

Social Entrepreneurship: The Way Forward to Sustainable Livelihood

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Abstract:

Women's entrepreneurship has been a significant driver of both concern and action. However, both in rural and urban areas, there is a very low level of development for women entrepreneurs in India. The government can use social entrepreneurs as a tool to help with problem-solving on the social front. The emphasis must be on empowering women by raising their levels of economic and social influence, participation, and decision-making. This is largely accomplished through the development of Self Help Groups (SHG), and it should be encouraged to foster social entrepreneurship for growth. Social entrepreneurship promotes economic growth, which is crucial for sustainable development. In the context of the chosen SHGs in the Salem district, the social and economic effects of SHG activities on household income, asset creation, savings, the creation of employment opportunities for other women, and the improvement of their social status have been studied. A multistage stratified random sampling technique has been used to select the sample SHGs and sample women SHG members. Simple tools like the percentage method and techniques like the chi-square test and a logit model have been used to analyse the data that has been gathered. Financial institutions have a crucial role in increasing income, the development of productive assets, and most importantly, in the social empowerment of women by providing loans to them in both urban and rural regions. SHGs are an attempt to achieve this goal. SHG performance, however, has substantially improved. Furthermore, it is claimed that the women's low socioeconomic status has an impact on their participation in SHGs. The study of the main data gathered shows that the performance of the chosen SHGs has greatly improved, and SHG units have significantly contributed to the economic empowerment of women through increased income, savings and employment of locals. Hence, it may be concluded that self-help groups are regarded as one of the most crucial instruments for promoting a participative strategy for the economic empowerment of women towards the process of sustainable livelihood. SHG is a widely accepted social entrepreneurship which has the primary aim of empowering rural poor women, developing their capacity for income generation, and raising the standard of living.

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Introduction

Women's entrepreneurial firms are critical in achieving increasingly important sustainable development goals, particularly in micro and small businesses. The contribution to job creation is significant; many small and medium-sized businesses face challenges growing and expanding to become large corporations. This paper focuses on the significance of women's entrepreneurship in rural and urban areas, as well as its contribution to their long-term livelihood.

By generating more jobs, all forms of entrepreneurship aid in empowering society. In order to accelerate the process of ending poverty, sustainable livelihood (SL) is a way of thinking about the goals, scope, and priorities for development. Indians who suffer poverty face the issue of insufficient money to meet their basic needs. Rural residents may be able to make money through entrepreneurship. Despite numerous training programmes on entrepreneurship, skill enhancement, etc. offered by various private and governmental agencies, they are not really capable of producing entrepreneurs among the poor people in the economy because entrepreneurship requires seed money to start a venture.

Women's entrepreneurship has been a significant driver of both concern and action. However, both in rural and urban areas, there is a very low level of development for women entrepreneurs in India. The government can use social entrepreneurs as a tool to help with problem-solving on the social front. The emphasis must be on empowering women by raising their levels of economic and social influence,

participation, and decision-making. This is largely accomplished through the development of Self Help Groups (SHG), and it should be encouraged to foster social entrepreneurship for growth. Social entrepreneurship promotes economic growth, which is crucial for sustainable development. Innovative approaches are developed by social entrepreneurs to mobilise funds for sustainable development. The process of utilising creative opportunities to address social needs and effective change is known as social entrepreneurship.

True, Self Help Groups (SHGs) have traditionally been viewed as institutions for borrowing and saving. SHGs are developing as social entrepreneurs and assuming new roles and responsibilities that are fundamental to the security of the poor's means of subsistence. Poor women's ability to maintain sustainable livelihoods has been severely hampered by globalisation. Solutions are required for this that go beyond microcredit. By assisting rural women in starting their businesses, SHGs significantly contribute to achieving a sustainable way of life. It is proving to be one of the most successful methods for combating poverty on a global scale. There are numerous instances where rural women form SHG groups but quickly become dysfunctional. The reason is that rural SHG women lack social entrepreneurship skills. SHG made it abundantly clear that, when properly implemented, it can reduce poverty and thus develop into a social entrepreneur.

As the concepts of inclusive growth and permanence in livelihood took centre stage in the government's policy agenda, it was deemed important to give women a chance to

play an active role in nation-building. Due to the low family income and limited employment opportunities, it was thought necessary to provide enough credit to women to start their businesses and contribute to the economy's output. Such a development is facilitated by the creation of SHGs. Hence, SHGs have now been successful in giving rural and urban women the opportunity to work, in raising the output of microbusinesses, and, most importantly, in enhancing the economic and social status of women in this great nation. The SHGs, however, encounter a number of difficulties as they develop. More specifically, their active participation and enrolment are hampered by social, economic, and demographic factors. The difficulties they encountered while carrying out their SHG activities are almost universal to small-scale units. In the current research, it is hoped to examine the socioeconomic circumstances of female SHG entrepreneurs as well as the various issues that SHGs encounter. In the context of the chosen SHGs in the Salem district, the social and economic effects of SHG activities on household income, asset creation, savings, the creation of employment opportunities for other women, and the improvement of their social status have been studied.

Mahalir Thittam (Scheme for Women) of Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd. has implemented the socioeconomic empowerment programme known as Mahalir Thittam for women. Mahalir Thittam is based on the SHG approach and is carried out in collaboration with community-based organisations and non-governmental

organisations (NGOs). The SHG movement is currently very active and has spread to all of the state's districts.

The NGOs that assist in forming the SHGs, offer training, and oversee them are partners in implementing Mahalir Thittam. For delivering the aforementioned services, NGOs are given funding. If they meet the requirements for affiliation, interested NGOs are affiliated as partners with the Mahalir Thittam. The Mahalir Thittam-sponsored SHGs are distinguished by the systematic training that is given to the office holders and SHG members. The women's attitudes are qualitatively altered as a result of this capacity building, which also fosters group cohesion and productive operation.

Problem design

Through financial inclusion, women's SHGs are significantly contributing to the decline in poverty and the empowerment of women. SHGs were initially created as a result of mainstream institutions' failure to connect with the poor and women, who make up a sizable portion of the population, but they are now viewed as partners by mainstream institutions.

It was decided to examine these issues in relation to SHGs that operate in both urban and rural areas of the Salem district. The women's population has a high potential to engage in productive activities because there is little difference in the level of poverty between the rural and urban areas of the Salem district. Due to this, there are many opportunities for micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. However, the SHGs face fierce competition due

to the subpar product quality and production technology.

Along with this, the Salem district's nascent SHG concept is present in the urban areas of the Salem district. Therefore, a special emphasis has been placed on the formation of new women SHGs in urban slums in order to enable those living in urban areas below the poverty line to join the SHG movement.

Given these issues, the questions that remain in the context of SHGs are: Do SHG members come from low socioeconomic status? Does SHG membership help the women members earn additional income and develop a habit of saving money?

Objective

Based on the aforementioned concerns, the study's objectives are as follows:

- To explore the socio-economic and demographic details of the sample SHG members; and
- To find out how SHGs affect members' social and economic empowerment for long-term sustainable livelihood

Methods and materials

This study solely relied on the primary data gathered from the SHG members who were chosen at random in order to examine the objective framed.

It was determined based on the identified variables that it is necessary to collect data from both the SHG women members and the SHG units. The sample SHG units and the SHG members are identified using the secondary data

that was gathered. The counting of the number of blocks where SHGs are active is the first step in the data collection process. The project implementation unit in Salem provided the source list, which indicates a total of 20 blocks in both urban and rural areas.

Equal weight has been given to both rural and urban areas among all of the blocks when choosing sample respondents. Therefore, 10% of the villages and towns were chosen at random. The number of SHGs operating in the identified villages and towns was also determined. Out of which, 10% of the SHGs were randomly chosen. With 17 SHGs from rural and 15 SHGs from urban areas, there were a total of 32 SHGs in the sample. The third step is choosing women from the SHGs that have been chosen.

However, the total number of proposed samples was proportionally distributed among the women of the 32 SHGs in both rural and urban areas, keeping 300 as the total sample size. Consequently, a multistage stratified random sampling technique has been used to select the sample SHGs and sample women SHG members. Simple tools like the percentage method and techniques like the chi-square test and a logit model have been used to analyse the data that has been gathered.

The formula for chi-square test can be given as below:

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O_i - E_i)^2 / E_i$$

where,

O – Observed frequency in each category

E – Expected frequency in the corresponding category

df - degree of freedom (n-1)

χ^2 – Chi square

The logistic regression also called the logistic model or logit model is used for prediction of the probability of occurrence of an event by fitting data to a logit function. It is a generalised linear model used for binary regression where the variables take the value of 0 and 1.

The variable 'z' is usually defined as:

$$Y = a_0 + a_1X_1 + a_2X_2 + a_3X_3 + \dots + a_nX_n$$

a_0 - intercept

$a_1, a_2 \dots a_n$ - regression coefficients of X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n variables respectively.

The intercept is the value of 'Y' when the value of all independent variables is zero. A positive regression coefficient means that the explanatory variable increased the probability of the outcome, while a negative regression coefficient means that the variable decreases the probability of that outcome; a large regression coefficient means that there is a strong influence in the probability of that outcome; while a near-zero regression coefficient means that the variable has little influence.

Logistic regression is a useful way of describing the relationship between one or more independent variables (eg., age, sex etc.) and a binary response variable expressed as a probability, that has only two values.

The variable which are both binary and absolute used in the present research work are; age (years), level of education (years), marital status (married = 1 and unmarried = 0), household responsibility (yes = 1 and no = 0), number of members in the family (numbers), permanent/temporary job of the head of the household (temporary = 1 and permanent = 0), type of family (nuclear = 1 and joint = 0), positive economic impact (yes = 1 and

no = 0), support from the family members (yes = 1 and no = 0) and positive social impact (yes = 1 and no = 0).

Review of literature

Women are increasingly involved in entrepreneurship, which is a useful tool for economic growth (de Vita et al., 2014). Women entrepreneurs can emulate the successes of gender equality by starting and growing small and medium-sized businesses that contribute to the national economy (de Vita et al., 2014; Grint, 2020; Gumusay, 2015). A study found that women entrepreneurs in underdeveloped or poorer countries have higher levels of self-confidence than those in developed nations. The only way to find work and maintain a stable home is to start their own business (de Vita et al., 2014)¹⁵. Hisrich et al. (1997) studied the motivations behind and reasons behind why women started businesses.

According to Carney, the key component of sustainable livelihood strategies is asset identification (2004)²⁴. Early in the 1990s, the concept of "sustainable livelihood" was developed to help people understand the 1980s food shortages and hunger. Additionally, the Department of International Development (DFID) began an action project in 1997 that supports one sustainable livelihood and has as one of its goals the eradication of poverty (Bhuiyan et al., 2012)¹².

The Department of International Development has identified human capital, intellectual capital, social capital, financial capital, and physical capital as assets of sustainable livelihood (DFID, 1999)²².

Understanding female entrepreneurship can also significantly influence economic growth and the fight against poverty (Kreide 2003)⁹. It has been determined that female entrepreneurship is a significant force for innovation and job creation (Orhan and Scott 2001)⁷.

Benzing et al. (2009)¹¹ found that income levels and employment opportunities are the driving factors for women's entrepreneurship, and Bullough et al. (2015)¹⁸ contend that women entrepreneurs engage in entrepreneurship to effectively generate value, overcome poverty, and promote societal and economic advancement.

The need for food on a daily basis, rather than for enjoyment at work or in free time, drives women entrepreneurs in developing nations. Because there are no jobs or other options for earning money, they typically engage in entrepreneurial activity as a survival strategy out of necessity rather than an opportunity. Women start businesses in developed countries because they see opportunities or want to be independent (Vossenbergh, 2013)¹³.

When a livelihood maintains or improves the local and global resources on which it depends and has net positive effects on other livelihoods, it is considered to be environmentally sustainable. A person's means of support for their basic needs and overall well-being is defined as their skills, possessions, and activities. Building a living is a reflection of and an attempt to meet both material and experiential needs. Livelihoods are not just a local phenomenon; they are also connected to larger national, regional, and international arenas through environmental, economic, political, and cultural processes (Castro, 2002)⁸.

Different academics have interpreted livelihood security in different ways. While livelihood is understood to include ownership of access to resources and assets to offset risks, smooth out shocks, and prepare for contingencies, livelihood security has been defined as an adequate flow of resources (both cash and kind) to meet the basic needs of the people, access to social institutions related to kinship, family, and neighbourhoods, village, and gender bias free property rights (Chamber, 1989; Redelift, 1990; Chamber and Convey, 1992; long, 1997; Complain, 1998; Ellis, 2000; Huq, 2000)^{1,2,3,5,6}. Frank Ellis (2000:10) offers a useful definition of livelihoods as "the assets (natural, physical, human, financial and social capital), the activities, and the access to these, through institutions and social relations, that together determine the living achieved by individual or household."

According to Shylendra (1998)⁴ as cited in Chaithra et al., they are informal groups established with the intention of enabling the participants to improve their economic status through mutual assistance, support, and responsibility (2018).

SHGs are one of the most effective methods for reducing poverty in India, outperforming all other group approaches, according to observations (Garai et al, 2013)¹⁴.

Bawa et al. (2007)¹⁹ claim that due to a lack of resources in emerging economies, rural entrepreneurial activities are pursued to reduce poverty. This explains why local governments offer material resources, financial resources, as well as instruction and technical support to aid rural entrepreneurs in their success (Humphries et al. 2020)²⁰.

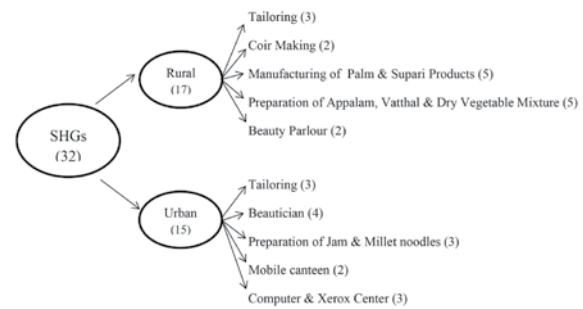
The sustainable livelihood perspective is a framework for measuring rural poverty relevant to rural entrepreneurship. This framework proposes a multidimensional measurement supported by improving the livelihoods of vulnerable individuals and communities in rural areas, moving beyond the conventional linear measurements of rural poverty based on income (Chambers and Conway 1992)². The multifaceted view of sustainable livelihood is important because poverty can take many different forms and is affected by various factors, not just income (Serna et al. 2015)²³. In general, the alleviation of poverty and its application to rural areas are two areas where the literature on rural entrepreneurship and sustainable livelihoods overlap. As a result, the framework for sustainable livelihoods becomes the best lens through which to examine the phenomenon of rural entrepreneurship.

Better analysis of sustainable livelihoods from a multidimensional and interactive perspective is required, claim Andreu and Fernández (2019)⁸.

In their study, Nirmala et al. (2004)¹⁶ also came to the conclusion that belonging to SHGs encourages members to take part in organised action, learn new skills, and advance technological change. According to a related study by Boga and Nakka (2005)¹⁰, poor households' expenditures on food and clothing increase after joining SHGs, and they also become more aware of health-related issues.

Distribution of SHG on various economic activities

The sample SHGs are engaged on different economic activities such as:



The above chart shows the SHGs running business units. Both rural and urban SHGs concentrate on more or less same units like tailoring, beauty parlour, coir making, computer/xerox centres, manufacturing of palm and supari products and preparation of appalam, vathaal and dry vegetable mixture etc.

Background characteristics of the samples

The respondents' socioeconomic situation has a significant impact on their ability to maintain a sustainable way of life. The same is shown in Table 1 below.

Table – 1
Socio-economic and demographic details of the sample respondents

Details	Rural	Urban	Total
Age distribution (26-35 years)	73 (47.69)	66 (45.83)	139 (46.80)
Educational attainment (Secondary level)	109 (70.00)	69 (47.50)	178 (59.20)
Marital status (Married)	115 (73.46)	83 (58.08)	198 (65.60)
Social status (Scheduled caste)	78 (50.00)	67 (46.25)	145 (48.20)
Type of the family (Nuclear)	98 (62.69)	86 (59.58)	184 (61.20)
Size of the family (4 in rural & 3 in urban)	77 (49.23)	57 (39.17)	Average of 4 members in both
Monthly family income (< Rs15000)	55 (35.00)	46 (31.67)	101 (33.40)

Source: Computed from primary data

Note : Figures in parentheses are percent

According to the data collection on SHG members, there are 300 members in the sample SHGs as a whole. More than four tenth (46.80 percent) of SHG members are between the ages of 26 and 35, and the average age of respondents is around 30 years. When compared to urban SHG participation, the number of women in rural SHG members is higher. Regarding the member's educational background, it should be noted that they have completed atleast secondary school. In both rural and urban SHGs, it was discovered that about 60% of the members had a secondary education. Rural women make up a larger portion of the total membership in this secondary education category. One of the social factors, marital status has a significant impact on various activities, including decision-making within the family and in the workplace. They are made up of about two thirds married women. Similar to that, they also contributed to their social status. Nearly half of them fall under the SC category, which is economically and socially disadvantaged. More than 60 percent of family members belong to a nuclear family system, regardless of family type. The received information also revealed the associated information, namely the size of the family. But it differs between households in rural and urban areas. Rural SHGs have larger average families (4 members) than urban SHGs (3 members). In both rural and urban areas, the average family size was 4 members, which is the same as the national average. The family's income is a crucial economic factor. Of the sample SHG women, 33.40 percent make less than Rs.15,000 per month. In comparison, there are more SHG women in rural areas (35 percent) than in urban areas (31.67 percent).

Socioeconomic and demographic influence on preferences for active participation in SHG activities

The purpose of the following paragraphs is to examine the significance of the effect that socioeconomic and demographic factors have on the preference for active participation in the SHG activities. A logit model has been run to estimate the effect of these factors in determining preference.

Table – 1
Factors Determining the Preference for Active Participation in SHG Activities: Logit Model

Variable(s)	Coefficient(s)
Constant	0.062974 (0.00365)*
Age	0.03958 (0.0654)*
Level of Education	0.05952 (0.06543)*
Marital Status	0.98634 (0.0026)*
Household Responsibility	-0.54321 (0.007943)*
Number of members in the family	-0.79653 (0.009543)*
Permanent/temporary nature of job of the head of the family	0.6952 (0.08043)*
Type of family	0.40653 (0.0016093)*
Economic impact	0.85329 (0.00983)*
Support from the family members	0.5329 (0.01295)*
Social Impact	0.3925 (0.1255)*
R ²	0.918
Adjusted R ²	0.987
F Value	252.40
DF	189
Number of Observations	300

*Indicates significant at 0.05 level of probability

D.F - Degree of freedom

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The table-1 above presents and discusses the outcome of the logit model run. As it might 91 percent of the variation in factors can be seen in the Table's adjusted R^2 value, which is 0.987. The changes in socioeconomics have been used to explain how people participate in SHG activities also, demographic elements.

The age variable has a slope coefficient of 0.03958, which means that for every unit increase in age, the preference for actively participating in SHG activities increases by 0.03958. According to the respondents' education level, the favourable opinion of active participation increases by 0.05952 units for every additional year of education. When it came to marital status, the positive value showed that married women preferred to continue participating in SHG activities over single women. Similarly, the negative value of household activity shows that household responsibilities negatively impact the desire to continue participating in SHG activities. The negative slope coefficient value again shows that the number of family members negatively impact the desire to continue SHG activities. The wives of the permanently employed members are more interested in continuing the SHG, according to the positive value of the head of the family's permanent/temporary nature of employment. The members of the SHG who have nuclear families are more interested in continuing the SHG activities than those who belong to joint families, according to the type of family they have. The preference for economic and social impact encourages the women member to continue with SHG activities, as shown by the positive values of the economic and social impact variables. The fact that the family support score

is positive means that family members' support motivates the members to carry on.

According to the aforementioned variables, every variable taken into account when gauging the opinions of the sample SHG members regarding active participation in SHG activities is significant at the 5 percent level, demonstrating that the socioeconomic status and demographic characteristics of the members have a significant impact on their preference for active participation in SHG activities.

Thus, it can be inferred from the analysis that all of the variables taken into account for assessing socioeconomic status and preference factors are all statistically significant at levels of 5 percent.

Trends in the amount of saving in total sample SHGs

According to Table 2, only 79.69 percent of the sample SHGs in total were able to save more than Rs.10,000 in 2018. The majority of SHGs (62.5 percent) in 2019 could save between Rs.10,000 and 20,000. This percentage has risen steadily to a range of Rs.40,000–50,000 saved by 56.25 percent of the sample units.

The increased amount of savings during the study period is due to a persistent increase in thriftiness. From Rs.10047 in the year 2018 to Rs.47812 in the year 2022, the average amount saved increased, with a coefficient of variation of 56.84 percent, the average level of savings over the course of the study and analysis was Rs.26180. The sample SHGs' savings have grown at a linear growth rate of 45.14 percent over these time periods.

Table -2
Trends in the distribution of total sample SHGs by amount of savings

Year	Amount (Rs.)								
	< 10000	10000 – 20000	20000 – 30000	30000 – 40000	40000 – 50000	50000 – 60000	60000 – 70000	> 70000	Total
2018	25 (79.69)	5 (15.63)	1 (3.13)	1 (1.56)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	32 (100)
2019	6 (18.75)	20 (62.50)	5 (14.06)	1 (3.13)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	32 (100)
2020	2 (6.25)	6 (17.19)	18 (57.81)	5 (15.63)	1 (3.13)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	32 (100)
2021	1 (3.13)	3 (9.38)	5 (14.06)	17 (53.13)	5 (20.31)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	32 (100)
2022	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (6.25)	4 (12.50)	13 (56.25)	2 (6.25)	3 (9.38)	3 (9.38)	32 (100)
	Rural			Urban			Total		
Avg. (Rs.)	27400.00			27126.76			27180.41		
CV (%)	65.92			68.65			66.48		
LGR (%)	44.64			40.68			45.14		

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to respective total

Source: Computed from primary data

As a result, the analysis of the savings behaviour of the sample SHG units shows that: the amount of savings of rural and urban as well as total sample units has increased continuously throughout the study period of five years; and the average amount of savings calculated for the entire study shows it is higher in the case of rural sample SHG units than the urban units. Thus, it can be inferred from the analysis that the sample SHGs' annual savings have increased over the course of the study and are higher for rural than for urban SHGs.

Trends in the distribution of assets created by all sample SHGs

Any business unit's performance and subsequent standing are based on the value of the assets it produces. In actuality, this is one of the elements that affect the unit's financial health. The goal

of this paragraph is to look at the specifics of created assets.

The average asset accumulation level of the rural samples was Rs.28.67 lakhs over the course of the study, with a 37.44 percent coefficient of variation. The sample rural SHGs' asset position has increased at a rate of annual linear growth of 23.18 percent. The average amount of wealth generated by urban samples was Rs.25.37 lakhs, which was less than the average amount of wealth generated by rural SHGs. The calculated coefficient of variation was 39.43 percent. The annual linear growth rate of sample rural SHGs' assets have increased at a 25.16 percent. In both rural and urban SHGs, the growth is also found to be significant at a 5 percent level. Table-3 shows that in 2018, the value of assets created by the entire sample of SHGs (43.75 percent) was less than Rs.10000. However, the value of newly

created assets measured by the proportion of SHGs owning an asset has continuously increased during the study period. For instance, the asset value for the majority of the sample SHGs could

be Rs.10000–25000 in 2019, Rs.25000–50000 in 2020, Rs.50000–100000 in 2021, and Rs.150000–200000 in 2022.

Table-3
Trends in the distribution of total sample SHGs by assets created

Value of assets (Rs.)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
< 10000	14 (43.75)	10 (29.69)	3 (9.38)	3 (7.81)	2 (4.69)
10000-25000	8 (23.44)	12 (37.50)	7 (20.31)	6 (18.75)	3 (9.38)
25000-50000	5 (14.06)	5 (14.06)	14 (43.75)	5 (15.63)	5 (14.06)
50000-100000	3 (9.38)	3 (9.38)	5 (14.06)	15 (48.44)	7 (21.88)
100000-150000	2 (6.25)	2 (6.25)	3 (7.81)	3 (7.81)	15 (46.88)
150000-200000	1 (3.13)	1 (3.13)	1 (3.13)	0 (1.56)	1 (3.13)
Total	32 (100)	64 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)
	Rural		Urban		Total
Avg. (Rs.)	28.67		25.37		27.59
CV (%)	37.44		39.43		38.69
LGR (%)	23.18		25.16		24.46

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to respective total
Source: Computed from primary data

With a coefficient of variation of 38.69 percent, the total sample units' average asset level was Rs.27.59 lakhs. During the study period, the assets of the entire sample of SHGs increased at a rate of annual linear growth of 24.46 percent. At 5 percent level, the growth is also found to be significant. Thus, it can be inferred from the analysis that most of the sample SHGs' asset values increased over the course of the study. The rise in performance of the sample units is indicated by the positive growth seen in the value of assets created during the study period.

Sample SHGs by creation of employment

Creating employment opportunities is one of the social duties of any unit, no matter how

small, medium-sized, or large-scale, and an SHG unit is not an exception. In fact, a firm's ability to increase employment is a sign of improved performance. This is due to the fact that a unit must increase its output to keep up with the rising demand for a product, and this can only be done by hiring more people. As a result, it is crucial to comprehend how sample SHGs' employment is distributed, which is what is attempted in the current paragraph. In addition to demonstrating the effectiveness and performance of the unit, the creation of jobs will also improve the sustainability of the livelihood of those who are employed.

Table-4 shows that the 32 sample units taken into consideration for the analysis could potentially add 272 new jobs. According to this, each sample SHG unit employs five workers on average. The highest percentage of SHGs in the rural sample

provided employment for four workers. Similar to this, the average number of jobs created by urban sample SHGs is five. The average level of employment generated registers a level of five for the entire sample of SHG units, as already indicated.

Table-4
Distribution of sample SHGs by creation of employment

No. of employment	No. of rural respondents	No. of urban respondents	Total no. of respondents	Employment created (Nos.)
< 3	8 (47.06)	6 (40.00)	14 (43.75)	21
3-6	5 (29.41)	4 (26.67)	9 (28.13)	41
6-9	3 (14.71)	4 (23.33)	7 (18.75)	44
9-12	1 (8.82)	1 (10.00)	2 (9.38)	31
Total	17 (100.00)	15 (100.00)	32 (100.00)	137
Average level of employment created per SHG (Nos.)	FOUR	FIVE	FIVE	

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to respective total
Source: Computed from primary data

Accordingly, it can be inferred from the analysis that SHGs could employ an average of five members as responsible units. As a social enterprise, SHGs have accomplished more than just opening up employment opportunities; they have also helped women in both rural and urban households establish sustainable means of subsistence. According to the cyclical flow of economic activity, the creation of jobs will increase income earnings, savings habits, the creation of assets for their future, and the standard of living of the sample households.

Trends in the distribution of income from activities undertaken by all sample SHGs

The average amount of money the sample urban SHGs generated from their productive activities over the course of the study was Rs.36.66 lakhs,

with a coefficient of variation of 43.73 percent. The income generated by the various activities carried out by urban SHGs has grown at a linear growth rate of 28.37 percent over the study period. Similarly, the rural sample SHGs' average earnings have grown at an LGR of 16.25 percent. The average income the rural sample SHGs generated for the study was Rs.40.54 lakhs, with a co-efficient of variation 38.33 percent.

Table 5 shows that, of the total sample of SHGs, the majority (34.38 percent) of the groups were able to make less than Rs.25000 of income in 2018. The majority of groups' earnings (32.81 percent) increased to Rs.25000-50000 in 2019. While 42.19 percent of the units could earn between Rs.50000 and 100000 in 2020, for 39.60 percent of SHGs in 2021, this level increased to

Rs.100000 to 150000. Once more, it rose to the highest level of Rs.150000-200000 in 2022 for the majority of the sample SHGs.

With a coefficient of variation of 40.43 percent, the average amount of income from productive

activities carried out by the entire sample of SHGs was Rs.68.11 lakhs. The income generated by the SHGs' various activities has grown at a linear growth rate of 26.28 percent over the study period.

Table – 5
Trends in the distribution of sample total SHGs by income from activities undertaken

Income (Rs.)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
< 25000	11 (34.38)	9 (26.56)	7 (20.31)	4 (14.06)	2 (7.81)
25000-50000	8 (25.00)	10 (32.81)	5 (17.19)	5 (15.63)	4 (10.94)
50000-100000	3 (14.06)	3 (7.81)	13 (42.19)	7 (20.31)	4 (10.94)
100000-150000	4 (12.50)	4 (14.06)	3 (7.81)	13 (39.6)	4 (10.94)
150000-200000	2 (6.25)	5 (15.63)	3 (7.81)	2 (7.81)	16 (51.56)
>200000	3 (7.81)	1 (3.13)	1 (4.69)	1 (3.13)	2 (7.81)
Total	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)
	Rural		Urban		Total
Avg. (Rs.)	40.54		36.66		68.11
CV (%)	38.37		43.73		40.43
LGR (%)	16.25		28.37		26.28

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to respective total
Source: Computed from primary data

As a result of the analysis, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the income generated by the income-generating activity for the entire sample of groups has increased steadily over the course of the study period, indicating an increase in the groups' economic strength and definitely this will lead to sustainable livelihood of members in SHGs.

Distribution of expenditure incurred by all sample SHGs

Another crucial aspect of the company's performance is the amount of money spent on activities that generate income. The goal of this

paragraph is to look at the spending patterns of the sample groups.

As can be seen in table-6, of the 32 sample SHGs, 28.13 percent had expenses of less than Rs.10000 in 2018. In 2019, an additional 32.81 percent spent between Rs.10000 and Rs.20000. The majority of SHGs (48.44 percent) spent between Rs.20,000 and Rs.30,000 in 2020. In 2022, 34.38 percent of SHGs spent between Rs.30,000 and 40,000 on income-generating activities, with the highest percentage of SHGs spending between Rs.40,000 and 50,000.

The average amount spent by rural SHGs in their income-generating activities was Rs.19.51 lakhs, with a co-efficient of variation 24.39 percent. During the five years of the study period, the rural sample SHGs' spending on productive activities

increased at an annual linear growth rate of 14.33 percent. Similarly, the average expense for the urban sample SHGs was Rs.18.61 lakhs, with a co-efficient of 23.61 percent. The expense has grown at an linear growth rate of 13.31 annually.

Table – 6
Trends in the distribution of expenditure incurred in income generating activity by all sample SHGs

Expenses (Rs.)	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<10000	9 (28.13)	7 (21.88)	6 (17.19)	4 (12.50)	3 (9.38)
10000-20000	8 (25.00)	10 (32.81)	6 (17.19)	6 (18.75)	2 (7.81)
20000-30000	6 (18.75)	2 (6.25)	15 (48.44)	8 (23.44)	5 (14.06)
30000-40000	4 (10.94)	3 (10.94)	1 (4.69)	11 (34.38)	5 (14.06)
40000-50000	3 (9.38)	5 (14.06)	2 (6.25)	2 (6.25)	16 (50.00)
>50000	2 (7.81)	5 (14.06)	2 (6.25)	1 (4.69)	1 (4.69)
Total	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)	32 (100)
	Rural		Urban		Total
Avg. (Rs.)	19.51		18.61		27.13
CV (%)	24.39		23.61		23.99
LGR (%)	14.33		13.32		13.27

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to respective total

Source: Computed from primary data

With a co-efficient of variation 23.99 percent, the average amount spent over the course of the study was Rs.27.13 lakhs. The rate of linear growth for the amount spent on productive activity is 13.27 percent. Thus, it can be inferred from the analysis that for the vast majority of the sample groups, spending has increased over the course of the study.

Estimates of income and expenditure on income generating activities: A comparison

Any production or service unit's goal is to turn a profit by managing its income and expenses. The trends in the sample units' income and spending have also been discussed in the current project. However, a comparison and income of the income-generating activities become essential in order to understand the success of SHGs, and in the current paragraph, such an attempt is being made.

Table - 7
Estimates of income and expenditure on income generating activities: A comparison

Estimates	Rural SHGs		Urban SHGs		Total SHGs	
	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure	Income	Expenditure
Average (Rs. Lakhs)	40.54	19.51	36.66	18.62	67.11	17.13
C.V (%)	38.37	24.39	43.73	24.61	40.43	24.99
LGR (%)	16.25	14.33	28.37	13.72	26.28	13.27
Income – expenditure ratio	2.08		2.00		2.47	

Source: Computed from primary data

As seen in table-7, when the income and expenditure for rural SHGs are compared, the income (Rs.40.54 lakhs) is significantly higher than the expenditure (Rs.19.51 lakhs). The growth rate suggests that the difference between income and expenditure is greater and more significant in this case. The co-efficient of variation demonstrates that the difference between income and expenditure is greater. When it comes to rural SHGs, the income-to-expenditure ratio is calculated to be 2.08, meaning that for every additional rupee spent, the income rises by 2.08 rupees.

Similar to rural areas, urban areas' average income for the study period was Rs.36.66 lakhs, while their average expenditure was Rs.18.62 lakhs, demonstrating once more that income was higher than expenditure. The growth rate shows that the increase in income (28.37%) is greater than the increase in expenditures (13.72 percent). When volatility is expressed in terms of the coefficient of variation, it can be seen that income volatility (2.00%) is once more higher

than expenditure volatility (24.61 percent). In the case of urban SHGs, the income-to-expenditure ratio is calculated to be 2.00, meaning that for every 1 rupee increase in expenditure, income will increase by 2.00 rupees.

A similar trend could be seen for the entire sample of SHGs. The income (Rs.67.11 lakhs) exceeds the average level of expenditure (Rs.17.13 lakhs), and the income's growth rate (Rs.26.28 lakhs) is higher than that of expenditure (Rs.13.27 percent). In the case of income versus expenditure, the co-efficient of variation is higher. In the case of all SHGs, the income-to-expenditure ratio is calculated to be 3.29, meaning that for every 1 rupee increase in expenditure, the income of rural SHGs rises to 2.47 rupees.

Accordingly, it can be inferred from the analysis that the sample SHGs from both urban and rural areas are doing well and can produce net resources from their economic activities. It is clear from the income-expenditure ratio that efficiency is found to be marginally higher in rural samples than in urban samples.

Conclusion

Social entrepreneurship promotes economic growth, crucial for sustainable livelihood and development. Social entrepreneurs develop innovative approaches to gather funds for sustainable development. The practice of utilizing creative possibilities to solve social issues and effect change is known as social entrepreneurship.

Women's social and economic empowerment has entered the mainstream since women make up the majority of the population and are generally the most disadvantaged members of society. Financial institutions have a crucial role in increasing income, developing productive assets, and most importantly, in the social empowerment of women by providing loans to them in both urban and rural regions. SHGs are an attempt to achieve this goal. SHG's performance, however, has substantially improved. Furthermore, it is claimed that the women's low socioeconomic status has an impact on their participation in SHGs. The study of the main data gathered shows that the performance of the chosen SHGs has greatly improved, and SHG units have significantly contributed to the economic empowerment of women through increased income, savings, and employment of locals.

Hence, it may be concluded that self-help groups are regarded as one of the most crucial instruments for promoting a participative strategy for women's economic empowerment towards sustainable livelihood. SHG is a widely accepted social entrepreneurship and which has the primary of empowering poor rural women,

developing their capacity for income generation, and raising the standard of living.

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