



**ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH SHGs
IN KRISHNA DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH****Swapna Vunnam****Research Scholar, Dept. of Economics, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.****Prof. K. Madhu Babu****Professor, Dept. of Economics, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur.****ABSTRACT**

The main objective of the paper is to examine the economics of women's entrepreneurship and empowerment through SHGs in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered via personal interviews with women micro-entrepreneurs. The study purposively selected Krishna District. A simple random sampling method was employed. One Mandal, Pedan, from the Bandar revenue division, was selected based on the highest number of micro-enterprises in the Mandal. Sample respondents were selected from the rural area, and 150 entrepreneurs were selected based on the highest percentage of women entrepreneurs in the study area.



The study concluded that the family's monthly income was analyzed to determine whether it significantly improved after becoming an SHG member. Before the members joined the SHG, they had been living in poverty with limited commitment, poor savings, struggling to run their family without a plan, and an inability to meet their day-to-day basic expenditure. Members' income increased after joining the SHGs. Members can meet their personal expenditure. They contribute more to their household income through SHG. The table shows the monthly income earned by members after the SHG period. The data shows that after joining SHGs, 59 (39.33%) of 150 respondents earned a monthly income of Rs 6,000 to Rs 8,000, followed by 52 (34.67%) who earned Rs 8,001 to Rs 10,000. About 22 (14.67%) earned a monthly income above Rs 10,000, and the remaining 17 (11.37%) earned a monthly income ranging from Rs 4,000 to Rs 6,000. It is concluded that a majority of respondents (88%) have a monthly income of Rs 6,000 to Rs 10,000 after joining the SHG.

SHGs foster a savings habit among members and provide credit facilities to build business awareness. Members engaged in business earn income. Table 6.4 shows the present value of household assets after joining an SHG. The data reveal that, among 150 respondents, 94 (62.67%) have household asset values between Rs 1,50,000/- and Rs 2,00,000/-; 30 (20%) have values above 2 lakhs; 23 (15.33%) have values from Rs 1,00,000 to Rs 50,000; and the remaining 3 (2%) have values less than Rs 50,000 after joining the SHG. It is concluded that, after joining an SHG, a majority of respondents (63%) have household asset values from Rs 1,50,000 to Rs 2,00,000/-.

Positive economic empowerment is vital to one's development. Self-Help Groups help their members improve their economic conditions. Members gain various economic benefits through SHGs, such as stronger saving habits, and are motivated to earn more income. SHGs provide employment opportunities to help members stand on their own feet. The data show members' perceptions of economic empowerment. Among the five economic empowerment statements, the highest mean score (4.75) was

achieved by the statement "Increasing saving habits among the members." The lowest mean score (3.65) was achieved by the statement "Increasing capacity to spend more.

KEYWORDS: SHG, Economics, Empowerment, Entrepreneur.

INTRODUCTION :

Performance among female entrepreneurs is a crucial behavioral system within businesses, shaping financial practices and the expansion and development of industrial organizations. To achieve company development and expansion, women entrepreneurs' functional and financial circumstances in business are crucial.

Comparing studies on women entrepreneurs with other management topics is completely unrelated. The performance of female entrepreneurs and their actions within business institutions are particularly delicate, difficult, and crucial responsibilities. This is due to the very complex and dynamic nature of the commercial and organizational environment, where the entrepreneur deals with hundreds of diverse, heterogeneous minds. The issues present several difficulties and demands, all of which often shift in various ways and to varying degrees.

Can performance, a set of tools with recommended access points to the corporate financial process, improve the system? Are female business owners receiving enough and the right kind of guidance? Are the opinions of female entrepreneurs taken into account by the structure of the organisational environment?

The investigator personally helped collect data from various women entrepreneurs in the coastal regions of Andhra Pradesh using a pre-designed questionnaire to gather relevant insights from the female business owners. After careful analysis, the research employed a survey method suitable for the subject and scope of the study. A detailed examination of women entrepreneurs reveals that a company's success heavily relies on its internal culture. Furthermore, an entrepreneur's performance is influenced by the organizational culture, which depends on how the business system considers the entrepreneur's perceptions and experiences.

Female business owners' perspectives on various topics reflect the demands and requirements of the real world. This is because female entrepreneurs are key sources of first-hand knowledge, as they directly experience the organizational environment and the business learning process. Female entrepreneurs manage business performance using a variety of tools and techniques. They take the advice and apply it in other situations. They are also exposed to consumer attitudes and psychological approaches. As a result, individuals develop certain attitudes and viewpoints regarding the organizational structure and corporate culture. We may infer that the opinions expressed by women company owners reflect the system's commercial activities. Their views and performance assist the company in removing roadblocks and in incorporating fresh concepts, ideas, and innovative techniques to fortify the organizational structure.

The second-largest group of prospective entrepreneurs in India is women, who make up half of the country's overall population. Women significantly influence the nation's economic and social growth. Entrepreneurship development is an economic process in which the entrepreneur acts as the significant factor in the said process. It will be very productive to analyze the process of transformation of social structure and the instrumentality in the emergence of the women entrepreneurs from the female gender.

The constitutional mechanism and the government of India had stressed the need for the spirit of women entrepreneurship through its 5th five year plan during the years from 1974-1978 successively. Several instrumental and logistics development with regard to women entrepreneurship were subjectively implemented promoting the entrepreneurial activity among the women gender across the nature.

The state of Andhra Pradesh had made a significant stride in the areas of socio-economic development and these projects into the higher levels of literacy among the women gender. The increased span of education process and the increased levels of awareness among the Indian women

towards the economic activities in the societies had paved the way for them to have their own mark on the business roads which were monopolistically occupied by men in the society. These factors had played a significant role in the social and economic transformation process of women into successful entrepreneurs. The existing business environment in the society had distinctively acted as the motivating factor for the increased level of women entrepreneurial activities in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

Women entrepreneurs had their precise mark on all the areas of business activities like manufacturing, services, trading and production activities and they had their tentacles extended to the commercial areas of raw material acquisition, plant capacity utilization, optimum output, labour management, financial management, credit and loaning aspects, marketing aspects and other associated functional activities that involves in the administration of enterprises. Yet, the women entrepreneurs are still facing some problems and other commercial hazardous in their day – to – day business activities. This was particularly witnessed in the small scale industrial sector across the state. Hence, the examination of entrepreneurial problems in the functional aspects of the micro enterprises across the state is quite relevant and appropriate. The micro enterprises play a significant role in the industrial scenario across the state of Andhra Pradesh. The micro enterprises generally involves local labour with easy availability and feasibility and thus this industrial sector acts as the main provider of employment to large section of people in the society through direct or indirect means. The present research study involves the macro level approach towards identifying and assessing the existing problems that relates to women entrepreneurs involved in the micro enterprises.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vaghela, (2017), had concentrated on the problems of rural entrepreneurs and found that a major chunk of the rural entrepreneurs were in their prime age and at their young age. Roughly 66% of the women entrepreneurs are married and most of them are having their educational standard upto seventh class only. Only 16 percent of the rural women entrepreneurs are having 10th class educational qualification. Hence majority of the women entrepreneurs had started their business enterprises as a result of family tradition and practice.

The study also found that the level of performance of the rural women entrepreneurs was not up to the desired level. The rural women entrepreneurs were posed by several problems like financial, marketing, social, technological changes, personal problems and challenges of education. These are the reasons that keep them out of the race with other entrepreneurs. They do not possess any motivational initiations and other forms of approaches.

Rao et.al, (2017), study revealed that marital status of the women entrepreneurs do not act as the hurdle for their performance in the business activities and it was found from the study that majority of the rural women entrepreneurs were married and they are running their enterprises in successful manners. It was further found from the study that the aspects of education and entrepreneurial training acts as the major contributors for promoting entrepreneurial activities among rural women.

The study further revealed that 64 per cent of the rural women entrepreneurs had completed their primary education and 36 percent of the women had undergone training in apparel designing and other allied activities. It was further found from the study that the aspects of past experience of the women entrepreneurs is contributing a remarkable support to them as the study depicts that majority of the rural women entrepreneurs had their past experiences in their present entrepreneurial activities and events. The present study concludes that the aspects of increased competition, low financial support, lack of self-confidence, lack of skills and modern technology and the negative support from the family members are acting as the main problems for the promotion of entrepreneurial activities by the rural women entrepreneurs.

Suneela Bharathi (2019) study concluded that the women Entrepreneurship is still untouched and untapped especially in the state of Telangana. Government must prioritise creating the necessary infrastructure, including women-centric incubator and accelerator models, mentorship and leadership

programmes, increased investment opportunities, revised educational policies, skill-building programmes, promotion of women-specific venture funds, etc., and persuading women to invest in other female-led businesses in order to address gender inequality and to build networking and mentorship platforms.

Vijayakumar (2020) observed that women are a significant gender group in the nation's total population, and they possess innate qualities and greater capacities to contribute significantly to the country's overall economic development. To enrich women entrepreneurs, special policies and programs should be framed and strategically implemented to support their entrepreneurial activities and foster an entrepreneurial culture among them.

To create awareness among women about entrepreneurial culture and economic development, the media plays a prime role and acts as a suitable platform to mould enthusiastic women towards entrepreneurial activities. To explore the various dimensions of business avenues, advanced countries urgently need to motivate and encourage women's entrepreneurial activities because the availability of human resources (workforce) in terms of women's gender is plentiful and readily available. Globally, the business world has recognized the importance of women's entrepreneurship in society's economic development, and in the future, women's entrepreneurship will be an effective strategy for handling and overcoming all types of business challenges.

Objectives

In this context, the main objective of the paper is to study the Economics of women's entrepreneurship and empowerment through SHGs in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh

METHODOLOGY

For the present study, a descriptive research design was proposed. This form of research design depicts the association that exists in between the identified variables of the study and it helps to interpret the associations under empirical basis. For a thorough examination of any research subject, selecting the right analytical tools and designing an appropriate approach are crucial. In this context, the study develops its approach. It comprises data collection, data collection methods, and analytical tools. The study was based on both primary and secondary data.

The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered through personal interviews with women micro-entrepreneurs. Krishna district is purposively selected for the study. A simple random sampling method is employed for the study. One mandal, Pedan in the Bandar revenue division, was selected based on the highest number of micro enterprises. Sample respondents are selected from rural areas, and 150 entrepreneurs are selected from rural areas with the highest percentage of women entrepreneurs in the study area.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Analysis is carried out at three levels-product, enterprise and entrepreneur levels-to study the above mentioned issues

Self-Help Groups, working on the principle of solidarity, help the poor come together to pool their savings and access credit facilities. An SHG helps the poor especially women to establish their credit-worthiness. SHGs create self-employment opportunities and entrepreneurial skills. It develops the economic empowerment among the members. Economic empowerment is attained when society improves members' quality of life, increases per capita income, reduces poverty, enhances individual economic opportunities, improves education, and enriches cultural life. Self Help Groups have emerged in significant ways across various business operations at local and community levels. Many people from every corner have applauded their growth and development globally. In India too, SHGs have contributed to the economic empowerment of the members as well as the society as a whole. Forming Self Help Groups will enhance their socio-economic position in society. SHGs provide loans to members. Small loans can help women start small businesses. Women stand to gain a lot from SHGs because they give them an independent means of generating wealth and becoming self-reliant.

Monthly Income of the Respondents before Joining the SHG

Income is a major determinant of people's standard of living. Table - 1 explains the monthly income of the respondents during the pre-SHG period. Out of the total respondents, 48 (32%) respondents have a monthly income ranging between Rs.6001-Rs.8000, followed by, 39 (26%) respondents have a monthly income ranging between Rs.4,001 and Rs 6,000, 23(15.33%) respondents have a monthly income is below Rs 4,000, 20 (13.33%) of respondents have a monthly income ranging between Rs.8001-10,000 and the remaining 20 (13.33%) respondents belongs to the monthly income group of above Rs 10,000. It is concluded that a majority of the respondents (51.33%) have a monthly income ranging between Rs 4,000-Rs. 6,000 before joining the SHG.

Table-1
Monthly Income of the Respondents pre and post SHG period

Monthly Income	Pre-SHG Period	Post-SHG Period
Less than 4000	23 (15.33)	2 (1.33)
4001-6000	39 (26.00)	15 (10.00)
6001-8000	48 (32.00)	59 (39.33)
8001-10000	20 (13.33)	52 (34.67)
Above 10000	20 (13.33)	22 (14.67)
Total	150 (100.00)	150 (100.00)

Source: primary data

Monthly income of the family has been analyzed to ascertain whether there is any significant improvement in the income of the family after becoming a member of the SHG. Before the members joined the SHG, they had been living in poverty with more commitment, poor savings, struggle to run their family without a plan and they inability to meet their day-to-day basic expenditure. The income level of the members has been increased after joining the SHGs. Members of the groups are independent to meet their personal expenditure. They contribute more to their household income through SHG. The table shows the monthly income earned by members after the SHG period.

The table shows that after joining SHGs, out of 150 respondents, 59 (39.33%) earned a monthly income ranging from Rs 6,000 to Rs 8000, followed by 52(34.67%) who earned a monthly income from Rs 8001 to Rs 10,000. About 22 (14.67%) earned a monthly income above Rs 10,000, and the remaining 17 (11.37%) earned a monthly income ranging from Rs 4,000 to Rs 6,000. It is concluded that a majority of respondents (88%) have a monthly income of Rs 6,000 to Rs 10000 after joining the SHG.

Value of Household Asset Possessed Before Becoming A SHG Member:

The value of possession of various assets and equipment explains the welfare of an individual and each family. Assets include a T.V, fridge, telephone, washing machine, Air condition and essential furniture. Table-2, exhibits the value of household assets before becoming a member. In case of before joining SHGs, 15 (10%) respondents household possessed assets with a value above 2 lakh rupees, followed by 26 (17.33%) respondents have their value of household assets ranging from Rs 1,50,000 to Rs 1,75,000, 79(52.67%) respondents have their household assets value ranging from Rs 1,00,000 to Rs 1,50,000, 15 (10%) respondents have Rs.75,000 to 1,00,000 and the remaining 15(2.37%) respondents have their value of household assets which value below Rs. 70,000. It is concluded that a majority of the

respondents (52.67%) possessed household assets whose value was ranges between Rs.1,00,000 to Rs.1,50,000/- before joining SHG.

SHGs develop a savings habit among members and provide credit facilities to build business awareness. Members engaged in business earn income. Table 6.4 shows the present value of household assets after joining an SHG. The data reveal that, among 150 respondents, 94 (62.67%) have household asset values between Rs 1,50,000/- and Rs 2,00,000/-; 30(20%) have values above 2 lakhs; 23(15.33%) have values from Rs 1,00,000 to Rs 50,000; and the remaining 3(2%) have values less than Rs 00,000 after joining the SHG. It is concluded that, after joining an SHG, a majority of respondents (63%) have household asset values from Rs 1,50,000 to Rs 2,00,000/-.

Table-2
Value of Household Asset Possessed Before Becoming After SHG Member

Assets Value	Pre-SHG Period		Post SHG period	
	No.of Respondents	Percentage	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 50000	5	3.33	0	0.00
50000-75000	10	6.67	0	0.00
75000-100000	15	10.00	3	2.00
100000-150000	79	52.67	23	15.33
150000-200000	26	17.33	94	62.67
above 2lakhs	15	10.00	30	20.00
Total	150	100.00	150	100.00

Source:Primary data

PERCEPTION OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Positive economic empowerment is the vital aspect of one's development. The Self Help Groups help their members to improve their economic conditions. Members gain various economic benefits through SHGs such as increasing saving habit among members and all the members are motivated to earn more income. Employment opportunities are provided to all the members, to induce them to stand on their own feet. Table-3, shows the perception of economic empowerment among the members. Its shows that among five economic empowerment statements, the highest mean score (4.75) has been secured by the statement, namely "Increasing Saving habit among the members." The least mean score (3.65) is secured by the statement, namely "Increasing capacity to spend more".

Table-3 Economic Empowerment of Women through Self Help Groups

Perception of beneficiary	SA	A	M	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
Increasing saving habits among the Members	75 (50.00)	50 (33.33)	20 (13.33)	25 (16.67)	0 (0.00)	4.75	0.4
All members are motivated to earn more Income	60 (40.00)	40 (26.67)	50 (33.33)	20 (13.33)	30 (20.00)	4.11	0.35
Employment opportunities are provided to all members	70 (46.67)	36 (24.00)	45 (30.00)	28 (18.67)	16 (10.67)	3.96	0.61
Increasing capacity to spend more	55 (36.67)	65 (43.33)	42 (28.00)	20 (13.33)	10 (6.67)	3.65	0.7
SHGs induce the members to stand on their own feet.	79 (52.67)	45 (30.00)	20 (13.33)	15 (10.00)	11 (7.33)	4.13	0.79

Source: Primary Data

CONCLUSION:

The family's monthly income was analyzed to determine whether it significantly improved after becoming a member of the SHG. Before the members joined the SHG, they had been living in poverty with limited commitment, poor savings, struggling to run their family without a plan, and an inability to meet their day-to-day basic expenditure. Members' income increased after joining the SHGs. Members can meet their personal expenditure. They contribute more to their household income through SHG. The table shows the monthly income earned by members after the SHG period. The data shows that after joining SHGs, 59 (39.33%) of 150 respondents earned a monthly income of Rs 6,000 to Rs 8,000, followed by 52 (34.67%) who earned Rs 8,001 to Rs 10,000. About 22 (14.67%) earned a monthly income above Rs 10,000, and the remaining 17 (11.37%) earned a monthly income ranging from Rs 4,000 to Rs 6,000. It is concluded that a majority of respondents (88%) have a monthly income of Rs 6,000 to Rs 10,000 after joining the SHG.

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