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Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences 37 (2012) 296 – 303

Procedia
Social and Behavioral SciencesInternational Conference on Emerging Economies- Prospects and Challenges
(ICEE- 2012)**Stri Shakti Groups – A parallel force**C. S. Yatnalli^a, M.B. Banakar^{b*}, Basavaraj H. Huggi^c^aMahantswamy Arts, Science & Commerce College, Haunsabhavi – 581109, Karnataka University, Dharwad, India^bB.R. Tambakad Arts, Commerce & Science First Grade College, Hirekerur. 581111, Karnataka University, Dharwad, India^cGovernment First Grade College Ranebennur, Karnataka University Dharwad, India**Abstract**

The Present Study was conducted in the Haveri District of Karnataka State in an attempt to understand the application of self help groups schemes and their impact on the empowerment of women in the study area. Since the researchers are hailing from the rural areas in Haveri district and has better observation with the nature of working environment within the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in Haveri District. The study which involves the organization performance and problems faced by the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups has been made. Objective of this paper is to explore many questions like are these SHG's is sustainable, are these SHG's benefiting the society, hindrances and accountability of SHG's, are these SHG's helping women to improve their literacy rate etc., Government of Karnataka implemented SSSHG'S in the year 2000-2001 for the furtherance of the social, economical and overall development of the rural women. As on today there are about 17, 82,822 rural women's have been organized through 1,20,000 SSSHG'S in 175 Taluks in Karnataka State. About 69,785 rural women have been organized in 4,447 SSSHG'S in all 7 taluks. The study aimed to examine the organization and the functional aspects of SSSHG'S in the study area. Data has been collected from a total of 500 selected members of the SSSHG'S and 100 SHG's which were organized under the Stri Shakti Scheme of Haveri district. Secondary data has been obtained through books, articles and unpublished thesis. Primary data are collected from the minutes and books of record maintained by the SSSHG'S departmental manuals and circulars etc. Both structural and behavioural approaches have been used for the study through questionnaires addressed to 100 SSSHG'S and 500 members of these groups. The study has revealed some significant findings. There has been drastic improvement in the economic position of each member after the joining SSSHG'S. Besides this their industrial skills, family status, social status, feeling of security has been enhanced.

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Keywords: Development; Empowerment; Organization; Rural; Sustainable

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1. Introduction.

Economic development is perhaps the most effective means of social empowerment. Project Stri Shakti is an attempt of the Government of India to empower woman, especially those belonging to the economically weaker section of the society. Three areas are prioritized in this project. These are health, literacy and income generation.

A SHG is a small economically homogeneous affinity group of the rural poor voluntarily coming together to save small amount regularly, which are deposited in a common fund to meet members emergency needs and to provide collateral free loans decided by the group. (Abhaskumar Jha 2000). They have been recognized as useful tool to help the poor and as an alternative mechanism to meet the urgent credit needs of poor through thrift (Rao 2002) SHG is a media for the development of saving habit among the women (Rajamohan 2003). SHGs enhance the equality of status of women as participants, decisions-makers and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. (Ritu Jain 2003). The basic principles of the SHGs are group approach, mutual trust, organization of small and manageable groups, group cohesiveness, spirit of thrift, demand based lending, collateral free, women friendly loan, peer group pressure in repayment, skill training capacity building and empowerment (Lalitha).

Stri Shakti Groups comes under NABARD'S Self Help Group bank linkage program borrow from banks once they have accumulated a base of their own capital and have established a track record of regular payments. Normally Stri shakti groups must have actively worked at least for six months to get introduced to the bank. Groups must have regular savings and maintenance of loan accounts and functioning successfully. Since Stri shakti self help groups depend upon the individual savings of the members this inculcate the habit of savings among the rural woman. This study aims to reflect the performance and maintaining the accounts in the study area.

2. Objectives

This study is aimed at identifying and exploring crucial factors that hinders the prospects and development of Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri District Karnataka state. In view of this the study is focused on income, expenditure and savings of the members after joining Self Help Groups and to know the role of Self Help Groups in providing rural credit.

3 Sample design

The sampling design is formulated for the purpose of collection of data. Primary data has been collected through the questionnaire, informal and formal discussion, interviews with 350 selected members of SSSHG's and 35 SHG's which were organized under the SSSHG of Haveri District. Out of 4447 Stri Shakti Sangh 7 were selected in each of the seven talukas and out of 69785 SSG members 350 members were selected randomly. Primary data has been obtained through books, articles, internet sources and unpublished thesis. Primary data are also collected from the minute, books and books of records maintained by the SSSHG's.

4. Methodology

This study is an empirical survey to understand the functioning of SSSHG's of Haveri district and is based on the collection of data from both primary and secondary sources in the study area.

5. Procedure

The schedule is basically guide to an intervener to elect data regarding socio-economic condition and along with scheduled sheet extensive interactions with Stri Shakti members and the officials as well as non officials was attempted in order to understand the basic factors related to Self Help Groups. Keeping in view of the objectives and based on the experiences and exposes gained as well as trend of responses recorded, suitable modification were made in the schedules. The questionnaires were provided in kannada language so that educated women members could be able to furnish the information on their own. Researchers appraised of the purpose and need of the survey to the members of SSG and impressed them to express free and frank opinion.

6. Functions of self help groups

- Create a common fund by the members through their regular savings.
- Flexible working system and pool the resources in a democratic way.
- Periodical meeting. The decision making through group meeting.
- The loan amount is small and reasonable. So that easy to repay in time.
- The rate of interest is affordable, varying group to group and loan to loan.
However it is little higher than the banks but lower than the money lenders.

7. Linkage with the banks

SHG must actively work at least for a minimum of six months to get introduced to the bank. The group must have regular saving and maintenance of loan account and functioning successfully. Groups have to maintain their books of account properly. The performance must reflect the purpose of its objectives.

In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Karnataka State Government Stri Shakti Self Helps Group has been introduced in Haveri district. Following table shows the actual position of group involved and their involvement with the banking sector.

Table1. Number of Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri District as on 31-March-2009

Sl. No.	Name of Taluk	Total No of Stri Shakti Groups	No.of groups eligible for bank loan	No.of groups have not opened bank A/c	No.of groups not maintained books of records	No.of groups with > 15 members	No.of groups with < 15 members
1	Ranebennur	817	497	202	118	772	45
2	Byadagi	418	358	50	10	303	115
3	Haveri	804	514	204	86	668	136
4	Hirekeerur	734	495	233	06	585	149
5	Hanagala	702	480	180	42	682	20
6	Shiggaon	546	414	101	31	312	234
7	Savanur	426	222	182	22	267	159
	Total	4447	2980	1152	315	3589	858

Source : Office of the Deputy Director, Woman and Child Welfare Department

Table No.1 indicates that Out of total existing 4447 Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district 2980 (67.01percentage) are eligible for obtaining bank loans. 1152 Stri Shakti Groups i.e., 25.90 percentage have not opened bank accounts. Only 315 i.e., 7.08 percentage of the Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district have not maintained all the necessary books of records with them. 80.70percentage of the Stri Shakti Groups have more than 15 members and 19.29percentage of the Stri Shakti Groups have less than

15 members in their groups. This indicates that even nominal number of groups i.e., 7.08 percentage of the total number of groups in Haveri district have not maintained proper books of records.

Table 2. Categorywise Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district

Sl.No.	Name of Taluk	No.of SC groups	No.of ST groups	No.of Minorities groups	Total woman involved in the scheme	No.of woman in SC	No.of ST woman	Noof Minorities woman
1	Ranebennur	107	44	18	12863	2066	1716	761
2	Byadagi	34	18	28	6766	946	1183	957
3	Haveri	78	43	28	12920	1837	1749	2022
4	Hirekeerur	73	17	26	12164	1808	1383	1299
5	Hanagala	104	38	63	11304	2015	1471	1424
6	Shiggaon	66	11	28	7957	1356	716	1304
7	Savanur	40	06	12	5811	1239	701	836
	Total	502	177	203	69785	11267	8919	8603

Source : Office of the Deputy Director, Woman and Child Welfare Department

Table No. 2 signifies that involvement of all the categories in the Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district is laudable. It is significant that there are 502 Stri Shakti Groups i.e., 11.28 percentage of the total 4447 existing Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district. Regarding No.of ST groups there are only 3.98percentage of the total Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district. 203 i.e., 4.56 percentage groups belongs to minorities section and 80.16percentage of Stri Shakti Groups belongs to other member groups. It indicates that most of the communities have involved in the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in Haveri district.

Table 3. Talukawise distribution of revolving fund in Haveri district as on 31-March-2009

Sl. No.	Name of taluka	Stri Shakti Groups	Total No.of Groups received the revolving fund	Total amount of revolving fund received	Total amount of savings	Total No.of groups received incentive by the government	Incentive received by the government
1	Ranebennur	817	797	39,85,000	5,47,20,818	45	7,50,000
2	Byadagi	418	415	20,75,000	1,63,27,529	20	3,00,000
3	Haveri	804	779	38,98,000	2,73,62,179	24	4,60,000
4	Hirekerur	734	721	36,05,000	3,11,02,818	25	4,25,000
5	Hanagal	702	655	32,75,000	2,71,26,478	23	3,95,000
6	Shiggoun	546	541	27,05,000	1,86,51,248	28	4,70,000
7	Savanur	426	398	19,90,000	1,03,23,955	20	3,50,000
	Total	4447	4306	2,15,30,000	18,56,15,025	185	31,50,000

Source : Office of the Deputy Director, Woman and Child Welfare Department

According to Table No.3 bank linkages with of Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in Haveri district is moderately very good, Out of 4447 of Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district 4306 i.e., 96.82percentage have received the revolving fund of Rs.2,15,30,000 during the financial year 2008-09. Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district have saved Rs.18,56,15,025 during the same year. Mere 185 i.e., 4.16 percentage groups have received incentive by the government at the tune of 31,50,000.

Table No.4 indicates that all the 4447 i.e., 100percentage groups have opened and maintaining their accounts with the bank. Ranebennur taluk has the highest No.of 817 groups i.e., 18.37 & of the total Stri Shakti Groups in Haveri district have opened their bank accounts and 22 banks were involved in the scheme out of 817 groups 767 have availed bank loan in Ranebennur taluk and loan of Rs.3,51,01,156 have been obtained by the Stri Shakti Groups. Byadagi taluk having 418 groups which have opened their bank accounts, out of this 159 i.e., 38.03 percentage groups have availed bank loan at the tune of

1,83,67,650. In Savanur taluk only 8 banks involved in the scheme and they have disbursed Rs.2,04,24,950 i.e., 10.73 percentage of the total amount disbursed in the Haveri district.

Table 4. Bank Linkage of Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in Haveri districtas on 31-March-2009

Sl. No.	Name of Taluk	No.of groups doing inter loaning	No. groups opened bank A/cs	No. of banks involved in the scheme	No.of groups availed bank loan	Total amount of bank loan	Total repayment of bank loan
1	Ranebennur	797	817	22	767	3,51,01,156	2,37,47,058
2	Byadagi	401	418	11	159	1,83,67,650	1,20,60,397
3	Haveri	490	804	20	493	5,27,15,000	2,70,32,896
4	Hirekerur	672	734	07	404	2,81,70,250	2,34,15,634
5	Hanagala	682	702	17	366	1,84,23,000	1,68,19,277
6	Shiggaon	546	546	08	299	1,70,11,235	1,05,53,336
7	Savanur	411	426	08	247	2,04,24,950	1,03,23,955
	Total	3999	4447	93	2735	19,02,13,241	12,42,52,553

Source : Office of the Deputy Director, Woman and Child Welfare Department

8. Contribution made by the members of SHG's

Contributions by the individual members constitute their savings and also the main source for the common fund of SSSHG. The contribution promotes the habit of savings among the poor women members of the groups. It also indicates that the poor too are capable of generating savings out of their earning. Table No. 5 give light on the savings factor of SSSHG's in Haveri district.

Table 5. Contribution made by the members of SHG's

Taluks	Amount	Percentage of the total
Ranebennur	8,90,733	16.42
Byadagi	7,31,405	13.49
Haveri	6,50,754	12.00
Hirekerur	7,41,438	13.67
Hanagal	8,97,537	16.55
Shiggoun	8,21,897	15.16
Savanur	6,89,094	12.71
Total	54,22,858	100.00

Study revealed that out of the total savings amount Rs.54,22,858-00 Hanagal and Ranebennur taluks SHG's have contributed more towards the savings i.e., 16.55percentage and 16.42 percentage respectively. Shiggoun, Hirekerur and Byadagi have contributed 15.16 percentage, 13.67 percentage and 13.49 percentage towards the savings. Savanur and Haveri have contributed miserly i.e., 12.71 and 12 percentage respectively.

Karnataka Government has been encouraging the SSSHG and their members to achive higher amount of contributions to their group's common fund. In continuation of this scheme government has announced a normal scheme to give incentive to the groups which have saved more then Rs.75,000/- and Rs.1,00,000/-. The incentive amount is Rs.15,000/- and Rs.20,000/- respectively considering their contributions towards the savings.

8.1. Grants received by the SHG's from government of Karnataka

Haveri district SSSHG's have been receiving revolving grants from the State Government of Karnataka. The annual receipts of the grants from the government have shown continuous increase during the first four years from 2001 to 2004. However there is a decrease in the amount of grants received during 2006 and substantial increase in the next two years i.e., 2007 and 2008. Table No. 6 highlights the grants received by the SHG's in the Haveri district.

Table 6. Grant received by selected SSSHG's from the government (Note: Base year 2001)

Year	Total Grants	Percentage of increase	Percentage of decrease
2001	35,000	-	-
2002	40,000	14.28	-
2003	95,000	171.43	-
2004	95,000	171.43	-
2006	10,000	-	71.43
2007	30,000	-	14.28
2008	35,000	-	-

The total amount of grants received between 2001 and 2008 is Rs.3,40,000/-. If we considered 2001 as a base year, there is a decrease of 14.28percentage, 171.43percentage and 171.43 percentage during the year 2002, 2003 and 2004 respectively. From the above figures we may find that there is a drastic increase in grants during the year 2003 and 2004. During the year 2006 and 2007 there is substantial decrease of 71.43 percentage and 14.28 percentage respectively.

9. Economic status of SHG members

There is a perceptible change in the annual income of the families of the respondent members of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in the study area. The annual income of large majority of respondent members families of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups of 320 (91.42percentage) was less than 18000 during the premembership period. However this small amount of annual income was reported by a lesser member of 150 member's families (42.85percentage) in the post membership period.

Higher annual income of the family of Rs.18000-24000 was reported by a small number of 15(4.28percentage) Stri Shakti Self Help Groups members in the pre membership period. This range of income was reported by a larger number of 280(80percentage) Stri Shakti Self Help Groups members in the post membership period.

Non of the 350 respondent Stri Shakti Self Help Groups membership were holding company shares in the pre membership period. However in the post membership period a small number of 12(3.42percentage) Stri Shakti Self Help Groups members indicated that they were in the position of company shares.

The above trends of change in the income level of the families of the members of Stri Shakti Self Help Groups indicate that income level of the families of the respondent Stri Shakti Self Help Groups members has gone up in the post membership period compared to the income level in the pre membership level period. This trend of change in income level is also reflected in the purchase of company shares by the members of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in the post membership period. Thus overall family income position of the members has gone up and their economic empowerment has improved substantially.

10. Hindrances of SHG's while performing their duties

Self Help Groups consist of poor people with some inadequacies which effect the functioning of the groups. These inadequacies are more pronounced among poor woman who are members of the Stri

Shakti Self Help Groups. Responses were sought from the selected members of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups covered by the study about the different type of the problems faced by them while discharging their duties in the affairs of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups.

Majority of 180(51.42percentage) respondent members expressed the view that inadequacy of education was faced by them. This problem of the members of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups calls for proper education of woman so that they can effectively participate in the deliberation of these democratic socio economic institutions. A substantial number of 70(20percentage) respondent Stri Shakti Self Help Groups members indicated in their responses that their inferiority complex come in the way of their performance in the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups. This problem needs to be addressed by the concerned sponsors of the group so that woman members over come the problem of inferiority complex. Interference by male and other members of the families is other problem mentioned by 34(9.71percentage) and 28(8percentage) respondent respectively. Disadvantage of old age problem was another issue indicated by 8(2.28percentage) respondent woman members. While caste problem come in the way of performing the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups by 12(3.42percentage) respondents. Following Table No. 7 provides the details.

Table 7. Problems faced by the members of Stri Shakti Self Help Groups

Hindrances	No.of respondents	Percentage
Lack of Education	180	51.42
inferiority complex	70	20
Male interference	34	9.71
Other members of the family	28	8
Old age	8	2.28
Caste	12	3.42

Source : field survey

The above table indicates a significant fact that 18(5.14percentage) respondent members of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups did not face any of the above problems while performing the work of the group.

11. Findings

The study has revealed some significant findings. Based on the research study some useful suggestions have been made.

Empowerment of woman includes higher literacy level and education for woman, better health care, equal ownership of productive resources and more participation in economic and commercial sector. Improved standard of living and acquiring self reliance, self esteem and self confidence to be given. State and Central Government have formulated and implemented various scheme for social, economic and overall development of the woman. However the results show that it has not been possible to achieve the overall development of woman. Need of the hour is the creation of awareness among woman regarding the states and position they were entitled in the society and they must be made financially, socially, politically fit and capable.

Bank official who have inspected the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in connection with their loans to these groups have found it good. Officials of the Woman and Child Welfare Department found the performance of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups as minimal according to 18(51.42percentage).

Impact of joining the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups the respondent members of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups have indicated that impact of joining their respective Stri Shakti Self Help Groups helped them enormously. The responses indicate that majority of respondents have been benefited by their membership of the Stri Shakti Self Help Groups in various ways in different areas like social, economic,

political and other areas. The following broad areas have emerged from the responses of the members covered by the study.

- Enhancement of industrial skills 140 (40percentage)
- Enhancement of family status 240 (68.57percentage)
- Enhancement of Social status 320 (91.42percentage)
- Power of group discussion has been improved 330 (94.28percentage)
- Realization of importance of woman education 340 (97.14)
- Capacity to take own decisions 280 (80percentage)
- Awareness of Government facilities 320 (91.42percentage)
- Awareness of celebration of National Festival 345 (98.57percentage)
- Change in the life style of members 300 (85.71percentage)
- Awareness about adult education 310 (88.57percentage)

12. Suggestions

1. Bank linkages should be furthermore strengthening.
2. More No of SC, ST and OBC Self Help Groups must be encouraged.
3. ITES should be provided to Self Help Groups and training in this regard should provide.
4. Government must take steps to provided knowledge of account maintenance to Stri Shakti Self Help Groups.
5. Member's contribution to group's common fund should be increased.

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