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HYPOTHESES

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RESULTS & DISCUSSION

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SELF HELP GROUPS (SHGs): IMPACT ON WELFARE OF RURAL WOMEN AT IKP (INDIRA KRANTHI PATHAM)

DR. M SUKANYA ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR SREE NIDHI INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY GHATKESAR

ABSTRACT

In India self help groups represent a unique approach to financial intermediation. The approach combines access to low-cost financial services with a process of self management and development for the women who are SHG members. This paper attempts to show the impact of SHGs on improved lifestyle of rural women to grow their savings and to access the credit which banks are increasingly willing to lend. This study explores based on field research in 4 villages at Nizamabad district (AP) and sample for the study is 4 groups of 20 members in each group, the sample represents married, older, widows, diverse women and women's groups, mostly bank linked with a loan, it examines the effective management of financial transactions, group sustainability, benefits of the group and also to know the reasons for dropout. The study evidence that women perceived changes in their identity towards working collectively to influence for change at the village and panchyat levels.

KEYWORDS

Self-help groups (SHG), Banks, life style, rural women and group sustainability.

INTRODUCTION TO MICRO FINANCE AND SHG's

icro finance has evolved over the past quarter century across India into various operating forms and to a varying degree of success. Micro Finance is the term used for funding poor families with very small loans to improve their livelihood but its activities grow more than providing small loans and it discusses a broad range of services which includes credits, savings, insurance, etc. Since poor families are not accustomed to the traditional form of financial institutions and hence they hesitate to approach and by that they are lacking in financial support and hence the scope of micro finance is very wide and its scope is highly essential to the welfare of poor family.

Microfinance refers to the provision of financial services to low-income clients, including consumers and the self-employed. One such form of microfinance has been the development of the self-help movement. Based on the concept of "Self-help," small groups of women have formed into groups of ten to twenty and operated a savings-first business model whereby the member's savings are used to fund loans.

A type of banking service that is provided to unemployed or low-income individuals or groups who would otherwise have no other means of gaining financial services, ultimately, the goal of microfinance is to give low income people an opportunity to become self-sufficient by providing a means of saving money and borrowing money.

ABOUT IKP (INDIRA KRANTHI PATHAM)

IKP was founded in 2001 as a statewide poverty project to enable the rural poor to improve their livelihoods and quality of life through their own organizations. It aims to cover all the rural poor households in the state with a special focus on the 30 lakh poorest of the poor households. The main aim of starting this group was, for any meeting or public gathering Male persons used to visit and female members were not aware of things happening around. In order to bring awareness and knowledge about issues of finance and other matters IKP was formed; it was started firstly at Nellore district calling few women to gather and asked the mandal development officers to start a sangham. Initially SC&ST groups have taken initiation to start later on other caste groups are also stated joining in the groups. The groups not only benefited economically but also education wise awareness has come. Initially there were 3 groups with 30 members in 2001 and in 2010 groups became 3250 members in 325 groups at Bhimgal Mandal, Nizamabad District.

TABLE 1.1: NO OF MEMBERS AT BHIMGAL MANDAL, NIZAMABAD DISTRICT

Year	Groups	Members
2001	03	30
2010	325	3250

A drastic Increase in groups from last 10 years at IKP has observed the following improvements

- 1. Group members are approaching the group leaders any type of loan.
- 2. Members are able to send their girl child for school.
- 3. Improtance of education has came to their knowledge
- 4. They are able to distinguish the money getting a less interest rates compare to previous ones.
- 5. They became health conscious and awareness regarding HIV, Leprosy and other communal diseases
- 6. Counciling is also given in these groups regarding family issues and able to solve their problems.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on both Primary and Secondary data. The primary data is in the form of Questionnaire and followed by the Interview based on the objectives of the study. Questionnaire consists of 15 questions which is collected from Four SHGs (self help group)s selected for the study and each group consists of 10 to 20 members group of Nizamabad district. The group consists of combination of BPL (Below Poverty Line) and other women members. Sample size of 80 members and also interviewed the President of the Groups. Secondary data is from statistics report of IKP website, Journals, various articles, books etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1. To study the benefits obtained by the members of the group.
- 2. To Study the impact of SHGs in Improving Lifestyle of women and poor people.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

H1: Members of the group are obtained complete benefits from the SHGs.

H2: There is a considerable improvement in the Lifestyle of the women and poor people after joining the SHG.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is wide from a concept point of view because it covers major aspects of Micro finance. However, from an empirical point of view the scope of the study is narrow. The study explores improved Lifestyle of women and poor people who are the members in SHGs. Time period of the study is December 2010 to January 2011.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

The main objective of Indira Kranthi Patham is to enable all the rural poor Families in 22 rural districts of Andhra Pradesh to improve their livelihoods and quality of life. All households below the poverty line, starting from the poorest of the poor are the target group of Indira Kranthi Patham.

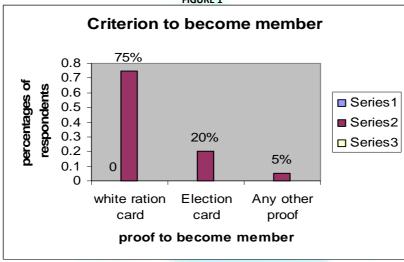
FOLLOWING ARE THE RESULTS FROM THE PRIMARY DATA COLLECTED FROM THE RESPONDENTS

1. Criterion to become a member: The members in the SHG are Nativity, Migrants or Daughters. These people are given membership in the group and they have to open bank account with the bank through the president of the group. Only one woman from the family is eligible to become the member in that group. The following table 1 shows the details of respondents who became members in the SHG.

TABLE 1: CRITERION TO BECOME A MEMBER

Proof to become a member	Percentage of respondents	
Nativity	90%	
Migrants	05%	
Daughters (widows)	05%	





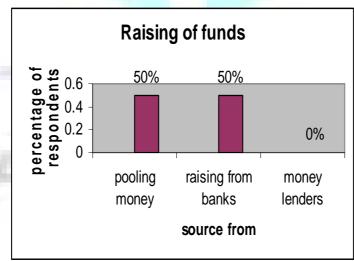
RISING OF FUNDS

Initially the funds are raised by pooling money from the members as per the capacity of the group e.g. (Rs.100 or Rs 150) per month and kept with the president, who ever the group member wants to use for any urgency it will be given and time will be mentioned to repay back the amount, any default by any member the loss will be borne by the remaining members. After one year or two once the group is established the president will approach the bank for further loans. From the following table and figure 2 shows the details of the respondents who have got loans banks and others who are still waiting to complete the minimum period.

TABLE 2: RAISING OF FUNDS

Source from	Percentage of respondents
Pooling money	50%
Raising from banks	50%
Money lenders	0%

FIGURE 2



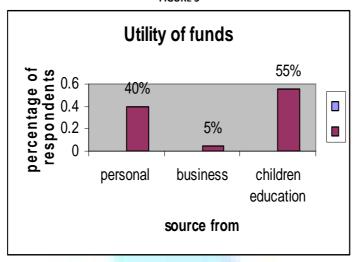
UTILITY OF FUNDS

Respondents of the group said, most of them used funds for children education, personal loans and others have used to set up small business in the house. The respondents who are the members for long time they have benefited by purchasing small piece of land and little of gold and starting up of joint business they come under 5% category. The following table and figure 3 shows the details of utility of funds

TABLE 3: UTILITY OF FUNDS

Funds utilized	Percentage of respondents
Personal	40%
Business	05%
Children education	55%

FIGURE 3



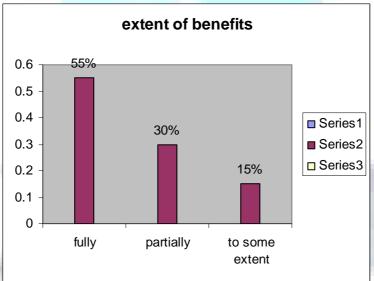
EXTENT OF BENEFITS OUT OF SHGs

Respondents who have benefited fully are (55%) in giving education to their children, taking decisions in house hold activities regarding money matters. By improving their standard of living in accordance with the society. Some respondents have benefited partially are (30%) which requires for them some time to improve. Others who are not sure about their improvement are said to some extent are (15%). They prefer to be life members in the group rather than in any other Institutions, due to flexibility in getting loans and easy to access and approachable. Many respondents said that they have repaid their loans which they were indebted for years together. The following table and figure 4 shows the details of the respondents about their benefits received from the SHGs.

TABLE 4: EXTENT OF BENEFITS OUT OF SHGs

Benefited	Percentage of respondents
Fully	55%
Partially	30%
To some extent	15%

FIGURE 4



IMPROVEMENT IN THE LIFESTYLE

The respondents felt happy about the SHGs, as they have improved in many ways, e.g. For illiterates, groups have given couching in how to write their name and do signature, by conducting meetings they have educated awareness of many other things related to their life and well being.

TABLE 5: IMPROVEMENT IN THE LIFESTYLE

Extent of improvement in lifestyle	Percentage of respondents
Fully	55%
Partially	30%
To some extent	15%

FIGURE 5



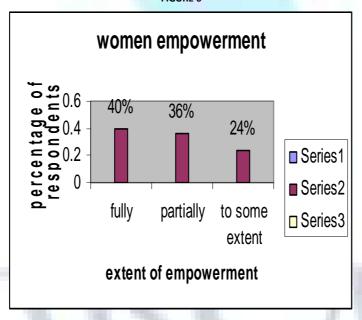
EXTENT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AFTER JOINING THE GROUP

Regarding women empowerment 40% of the respondents felt fully and remaining 36% said partially and 24% respondents feel they are empowered to some extent. but those who are widows and divorcées they are happy with the scheme, that they need not depend either on their parents or on their parent-in-law, in fact they feel it is a boon for them to become a member in the SHGs.

TABLE 6: EXTENT OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AFTER JOINING THE GROUP

Extent of women empowerment	Percentage of respondents
Fully	40%
Partially	36%
To some extent	24%

FIGURE 6

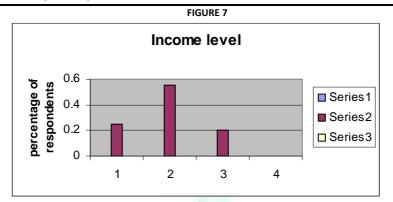


INCOME LEVEL OF THE MEMBERS

The income level of the members are varies from month to month as they are not sure of their earnings, so most of them said their average income for the month would be Rs 3000 to Rs 4000 as their family total income. Most of them work under daily wages. The following Table 7 shows the percentages of respondents who are below Rs 2000 income level and Above Rs 4000 income level.

TABLE 7: INCOME LEVEL OF THE MEMBERS

Level of Income	Percentage of respondents
Rs 2000 to Rs 3000	25%
Rs 3000 to Rs 4000	55%
Above Rs 4000	20%



TIME TAKEN TO COME OUT OF POVERTY SITUATION

SHGs started with loans of Rs 3000 in the first year, going up to Rs 4,000 in the second year, and so on. But now some SHGs start with Rs 10,000, go up to Rs 15000 the next year, and so on, with this kind of loan facility, respondents said minimum period without any discontinuation poor member can come out of poverty line after two years which is very slow process and further steps to be taken.

MAINTAINING BOOKS OF ACCOUNTS

The president of the group will maintain books of accounts and conduct meeting once in a week. And all members must be present for the meeting and decisions will be taken with the concern of members, for this the president will be paid a commission of 2% of the loan amount sanctioned.

DROPOUTS IN THE GROUP

There will be dropouts in the groups, even after taking many precautions before they join. But on the whole they will be less in ratio, in order to maintain harmony in the group they take the new members in to the group in the name of Old member, through the willingness of remaining members.

MISAPPROPRIATION IN GETTING LOANS

Respondents of the group said that, as the president who looks after the sanctioning of the loans and getting them, distributing among the members, different groups charge different types of interests. Even though they get 25 paisa interest, but presidents charge from them for 1.25 paisa, but members of group feel that they are comfortable with the group than instead of going to Money lender who charges for higher rate of interest with security. But in SHGs there is no Collateral Security.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

H1 There is a considerable improvement in the Lifestyle of the women and poor people after joining the SHG......Accepted.

In India still there are 40% of the people who has no bank account out of which 60% are lying in rural areas. Approach to the common people should be fastened and should make flexibilities in obtaining rural credit. This paper has outlined several areas of working with SHGs to further their civil society; the financial status of households had improved due to improvement in access in a formal credit institutions, since SHGs are linked with banks. It has enabled women to undertake income generating activities and increased awareness levels about the society. The SHGs system reflects the independence and diversity.

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