



ECONOMIC IMPACT ON TRIBAL WOMEN THROUGH SELF HELP GROUPS PARTICIPATION IN NAGALAND

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Abstract: *Micro financing SHGs helps women to understand their potential and confidence in problem solving through mutual help. This encourages women to undertake business ventures and other viable economic activities leading to economic independence of women. The study was undertaken to study the economic impact on tribal women through Self Help Groups participation in Nagaland. Multistage purposive random sampling method was adopted for selecting the sample of SHG participants. A total of 360 SHG respondents from 120 identified SHGs were selected for the study. Z-test for two sample mean was applied to study the economic impact of SHGs members by comparing before and after situation on the income, expenditure, saving, assets creation and employment generation at household level. The result shows that there is a significant increase in income, expenditure, saving, assets and employment at household level after SHG participation. SHG participation plays an important role in improving the economic condition and standard of living among tribal women in Nagaland.*

Keywords: *Self Help Group, tribal women, income, expenditure, saving, assets, employment, household.*

Introduction

Women empowerment is an important instrument for the inclusive socio-economic growth of a nation has become a meme in the global governance. SHGs were designed not only as a strategy for poverty alleviation, but also to increase women's access to resources and their power in household decision-making and paved the way for economic independence of women. Majority of micro finance programs target women with the explicit goal of empowering women and provide adequate scope to improve quality of life. In the recent past, an increasing number of micro finance institutions and funding agencies emphasize on women beneficiaries as women are found to be more reliable and financial viability. SHGs have emerged as effective tools for inclusion of socially and financially weak women to bring into the mainstream of nation growth and progress. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the economic impact on SHGs members. The impact is measured in terms of the changes in the levels of income, expenditure, saving, assets and employment generation by comparing before and after situation of SHG participation.

Objectives of the study

To study the economic impact through SHG participation on household income, household expenditure, household saving, household assets creation and employment generation, null hypothesis was framed.

Ho: "There is no significant increase in income, expenditure, saving, assets creation and employment at household level after joining SHG".

H₁: "There is significant increase in income, expenditure, saving, assets creation and employment at household level after joining SHG".

Methodology and tools of analysis

The study is a combination of both descriptive and analytical. In Nagaland there are eleven districts and 72 R.D. blocks. The study was conducted in four districts of Nagaland *viz.*, Wokha, Mon, Phek and Dimapur districts of Nagaland. Multistage purposive random sampling was adopted for selecting the sample of SHG participants. From each district, 3 R.D. blocks having effective functioning SHGs were identified and selected for

detailed study. From each R.D. block, 10 number of sample SHGs was identified randomly. In the final stage, out of 120 identified SHGs, 3 members from each SHG were randomly selected which resulted in 360 respondents for the study. Z-test was applied to study the economic impact of SHGs on the participating members by comparing before and after situation on income, expenditure, saving, assets creation and employment generation at household level.

Economic impact of SHGs

The economic impact of SHGs on members has been analysed in terms of their monthly household income, monthly household expenditure, monthly household saving, household assets creation, employment generation at household level.

Income generation

Increase in income generation activities through SHG participation helps in improving food security. The distribution of sampled respondents based on monthly household income before and after joining SHG is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of sampled respondents based on monthly household income before and after joining SHG

Sl. No	Monthly Household Income (Rs)	Before Joining SHG		After Joining SHG	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 5000	270	75.00	177	49.17
2	5001 - 10000	62	17.22	137	38.06
3	10001 - 15000	9	2.50	18	5.00
4	More than 15000	19	5.28	28	7.78
5	Total	360	100.00	360	100.00

From table 1, it can be observed that there is an increase in level of household income after joining SHG. Before joining SHG, 270 (75.00 per cent) of the sampled respondents are in the income group up to 5000, whereas after joining SHG it was decreased to 177 (49.17 per cent). On the contrary there was an increase in number of respondents in income group 5001 to 10000 from 62 (17.22 per cent) to 137 (38.06 per cent) after joining SHG. There was also increase in number of respondents for income group more

than Rs 15000 after joining SHG. Singh (2013) also reported that majority of the respondents have increased their income post-SHG stage.

Expenditure

The standard of living of the people is judged generally by per capita expenditure on consumption items. The distribution of sampled respondents based on monthly household expenditure before and after joining SHG is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of sampled respondents based on monthly household expenditure before and after joining SHG

Sl. No	Monthly Household Expenditure (Rs)	Before Joining SHG		After Joining SHG	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 3000	229	63.61	158	43.89
2	3001 - 6000	107	29.72	150	41.67
3	More than 6000	24	6.67	52	14.44
4	Total	360	100.00	360	100.00

Table 2 shows that the level of expenditure for 229 (63.61 per cent) respondents was up to Rs. 3000 before joining SHG, whereas after joining SHG the number of respondents for the same expenditure

group decreased to only 158 (43.89 per cent). It can be also seen that there is an increase in number of respondents for expenditure between Rs. 3000 to Rs. 6000 from 107 (29.72 percent) to 150 (41.67 per

cent). This shows that there is an increase in level of expenditure after joining SHG. This result is in conformity with the study carried out by Fatima and Uma (2013) which concluded that expenditure of the household increased after joining SHG as the income of the members increased.

Saving

Micro financing encourages members to develop habit of thrift and save regularly. The distribution of sampled respondents based on monthly household saving before and after joining SHG is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of sampled respondents based on monthly household saving before and after joining SHG

Sl. No	Monthly Household Saving (Rs)	Before Joining SHG		After Joining SHG	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 1000	250	69.44	110	30.56
2	1001 - 5000	88	24.44	207	57.50
3	More than 5000	22	6.11	43	11.94
	Total	360	100.00	360	100.00

From table 3, it can be observed that there is an increase in level of saving after joining SHG for the sampled respondents. It can be seen that before joining SHG the number of respondents who save up to Rs. 1000 was 250 (69.44 per cent), whereas after joining SHG the number of respondents decreased to 110 (30.56 per cent). Also, there was an increase in number of respondents who save Rs.1001 to 5000 and more than Rs. 5000 from 88 (24.44per cent) and 22 (6.11 per cent) to 207 (57.50 percent) and 43 (11.94 per cent) respectively. Similar conclusion was also found where saving of the

members increased after joining SHG by Lalitha (2016).

Creation of assets

Creation of assets helps members to meet financial obligation and improve financial position of the SHG members. Since asset changes in terms of land and buildings cannot be expected over a short span of time due to micro finance, thus, these assets were excluded for the study. The distribution of sampled respondents based on creation of assets before and after joining SHG is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of sample respondents based on creation of assets before and after joining SHG

Sl. No	Household Assets (Rs)	Before Joining SHG		After Joining SHG	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 30000	192	53.33	98	27.22
2	30001 - 60000	121	33.61	156	43.33
3	60001 - 90000	28	7.78	66	18.33
4	More than 90000	19	5.28	40	11.11
5	Total	360	100.00	360	100.00

From table 4, it can be observed that the sampled respondents who possessed household asset worth up to Rs 30000 was 192 (53.33 per cent) before joining SHG, but the number of respondents decreased to 98 (27.22 per cent) after joining SHG. It was also found that the number of respondents who possessed assets worth more than Rs 90000 had

increased considerably from 19 (5.28 per cent) to 40 (11.11 per cent). This shows that there is an increase in assets generation after joining SHG. Similar finding with increase in assets of household after joining SHG was also reported by Gautam and Chettri (2016).

Employment generation

Employment opportunity for women is an important index of social and economic progress. Increased in employment opportunities enjoyed by the women indicate increase participation of women

in the national workforce and increase in income generation which eventually leads to better quality life. The distribution of sampled respondents based on the level of employment generation before and after joining SHG is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of sampled respondents based on the level of employment generation before and after joining SHG

Sl. No	Level of Employment (Hours/Day)	Before Joining SHG		After Joining SHG	
		Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Up to 2	77	21.39	16	4.44
2	3 – 4	99	27.50	75	20.83
3	5 – 7	134	37.22	154	42.78
4	More than 8	50	13.89	115	31.94
5	Total	360	100.00	360	100.00

It can be observed from table 5 that there is an increase in level of employment after joining SHG. It is worth noting that the number of SHG members who was employed up to 2 hours in a day was 77 (21.39 per cent), which was considerably decreased to 16 (4.44 per cent). It was also found that the number of respondents who got employment for more than 5 hours in a day increased considerably after joining SHG. The number of SHG members who got employment for more than 8 hours/day increased from 50 (13.89 per cent) to 115 (31.94 per cent) after joining SHG.

Similar findings were also reported by Malleswari (2010) and Lagare *et al.* (2016).

Z-test for different economic indicators

Z-test for two sample mean has been applied to find out if there is any significant mean difference for all five economic indicators *viz.*, monthly household income, monthly household expenditure, monthly household saving, household assets and employment generation before and after joining SHG. The results of the Z-test are presented in table 6.

Table 6: Result of Z-test for Two Sample Mean for different economic parameters

Sl. No.	Economic Parameters	Number of Respondents						Z value
		Before Joining the SHGs			After Joining the SHGs			
		N	Mean	S. D	N	Mean	S.D	
1	Monthly Household income (Rs)	360	4855.83	4416.08	360	6936.11	5328.35	5.703*
2	Monthly Household expenditure (Rs)	360	3311.39	2136.53	360	4093.47	2513.90	4.426*
3	Monthly Household Saving (Rs)	360	1548.61	2790.93	360	2842.64	3420.25	5.607*
4	Household Assets (Rs)	360	39158.33	28225.61	360	57214.17	46725.03	6.275*
5	Employment generation (Hours/Day)	360	4.67	2.43	360	6.29	2.38	9.016*

From table 6, it can be seen that for all five economic parameters under study *viz.*, monthly household income, monthly household expenditure, monthly household saving, household assets and employment generation; it was found to be 5 per cent level of significant. From the result we can infer that there is a significant increase in monthly household income, monthly household expenditure,

monthly household saving, creation of assets and employment generation after joining SHGs. Similar findings were also reported by Alam and Nizamuddin (2012) and Fatima and Uma (2013).

Conclusion

To conclude from the study it was found out that there is a significant increase in income, expenditure, saving, assets and employment at

household level after joining SHG. This helped in raising the standard of living for the tribal women through SHG participation. Thus, micro financing SHG played a significant role in economic progress and poverty alleviation especially among tribal women in the study area. It also paved a way for economic independence of the rural women. Since women are the sole family caretaker, emphasis of empowering the rural women finance is required. Therefore, joining Self Help Group was an important means in mobilizing rural women which helped them to gain economic empowerment in Nagaland.

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