



Perception of Wshg Members Towards Empowerment of Women: an Empirical Investigation in Dibrugarh District of Assam

KEYWORDS

empowerment, SHG, chi square.

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ABSTRACT *There are a large number of factors on which socio economic empowerment of women depends. The objective of the present study is to examine the perception of women respondents of SHGs on empowerment of women in the dibrugarh district of Assam. The present study is primarily based on primary sources of data. The investigator selected 199 sample SHGs consisting of two members of each group totaling 398 respondents from all seven blocks in the district. The researcher applied analytical tools percentage analysis and chi square to draw inferences on testing of formulated hypotheses. In conclusion, it was found Empowerment of women achieved through SHG was high in the study district.*

INTRODUCTION

UN observed the year 1975 as international women's year. This indicates that the UN has convinced that the state of women throughout the world was not good. Therefore, UN wanted to draw particular attention of the whole world to the unsatisfactory condition of women as a whole. To give more importance to the women, 8th March is now observed as International Women's Day. To improve the conditions of women to provide rights, privileges and justice to the women are the main objectives of international women's day. It is also known as women empowerment day (Behera, Subhrabala, 2006, pp. 31-39)

Empowerment literally means making someone powerful, facilitating the weak to attain strength enable someone to confront injustice and oppression. Empowerment is a process which makes the powerless to acquire and control over power through awareness, capacity building, participation in decision making, acquiring information, attaining confidence and self employment. It is the process by which the powerless gain control over physical, human and financial resources. It is not only extrinsic-but also intrinsic capacity of self confidence and inner transformation to overcome barriers to access resources. In the process of empowerment, women become economically important, not only in earning, but also in controlling their income (Raya, R.P. and Rajendran, K. 2011, pp. 47-55)

A self help group is a registered or unregistered voluntary association of poor people of 15-20, from the same socio-economic background, involving primarily in saving and credit activities. A SHG is democratically formed without any political affiliations. It can be all women group, all men group or even a mixed group (Rao, G.V.J., 2010, pp. 81-88).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The women are getting empowerment through the SHGs, it is positive indication. There are a large number of factors on which socio economic empowerment of women depends. This study focused on perception of women on their socio economic empowerment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the present study is to examine the perception of women respondents of SHGs on empowerment of women in the dibrugarh district of Assam.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

While testing the hypothesis, the investigator combined scales of measurement strongly agree and agree and measurement scale of disagree and strongly disagree together.

Ho: There is no association between attitude of WSHG and the factors of socio economic empowerment.

H1: There is association between attitude of WSHG and the factors of socio economic empowerment.

METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

The present study is descriptive and empirical in nature. The present study is primarily based on primary sources of data. For the collection of primary data, the researcher prepared an interview schedule for SHGs. The researcher also collected various secondary sources of data for the present study.

The current research study was confined to all the development blocks of Dibrugarh District in term of geographical area. The researcher had selected the study area purposively. The justification of selection of the area was for two reasons: 1) the investigator is staying in the study area and 2) all the blocks in the district are accessible to the investigator easily. The investigator had chosen all the seven blocks in the dibrugarh district. There was a selection of a few gaon panchayats from each block purposively. Out of total gaon panchayat from each block, the researcher had selected a few villages for the survey purposively.

The investigator selected 199 SHGs out of total research population in the district and purposively conducted interview from two members of each group totaling 398 respondents. The sample respondents covered from all the seven blocks in the district. The sample size of all blocks was Barbaruah 32, Khowang 44, Tengakhat 19, Panitola 31, Joypur 20, Tingkhong 15 and Lahoal 38.

The justification of use this sampling technique was: 1) sample SHGs are homogeneous in nature, thus, there was very negligible difference in the use of particular sampling. 2) There was a practical difficulty in location of SHGs as per official list.

The investigator started the processing of raw data col-

lected from the field survey after completion of field visit. The researcher applied analytical tools percentage analysis and chi square to draw inferences on testing of formulated hypotheses.

The investigator collected the primary data from the WSHGs of Dibrugarh district during the year from June 2011-June 2012.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The investigator applied non probability sampling technique for the study, thus, the result of the report can be generalized to a limited extent in the study area only. The sample size is limited to 199 WSHG under Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana(SGSY). The research report relies on the responses given by the participants during period of interview and there is every possibility that some unconscious responses of the participants might be there.

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

Attitude of the women is an important element towards socio-economic empowerment of women. For the measurement of the attitude in respect of socio-economic empowerment of women of the sample WSHGs in the study area, the statement pertaining to issue having five alternatives namely strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree were included in the interview schedule as depicted in the table. The researcher used likerts five points scale assigning weights ranging from strongly agree (2), agree (1), neutral (0), disagree (-1), strongly disagree (-2). Following was the criteria to measure the extent of empowerment of women.

Zero and below Zero = No improvement, between zero and below 33.33 = Low empowerment

Between 33.33 and 66.67 = moderate empowerment, and above 66.67= high improvement

Table 1: Attitude/Perception Of Women SHGs In Socio Economic Empowerment

Parameter	SA	A	N	DA	SDA
Select / reject occupation as per her choice	119	169	59	45	06
Receive / spend her earnings	90	212	56	39	01
Borrow/ repay loan for domestic purposes.	113	189	53	36	07
Capacity to save from their wages / income From any other sources	95	183	58	51	11
Buy materials/ valuables for her/ her family Members	105	186	50	51	06
Participate in community level activities for public purposes.	100	174	63	55	06
Join women's group and initiate collective activities.	109	217	39	31	02
To articulate her views to family, group & community without fear or hesitation.	84	150	80	70	14
To visit various government, group and community issues.	120	221	27	27	03
To send girls / women to distant place alone.	39	84	74	179	22
Availability of easy / means of mobility to explore new avenues.	46	158	83	104	07

Source: Field Survey, total sample respondents: 398

SA: Strongly agree, A: Agree, N: Neutral, DA: Disagree and SDA: Strongly disagree

Table 2: Percentage of Attitude Of Women SHGs socio economic empowerment variables

Percentage				
29.89	42.46	14.82	11.30	1.50
22.61	53.26	14.07	09.79	0.25
28.39	47.48	13.31	09.04	1.75
23.86	45.97	14.57	12.81	2.76
26.38	46.73	12.56	12.81	1.50
25.12	43.71	15.82	13.81	1.50
27.38	54.52	09.79	07.78	0.50
21.10	37.68	20.10	17.58	3.51
30.15	55.52	06.78	06.78	0.75
09.79	21.10	18.59	44.97	5.52
11.55	39.69	20.85	26.13	1.75

Source: Computed

Table 3: Economic Index and Chi square of socio economic empowerment variables

EI	Chi square value	Sign/Non sign
87.93	273.05	Significant
88.19	325.17	Significant
91.70	324.58	Significant
75.37	238.87	Significant
83.66	283.64	Significant
77.13	225.85	Significant
100.5	422.75	Significant
55.27	116.15	Significant
107.5	490.78	Significant
-15.32	061.83	Significant
33.16	060.47	Significant

Source: Computed

Out of 398 sample respondents Regarding the statement of socio economic empowerment of selection / rejection occupation as per her choice with EI 87.93: 29.89 percent strongly agree, 42.86 percent agree, 14.82 percent neutral, 11.30 percent disagree and 1.50 percent strongly disagree, 2) The statement relating to receive/spend her earnings with EI 88.19: 22.61 percent strongly agree, 53.26 percent agree, 14.07 percent neutral, 9.79 percent disagree and 0.25 percent disagree, 3) Regarding Borrowing/ repayment of loan for domestic purposes with EI 91.70: 28.39 percent strongly agree, 47.48 percent agree, 13.31 percent neutral, 9.04 percent disagree and 1.75 percent strongly agree, 4) The statement pertaining to capacity to save from their wages / income from any other sources with EI 75.37: 23.86 percent strongly agree, 45.97 percent agree, 14.57 percent neutral, 12.81 percent disagree and 2.76 percent strongly disagree, 5) Regarding buying of materials/ valuables for her/ her family Members with indication with EI 83.66: 26.38 percent strongly agree, 46.73 percent agree, 15.82 percent neutral, 13.81 percent disagree and 1.50 percent strongly disagree, 6) For statement of Participation in community level activities for public purposes with EI 77.13: 25.12 percent strongly agree, 43.71 percent agree, 15.82 percent neutral, 13.81 percent disagree and 1.5 percent strongly disagree; 7) Joining of women's group and initiate collective activities with EI 100.5: 27.38 percent strongly agree, 54.52 percent agree, 9.79 percent neutral, 7.78 percent disagree and 0.5 percent strongly disagree; 8) Regarding the statement of articulation her views to family, group & community without fear or hesitation with EI 55.27: 27.10 percent strongly agree, 37.68 percent agree, 20.10 percent neutral, 17.58 percent disagree and 3.51 percent strongly disagree; 9) The statement relating to visit various government, group and community issues with EI 107.5: 30.15 percent strongly agree, 55.52 percent agree, 6.78 percent neutral, 6.78 percent disagree

and 0.75 strongly disagree; 10) Regarding the statement of sending of girls / women to distant place alone with EI -15.32: 9.79 percent strongly agree, 21.10 percent agree, 18.59 percent neutral, 44.97 percent disagree and 5.52 percent strongly disagree; 11) For statement of availability of easy / means of mobility to explore new avenues with EI 33.16: 11.55 percent strongly agree, 39.69 percent agree, 20.85 percent neutral, 26.13 percent disagree and 1.75 percent disagree.

Inference on Hypothesis

Ho: There is no association between attitude of WSHG and the factors of socio economic empowerment.

H1: There is association between attitude of WSHG and the factors of socio economic empowerment.

It is inferred that the table value of Chi square for 2 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance is 5.991. Comparing calculated value and table values of chi square it is found that calculated value is more than the table value and as such difference is because of population of the study. Thus null hypothesis is rejected. The result, thus, support that and it can be concluded that there is association between attitude of WSHG and the factors of socio economic empowerment.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

From the above analysis, it was found that the composite economic index of overall factors was 71.37. Thus, it can be concluded that Empowerment of women achieved through SHG was high in the study district. The null hypothesis proved that there is association between attitude of WSHG and the factors of socio economic empowerment. There is a hope SHG will continue to give empowerment to the women in the near future.

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