their families. In most cases, micro-credit programmes offer a combination of services and resources to their clients, in addition to credit for self-

employment. These often include savings facilities, training, networking and peer support. Our nation is agro-centered and hence majority of masses tend to depend upon agriculture. Self - help groups, the most common microfinance institutions in India, are small voluntary associations of poor people from the same socio-economic background

who come together for the purpose of solving their common problems through self-help and mutual help (NABARD, 2000). Microfinance through SHG has become a ladder for the poor to bring them up not only economically, but also socially, mentally and attitudinally. Self help groups (SHGs) are fast emerging as powerful tool of socioeconomic empowerment of the poor in rural areas. SHG is a small body formed by people for meeting their specific objective, particularly credit.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

South Konkan Coastal Region was selected for the study comprising Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts of SHGs purposively. A list of tahsils along with number of SHGs functioning in each tahsil was collected from District authorities and Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM). Three tahsils from each district were selected randomly. From Ratnagiri district Dapoli, Khed and Guhagar while from Sindhudurg district Kudal, Devgad and Kankavali tahsils were selected. From each tahsil, ten SHGs were selected randomly. Five members of each SHG were selected randomly for collecting information regarding their experiences about SHGs. Thus, final sample consisted of 60 SHGs, 300 SHG members. The data on relevant aspects were collected from each selected SHG and also from selected members of SHGs by personal visit and interview. The primary data required for fulfilling the objectives under study were collected with the help of specially designed schedules for SHGs and members. The sample SHGs were stratified into different categories based on their nature of activities. Accordingly three categories were formed *i.e.* farm, agro-processing and non-farm.

Tabular analysis of data :

The data were subjected to tables and cross tables. The appropriate mathematical and statistical tools like mean, percentages, ratios and frequency distribution were used for analysis of data. The analysed data are presented in different Tables.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

Classification of SHG:

The selected SHGs were categorized taking into consideration group activities performed by SHG. The SHGs were classified as farming, agro-processing, and non-farming.

The detail classification of each selected SHG is presented in Table 1. It is observed from Table 1 that, out of 60 selected SHGs, farming group undertaken one dairy unit, two farming activities, one mango farming activity, two goat rearing units and four fish selling activities. Agro-processing group undertaken six cashew processing units, five kokum syrup activities, four pickle making activity, five masala preparation activities, and four bamboo work activity. Non-farming group undertaken four agarbatti preparation, five bag making activities, one candle making activity, two cloth shoppies, two decorative material preparation activities, five diwali stuff making activities, two mess, five papad making activities and three tailoring activities. Hence, farming group undertaken total ten activities, agro-processing group twenty one and non-farming group twenty nine activities.

The results of the present investigation lead to accept the hypothesis that the diversified activities were undertaken by women SHGs.

Income and employment generation of SHGs :

One of the main objectives of SHG formation is to generate income and employment. The information on activitiwise income and employment generation by SHGs is given in Table 2.

It is seen from Table 2 that, per year income generated through group activities at overall level was Rs. 66326.7. The total annual income received in non-farming, category was highest (Rs.69800), than farming (Rs.66566.73) and agro-processing (Rs.61158.30).

As regards to employment generation, at overall level 515.80 man days of employment was generated. The highest (581.03 man days) employment was generated through farming category followed by (509 man days) through non-farming and (489.7 man days) through agro-processing category. The high rate of employment generation in farming category could be attributed to labour intensive activities in this category. The foregoing analysis revealed that there was no much difference in income and employment generation in different group activities.

Impact of SHGs formation on members :

The main objective of formulation of SHGs is firstly to meet the day to day consumption needs of the households by undertaking income generating activities which in turn result in increased employment and hence income of group members.

The present study was undertaken to assess whether the women who joined the SHGs became self sufficient or not. This is judged with the help of improvement in income and employment of their family. This impact was studied taking into consideration income, employment and saving position of member family before

Table 1 : Distribution of sample SHGs according to activities undertaken

Sr. No.	Farming		Agro-processing		Non-farming		SHG No.
	Activities	No	Activities	No	Activities	No	
1.	Dairy unit	1	Cashew processing	6	Agarbatti preparation	4	
2.	Farming	2	Kokam syrup preparation	5	Bag making	5	
3.	Mango farming	1	Pickle making	4	Candle making	1	
4.	Goat rearing	2	Masala preparation	5	Cloth shoppy	2	
5.	Fish selling	4	Bamboo work	1	Decorative material	2	
6.					Diwali stuff	5	
7.	-	-	-	-	Mess	2	
8.	-	-	-	-	Papad making	5	
9.	-	-	-	-	Tailoring	3	
	Total	10 (16.67)		21 (35.00)		29 (48.33)	60 (100)

Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage to total

Table 2 : Per SHG activitiwise income and employment generation

Sr. No.	Particulars	Farming (n=10)	Agro-processing (n=21)	Non-farming (n=29)	Overall (n=60)
1.	Income (Rs.)	66566.73	61158.30	69800	66326.7
2.	Employment(Days)	581.03	489.7	509	515.80

Table 3 : Impact of SHGs on average income, employment, investment and saving of members of SHGs

Sr. No.	Particulars	Before	After	Percentage increase
Farming (n=50)				
1.	Income generation(Rs.)	89698.14	103010.90	(14.84)
2.	Employment generation (man days)	145.34	266.24	(83.18)
3.	Change in investment on assets (Rs.)	19556.42	23903.14	(22.22)
4.	Change in saving (Rs.)	15221.82	20190.90	(32.64)
Agro-processing (n=105)				
1.	Income generation(Rs.)	97039.34	108992.90	(12.31)
2.	Employment generation (man days)	158.35	256.46	(61.95)
3.	Change in investment on assets (Rs.)	18643.91	21783.5	(16.83)
4.	Change in saving (Rs.)	18940	23596	(24.58)
Non-farming (n=145)				
1.	Income generation(Rs.)	93551.76	107247.68	(14.63)
2.	Employment generation (man days)	148.40	263.29	(77.41)
3.	Change in investment on assets (Rs.)	18665.62	23671.95	(26.82)
4.	Change in saving (Rs.)	16995.17	21876.55	(28.72)
Overall (n=300)				
1.	Income generation(Rs.)	94003.56	107045.72	(13.87)
2.	Employment generation (man days)	151.16	261.55	(73.02)
3.	Change in investment on assets (Rs.)	18823.54	23083.25	(22.62)
4.	Change in saving (Rs.)	17415.77	22264.63	(27.84)

joining of SHG and after joining SHG. Generally the change in these indicators in these two points of time considered as impact of SHGs, whether negative or positive as the case may be. Therefore, the collected information on these aspects was analyzed and the results are presented in Table 3.

Impact on income of members :

The impact of SHGs activities on the members income was estimated by comparing their income before and after participation in SHG. It can be seen from Table 3 that at overall level, the average income of member before joining SHG was Rs. 94003.56, as SHG activities started income increased to Rs.107045.72. This indicated that after joining the SHG the per member income increased to the extent of 13.87 per cent. This increase in income was 14.84 per cent in farming, 12.31 per cent in agro-processing and 14.63 per cent in non-farming category.

Impact on employment of members :

The employment generating potential of different economic activities undertaken by SHGs was estimated on the basis of number of day's employment generated in a year for the SHG members. Accordingly, results depicted in Table 3 showed that, at overall level, before participation in SHG the employment was 151.16 man days per year which increased to 261.55 man days after joining the SHG. This indicated that after joining the SHG, about 73.02 per cent more employment was generated showing positive impact on employment generation. Within different categories of groups, the increase in employment was 83.18 per cent in farming category, 61.95 per cent in agro-processing category and 77.41 per cent in non-farming category.

Impact on investment by members :

It is general tendency of human being to invest the part of income in durable goods like home appliances, as well as in farm equipments. Also some of income is saved for future. Therefore, impact on investment and saving was also studied.

Table 3 revealed that, at overall level an amount Rs.18823.54 was invested in different assets by member before participation of group activities which increased to Rs.23083.25 after participation in group activities. This showed that the investment in different assets increased to the extent of 22.62 per cent after participation in SHG

group. Within different categories of groups, the increase in investment was 22.22 per cent in farming category, 16.83 per cent in agro-processing category and 26.82 per cent in non-farming category.

Impact on saving by members :

Contribution of a fixed sum on monthly basis in the form of saving assumed greater importance as they directly influence the growth of the common fund of the group. It is observed from Table 3 that, at overall level, the average saving per year and per member was Rs. 17415.77 before participation in group which increased to Rs.22264.63 after participation in group. This indicated that, after participation in SHG activities per member saving increased by 27.84 per cent. This saving was increased to the extent of 32.64 per cent in farming which was higher than 24.58 per cent in agro-processing and 28.72 per cent in non-farming category. The impact analysis showed that due to participation in SHG activities there was considerable increase in the income, employment, investment and saving of SHG members indicating positive impact of SHG on these selected indicators.

The results of the present investigation lead to accept the hypothesis that there was substantial impact of SHGs on women empowerment.

The findings of the present study are in conformity with the findings of Puhazhendhi and Satyasai(2000); Awasthi *et al.*(2001); Mishra *et al.* (2001); Khorate (2003); Ganesamurthy *et al.*(2004); Antwal *et al.* (2015); Kumar *et al.* (2008); Suresh *et al.* (2009); Feroze *et al.* (2011); Sita Devi *et al.* (2011); Mary (2008); Sriraman (2006); Nagaraj *et al.* (2009) and Nalini *et al.* (2013).

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