



## MICRO – FINANCE THROUGH SHGS: A TOOL FOR SOCIO – ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN IN ANANTHAPURAMU DISTRICT

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### **Abstract**

*Empowerment is a multidimensional project with components such as economic, social, political, cultural and psychological. Women empowerment means making women able, competent, effective, skilled and manipulating, so that they may develop their potential and be parallel to men in all aspects of life. Micro-Finance is emerging as a powerful instrument for poverty alleviation in the new economy. In India, micro finance scene is dominated by Self-Help Groups-Bank linkage programme aimed at providing cost effective mechanism for providing financial services to the “un-reached poor”. The present paper is to study the role of micro finance through Self-Help Groups, the tool for socio-economic empowerment of scheduled caste women in Ananthapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.*

**Key Word: Micro Finance, Self-Help Groups, Empowerment.**

### **Introduction**

The role of women in economic development is most intimately related to the goal of comprehensive socio economic development and is a strategic question for the development of all societies. Since women empowerment is the key to socio-economic development of the community, bringing women into the mainstream of national development has been a major concern of government. A significant development in recent years has been the mushrooming of community based organizations and initiatives at the local level of women. Reports indicates that self help programmes, often in the form of savings and credit or micro credit schemes have succeeded in changing the lives of poor women, enhancing income and generating positive externalities such as increased self – esteems.

The micro-finance has become the most affective interventions for socio economic empowerment of the poor. The term microfinance and micro credit are used interchange ably. But micro finance is a term for providing financial services such as micro credit, micro-savings and insurance to poor people. Micro credit refers to purveyance of small loans. The task force on supertime policy and regulatory frame work for micro finance has defined micro finance is “provision of thrift, credit and other financial support to the poor in rural, semi-urban or urban areas to raise their income levels and improve living standards. The mantra “micro-finance” is banking through SHG groups, to provide financial services through the SHG groups of individuals, either in joint liability or co-obligation. Mahammad Yunus is known as the pioneer of self-help groups. This is the predominant model followed in India. The micro-finance helped poor women by providing independent source of income and reduce the dependency on the husband’s income, by increasing. The assertiveness of women and providing independent source of income with exposure to new sets of ideas, values and social support.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To study the socio economic empowerment and micro finance.
- To analyze the socio-economic empowerment of scheduled caste women
- To draw the conclusions.

### **Data Collection**

The present study based on primary and secondary data primary data was collected from the SHG beneficiaries from the Tadipatri mandal, Ananthapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh through interview - schedule. Secondary data were collected from journals and publications, books, published and unpublished thesis, Govt web sites and DRDA office. In the study tool and techniques are used in appropriate places.

### **Sampling**

Ananthapuramu district is divided into three revenue division live 63 revenue Mandals Ananthapuramu division 20, Dharamavaram Division 17, and penukonda division 26. For a detailed analysis the tadipatri mandal of the district of Ananthapuramu were selected 20 panchayat in first stage. And 30 samples were selected from each panchayat and total 300 samples in the district.

**Table 1: Details of Educational Status of Selected Respondents**

S. No	Educational status	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Illiterate	184	61.33
2	Primary education	76	25.33
3	High school education	29	9.67
4	College education	11	3.67
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: field survey

Table 1 present the details of educational status of selected respondents. The table reveals that about 184 respondents are illiterates, about 76 respondents are having primary education level status, about 29 respondents are high school education status and 11 respondents are having the status of college education. The respondents who are illiterates comprise about 61.33 percent of the respondents who have primary education status are comprising about 25.33 percent of the respondents who have high school education status are comprising about 9.67 per cent and the remaining who have the status of pursuing college education are comprising about 3.67 per cent of the total sample. It indicates that a majority of respondents are having the status of either illiterate or education at low level and only a small proportion of the sample are having status of college education.

**Table 2: Attended Various Levels of Training Programmes by the SHG Members**

S. No	Training Programme	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Attended at Mandal level	72	40.00
2	Attended at District level	64	36.00
3	Attended at State level	30	17.00
4	Attended at Inter -state level	12	7.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>178</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey

According to table 2, it is understood that out of 300 SHG members, as many as 178 members have attended the training programme conducted at different levels. It is explicitly noticed that majority of the have attended at mandal level, 36 per of sample SHG members are attended at District level, 17 per cent of SHG members are attended at state level and migre percentage of member i.e., 7 per cent are indicate Inter-state level participating. It can be inferred that the majority of the respondents attend their training programmes confirming to Mandal, District and State level only.

**Table 3: Type of House of the SHGs Members in the Study**

S. No	Type of House	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Thatched house	14	5.00
2	Semi pukka	66	22.00
3	Pukka	80	26.00
4	Govt. Pukka house	140	47.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey

The type of house being owned and lived by the select respondents can be seen in table 3. According to the findings shown in the table, it can be understood that out of 300 respondents selected, 140 respondents representing 47 per cent have stated that they are living in pukka houses provided by the government. About 26 per cent have stated that they are living in pukka houses constructed by themselves, 22 per cent are dwelling n semi-pukka houses while only 5 per cent of the respondents are living in thatched houses. From the above analysis, it can be concluded that majority of SHG members have availed the housing scheme provided by the government followed by own pukka hoses.

**Table 4: Annual Income of the SHG Family before and after SHG**

S. No	Income	Before SHG	After SHG
1	Below Rs. 10,000	123 (41.00)	75 (25.00)
2	Rs. 10,001-20,000	150 (50.00)	185 (62.00)
3	Rs. 20,001-30,000	15 (5.00)	25 (8.00)
4	Above 30,000	12 (4.00)	15 (5.00)
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>300</b> <b>(100)</b>

Source: Field Survey

Table 4 reveals that the total family annual income of the sample SHGs respondents. Out of 300, 123 SHGs families are getting annual income less than Rs. 10000, 15 families are getting their annual income between 20001 -30000 and only 12 families are getting above Rs. 30000 in the present study. Remaining 50 per cent representing 150 sample respondent families are getting their annual income between Rs.10001-Rs.20000. majority of the respondents before joining SHGs are getting their income level is below Rs.20000. After joining SHGs, majority of families are getting their income level is Rs. 10001-Rs.20000. It is clearly concluded that number SHGs families increased for getting their annual income in the present study.

**Table 5: Monthly Savings of the Selected SHG Members**

S. No	Saving per Month	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	30	96	32.00
2	50	180	60.00
3	100	24	8.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field survey

One of the objective of the SHGs is to inculcate the habit of savings among the poor and it is realized that Self-Help is the best help. "Save to Survive" is the slogan. To find whether the SHGs have achieved their objectives and able inculcate the habit of saving a question is asked to mention the monthly savings for month by the members and such details presented in table 5. It is found from the table that the all members are able to save. The amount of savings, however, according to their family earnings. It is noticed in the table that 180 respondents (out of 300) are able to save Rs. 50 per month. While 32 per cent could save Rs. 30 and remaining 8 per cent of the members are saving Rs. 100 per month. This, is deed, it is a good sign to note that the selected self group members in Anantapuramu district have gradually developed their mind, towards thrift. It clearly implies that the SHGs have brought an impact on the saving attitude and awareness to reduce unnecessary expenditure.

### Conclusion

Micro-finance is a powerful weapon for poverty alleviation in Indian economy. It is dominated by self-help Groups, aimed at providing financial services to the "Un-reached poor". Development of women has emerged as an important issue in our society in the recent years. Developing women contributes to social development. Self-Help Groups can help women's economic independence and improve their social status. Automatically, the women get empowered once they attain economic independence. Women's empowerment and their full participation in all spheres of the society are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace. Self-Help Groups have made the rural women to contribute for the socio-economic progress of the country. Economic progress in any country could be achieved through social development.

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