

PSYCHO-SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND LEGAL – POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT STATUS OF SHG MEMBERS OF RAJASTHAN STATE

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Abstract: The present study was conducted to know the psycho- social, economic and legal – political empowerment status of SHG members of Rajasthan state. Overall 84.13 per cent members were in medium empowerment category of socio-psychological empowerment. Majority of the members (84.13%) and non-members (86.02%) were in medium empowerment category of socio- psychological empowerment and 83.06 per cent members were in medium category of economic empowerment. SHG members (83.06 %) were in medium category of economic empowerment while, the office bearers (47.59-50.26%) and members (48.66-49.73%) were in low and medium empowerment category of legal & political empowerment. Majority of SHG members (72.37%) had medium level of empowerment. It was also showed mean score comparison of empowerment status of members and non-members. Overall mean score was 2.69 for SHG members & it was 2.33 for non-members.

Keywords: Self Help Group Members, Empowerment status.

Introduction

India is a land of enterprises, where almost 70 percent of the population is still self-employed and at some places this estimate is high as 80 percent. SHG programme has emerged across India as one of the most popular strategy for empowering women (Chidambaram, 2004). SHGs have now come up in a big way all over the country. Although there can be all women, all men or mixed SHGs, it is seen that all women SHGs have sustained well over the years. The banks and non-government organizations took the lead in India to start such SHGs. Soon the government of India and the state governments realized that for the economic betterment and development of rural women the potentiality of these women SHGs need to be harnessed and that it could be an important agency through which poverty could be eliminated. Since 2000 all annual plan of the government promote SHGs. Self-help group is a movement for

women empowerment. It helps women collectively for struggling against direct and indirect constraints to their self development and their social, political and economic participation (SenthilVadivoo and Sekar, 2004). It is the largest and fastest-growing microfinance programme in the developing world (Seibel & Khadka, 2002, Bali Swain and Floro, 2008). SHGs are now emerging as the predominant model for poverty eradication, women empowerment and development agencies (Panda, 2005).

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Rajasthan state covered all 7 divisions, from these divisions 10 districts *i.e.* Jhalawar, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Ajmer, Jaipur, Bikaner, Rajsamand, Sawai Maodhopur, Barmer & Sikar were selected. There were 402 SHGs registered in 2008-09 for which active, dormant & discontinued groups were identified after 5 years *i.e.* in year 2014-15. It was found that out of 402 registered SHGs, only 187 groups remain active. An attempt was also made to know the comparison between members of active groups and non-members of SHGs. To know the empowerment status of SHG members all 561 members of SHGs, were interviewed & the comparison was made between office bearer and members of the group to know the psycho- social, economic and legal – political empowerment status.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of office bearers and members according to socio-psychological empowerment n = 561

Socio-psychological empowerment	Percentage					
	Low (1-2.33)		Medium 2.34- to 3.66)		High (3.67 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Percentage of office bearers(n-187)	17	9.09	160	85.56	10	5.34
Percentage of Member (n-374)	53	14.17	312	83.42	9	2.40
Overall Percentage (n-561)	70	12.47	472	84.13	19	3.38

Table 1 depicts that overall 84.13 per cent members were in medium empowerment category of socio-psychological empowerment as majority of the office bearers (85.56%) and the members (83.42%) were in this category while, overall 12.47 per cent members were in low empowerment category as 9.09 per cent office bearers and 14.17 per cent members were found in this category, there were overall only 3.38 per cent members were found in the high empowerment category.

Table 2: Comparison of distribution of members and non-members according to socio-psychological empowerment n = 969

Comparison of socio-psychological empowerment	Percentage					
	Low (1-2.33)		Medium 2.34- to 3.66)		High (3.66 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
No. of office bearers and members (n=561)	70	12.47	472	84.13	19	3.38
No of non-members(n=408)	54	13.23	351	86.02	3	0.73

Table 2 observed that majority of the members (84.13%) and non-members (86.02%) were in medium empowerment category of socio- psychological empowerment. While in low empowerment category non – member’s percentage was 1 per cent higher than SHG members. Negligible percentage of non -members were found in high empowerment category and very few SHG members i.e. 3.38 per cent were found highly empowered.

Table 3: Distribution of SHG members according to economic empowerment n = 561

Economic empowerment.	Percentage					
	Low (1-2.33)		Medium 2.34- to 3.66)		High (3.67 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Office bearers (n-187)	15	8.02	156	83.42	16	8.55
Members (n-374)	41	11.81	310	82.88	23	6.14
Overall (n-561)	56	9.98	466	83.06	39	6.95

The data pertaining to economic empowerment of members in Table 3 depict that overall 83.06 per cent members were in medium category of economic empowerment .The similar trend was observed with respect to office bearers & members i.e. a majority of them (about 83%) were in medium category of empowerment & the percentages falling in low category of office bearers were less (3%) than members & in high category of office bearers it was slightly more (2%) than the SHG members.

The study also indicated by Malathi and Vijayarani, (2012), significant difference in economic empowerment of the SHG members in post-SHG situation when compared with

pre-SHG situation. The study also suggested a positive association between the level of education and empowerment.

Table 4: Comparison of distribution of members and non-members according to economic empowerment n = 969

Comparison of economic empowerment	Percentage					
	Low (1-2.33)		Medium 2.34- to 3.66)		High (3.67 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
No. of office bearers and members n- 561	56	9.98	466	83.06	39	6.95
No of non-members n- 408	304	74.50	101	24.75	3	0.73

Table 4 shows that majority of the SHG members (83.06 %) were in medium category of economic empowerment while, majority of the non-members (74.50%) were in low empowerment category. Few of the SHG members (6.95%) were found highly empowered as compared to non-members

Table 5: Distribution of SHG members according legal/political empowerment

n = 561

legal/political empowerment	Percentage					
	Low (1-2.33)		Medium 2.34- to 3.66)		High (3.66 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
No. of office bearers n-187	89	47.59	94	50.26	4	2.13
No of members n-374	182	48.66	186	49.73	6	1.60
Overall n-561	271	48.30	280	49.91	10	1.78

Data presented in Table 5 depicts that overall and category wise also, the office bearers (47.59-50.26%) and members (48.66-49.73%) were in low and medium empowerment category of legal & political empowerment. A very few i.e. 1.78 to 2.13 per cent SHG members and office bearers were highly empowered.

Table 6: Comparison of distribution of members and non-members according to legal/political empowerment n = 969

Comparison of legal/political empowerment	Percentage					
	Low (1 to 2.33)		Medium (2.34 to 3.66)		High (3.67 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
office bearers and members n- 561	271	48.30	280	49.91	10	1.78
non members n- 408	318	77.94	90	22.05	0	0

Table 6 clearly shows that 49.9 percent SHGs members were in medium & 1.78 per cent in high category of legal/political empowerment while 77.94 percent non-members were in low empowerment category. Only 22.05 percent non-members had medium level of empowerment.

Table 7: Comparison of distribution of members and non-members according to level of empowerment n = 2907

Comparison	Percentage					
	Low (1-2.33)		Medium (2.34- to 3.66)		High (3.67 to 5.0)	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Members (off. Bearers & members of sustaining groups) n=1683	397	23.58	1218	72.37	68	4.04
non members n=1224	676	55.22	542	44.28	6	0.49

The overall level of empowerment in table 7 depict that a majority of SHG members (72.37%) had medium level of empowerment and only 23.58 per cent had low empowerment. The non-members were almost equally divided in low (55.22%) and medium category (44.28%) of empowerment.

Table 8: Comparison of level of empowerment of members and non-members

n = 2907

Comparison of level of Empowerment	Mean score			
	Psycho- social	Economic	Legal	Overall
Members (off. Bearers & members of sustaining groups)	2.82	2.88	2.39	2.69
Non - members	2.61	2.18	2.21	2.33

Table 8 shows mean score comparison of empowerment status of members and non-members. Overall mean score was 2.69 for SHG members & it was 2.33 for non-members. It was observed that in all three components of empowerment status it was higher (psychological empowerment - 2.82, economic empowerment- 2.88 & legal empowerment - 2.69) for SHG members as compared to non-members (psychological empowerment - 2.61, economic empowerment- 2.18 & legal empowerment - 2.21).

Conclusion

The study was undertaken to know the psycho- social, economic and legal – political empowerment status of SHG members of Rajasthan state. It was concluded that majority of the respondent in medium empowerment category of socio-psychological empowerment (84.13%) and economic empowerment(83.06 %) while, majority of the non-members (74.50%) were in low empowerment category. It was also shows that 49.9 percent SHGs members were in medium & 1.78 per cent in high category of legal/political empowerment while 77.94 percent non-members were in low empowerment category. It was observed that in all three components of empowerment status it was higher (psychological empowerment - 2.82, economic empowerment- 2.88 & legal empowerment - 2.69) for SHG members as compared to non-members (psychological empowerment - 2.61, economic empowerment- 2.18 & legal empowerment - 2.21).

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