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RESEARCH ARTICLE

DETERMINANTS OF SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF HELP GROUPS AMONG WOMEN IN HARYANA.

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Abstract

Due to fast growing of the SHG-bank linkage programme in the state, the quality of the SHG has come under stress. Here an effort is made in this paper to assess the determinants of sustainability of self help groups in Haryana. The study was carried out in four districts of Haryana viz; Kaithal, Panipat, Rewari and Mahendergarh. Twelve blocks were selected from all the selected districts which had the maximum number of self help groups formed. The total of 240 SHGs constituted the sample of the present study representing 65 villages from 12 blocks of 4 districts of Haryana. An interview schedule was prepared for the collection of data and the data were analysed by using frequency and percentages. Out of 240 SHGs surveyed in Haryana, more than fifty percent groups were discontinued (56.66%) followed by 34.58 percent groups in dormant category and only 8.75 percent were active groups. The low gap in group formation and registration indicates lack of efforts of field functionaries in formation process pointing towards a quantitative target achievement approach. The sustainability of 43.33 percent SHGs was for five years and more. Poor monitoring, non-cooperation and conflict among the members were the major issues among members leading to dormancy or discontinuation beside problem in taking loan, lack of training and knowledge.

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Introduction:-

Enhancing financial access of the poor by encouraging microenterprises through provisions of investment facilities, training and business service support is a strategy widely being adopted by developing countries to overcome the problems of poverty, unemployment, inequality and deteriorating welfare. Sustainability in simple terms refers to the long-term continuance of the microfinance programme without depending on the support of external agencies. One of the most important goals of the microfinance programme is that of the empowerment of women. Formation of self help group (SHG) is a path breaking initiative that can transform the lives of a number of families. The concept of empowerment is defined as the process by which women take control and ownership of their choices. In India, the poor people in time of their emergency run to the door of the landlords and money lenders to fulfill their credit needs and this comes usually at a very high interest rate. There are many other constraints which affect the promotion of self help groups (Singh, 2012). However, looking at the vast potential, these constraints should not become hindrance for better economic prosperity. It is observed that due to fast growing of the SHG-bank linkage

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programme in the state, the quality of the SHG has come under stress. Here an effort is made in this paper to assess the determinants of sustainability of self help groups in Haryana.

Materials and Methods:-

The study was carried out in four districts of Haryana viz; Kaithal, Panipat, Rewari and Mahendergarh. Twelve blocks were selected from all the selected districts which had the maximum number of self help groups formed. The total of 240 SHGs constituted the sample of the present study representing 65 villages from 12 blocks of 4 districts of Haryana. An interview schedule was prepared for the collection of data and the data were analysed by using frequency and percentages.

Results and Discussion:-

Table 1:- Distribution of SHGs according to their present status

Districts	Active F (%)	Dormant F (%)	Discontinued F (%)	Total
Kaithal	7 (11.66)	15 (25.00)	38 (63.33)	60
Panipat	6 (10.00)	20 (33.33)	34 (56.66)	60
Rewari	5 (8.33)	28 (46.66)	27 (45.00)	60
Mahendergarh	3 (5.00)	20 (33.33)	37 (61.66)	60
Total	21 (8.75)	83 (34.58)	136 (56.66)	240

Women self help groups were divided into three different sub-groups based upon their present status viz. active, dormant and discontinued. The data as shown in the Table-1 reveal that majority of the groups in Kaithal (63.33%) were discontinued followed by SHG's in Mahendergarh (61.66%), Panipat (56.66%) and Rewari (45.00%). In dormant category, most of the groups were dormant in Rewari (46.66%) followed by 33.33 percent in Panipat and Mahendergarh and 25.00 percent in Kaithal. The percentage of active groups was very low. Nearly 10.00 percent groups were active in Kaithal and Panipat followed by Rewari and Mahendergarh. None of the groups were engaged in group entrepreneurship. The active groups were involved only in individual income generating activities followed by 34.58 percent involved in micro financing. Nearly 60.00 percent groups in discontinued category pointing towards a serious problem in programme policies and their implementation with regard to women SHG's.

Table 2:- Reasons for forming the SHG's

S.No.	Reasons	Kaithal n=60 %	Panipat n=60 %	Rewari n=60%	Mahendergarh n=60 %	Total N=240 %
1.	Improve social status	65.00	60.00	53.33	50.00	57.08
2.	Promote saving habit	60.00	70.00	66.67	80.00	69.16
3.	Obtain financial support	88.33	80.00	90.00	93.33	87.91
4.	Initiate individual activities	30.00	25.00	15.00	18.33	22.08
5.	Influenced by friends & relatives	48.33	61.67	35.00	40.00	46.25

* Multiple responses

Table-2 reveals that majority of the groups (87.91%) were formed for obtaining financial support followed by promoting saving habit (69.16%). About 60.0 percent groups opined that they joined the SHG for improving their social status. Another 46.25 percent groups were influenced by friends and relatives and only 22.08 percent were interested to initiate individual income generating activities. Das (2012) also found that 38 % groups are formed to obtain the financial support from the government, the NGOs and the financial institutions. Some 14% groups are formed to improve their economic status. Another 8.67 % groups are formed to improve social status while 16% groups are formed to promote saving habit among the members. Yet another 7.33 % groups are formed to initiate group activities, only 6.67% groups are formed to take up community development activities and 9.33% are formed by the influence of friends and relatives.

Table 3:- Distribution of groups according to the gap in formation and registration of SHG

Districts	Gap in months					
	0 F (%)	1-3 F (%)	3-6 F (%)	6-9 F (%)	9-12 F (%)	More than 12 F (%)
Kaithal n=60	5 (8.33)	55 (91.66)	-	-	-	-
Panipat n=60	5 (8.33)	48 (80.00)	4 (6.66)	3 (5.00)	-	-
Rewari n=60	1(1.66)	59 (98.33)	-	-	--	-
Mahendergarh n=60	-	60 (100.0)	-	-	-	-
Total =240	11 (4.58)	222 (92.50)	4 (1.66)	3 (1.25)	-	-

The intervening time period between the formation and registration of SHG's was studied in terms of months taken to understand the process of group formation. The data in table-3 shows that majority of the groups (92.50 %) were registered with the bank between 1-3 months. Nearly five percent groups (4.58%) took less than one month and only 1.66 percent groups took 3-6 months time to get registered. This shows that the basic principles of formation of SHG's had not been followed in majority of the cases. As per rule, it is recommended that there should be a gap of minimum six months between formation and registration of the groups.

Table 4:- Monthly collection status of groups at different stages of group sustainability

Districts	Average collection in Rs.						
	Formation		Registration		Present		
	Total collection	Average	Total collection	Average	n	Total collection	Average
Kaithal n=60	53600	893.33	54100	901.66	22	29400	1336.36
Panipat n=60	65000	1083.33	66000	1100.00	26	49500	1903.84
Rewari n=60	63500	1058.33	63500	1058.33	33	50200	1521.21
Mahendergarh n=60	44200	736.66	45950	765.83	23	21100	917.39
Total		942.91		956.45	104		1419.70

The money collection status of groups at different stages of group sustainability shows that average collection by most of groups was Rs. 942.91 monthly at formation stage. The collection was slightly increased at registration stage. While at present the monthly collection in most of SHG's was raised up to Rs. 1419.70/- per group.

Table 5:- Distribution of groups according to frequency of deposit collection in bank.

Districts	Monthly F (%)	Quarterly F (%)	Six monthly F (%)	Discontinued F (%)
Kaithal n=60	8 (13.33)	9 (15.00)	5 (8.33)	38 (63.33)
Panipat n=60	15 (25.00)	7 (11.66)	4 (6.66)	34 (56.66)
Rewari n=60	21 (35.00)	9 (15.00)	3 (5.00)	27 (45.00)
Mahendergarh n=60	13 (21.66)	6 (10.00)	4 (6.66)	37 (61.66)
Total	57 (23.75)	31(12.9)	16 (6.66)	136 (56.66)

Table-5 revealed that more than fifty percent groups (56.66%) were discontinued. Among the sustaining groups (Active+ dormant) nearly 1/4th of the self help groups deposited their money in bank monthly followed by those who deposited money in bank quarterly (12.91%). District wise analysis shows that maximum number of groups (35.00%) deposited money in bank monthly in Rewari district followed by Panipat, Mahendergarh and Kaithal district.

Table 6:- Distribution of the groups according to sustainability.

Districts	Less than 1 year F (%)	1-3 years F (%)	3-5 years F (%)	More than 5 years & continuing F (%)
Kaithal n=60	3(5.00)	12(20.00)	23(38.33)	22(36.66)
Panipat n=60	4(6.66)	10(16.66)	20(33.33)	26(43.33)
Rewari n=60	3(5.00)	14(23.33)	10(16.66)	33(55.00)
Mahendergarh n=60	2(3.33)	13(21.66)	22(36.66)	23(38.33)
Total	12(5.00)	49(20.41)	75(31.25)	104(43.33)

The sustainability of groups has been shown in Table-6. The data shows that a total of 43.33 percent groups sustained for more than 5 years and the groups which still sustaining after five years. Nearly 1/3rd groups (31.25%) sustained for 3-5 years followed by those (20.41%) who sustained for 1-3 years. Only 5.00 percent groups sustained for less than one year. Bhatt and Rajdev (2012) in their study “An Analysis of Factors Empowering Women Through Microfinance” stated that the research study aimed at checking the impact of microfinance on women empowerment. From the study it can be concluded that microfinance institution helps in poverty alleviation and through that standard of living of women also improves. The SHG’s have provided social opportunities to make them aware about these rights, entitlements and development programmes as well as starting income generation activities for substantial earnings and self-employment. D

Table 7:- Distribution of groups according to reasons for sustainability.

Reasons	Kaithal n=22 F (%)	Panipat n=26 F (%)	Rewari n= 33 F (%)	Mahendergarh n=23 F (%)	Total N=104 F (%)
Cooperation among the members	18(81.81)	23(88.46)	29(87.87)	19(82.60)	89(85.57)
Trust among the members	17(77.27)	22(84.61)	24(72.72)	19(82.60)	82(78.84)
Having knowledge about SHG	9(40.90)	14(53.84)	13(39.39)	12(52.17)	48(46.15)
No problem in taking loan	12(54.54)	12(46.15)	26(78.78)	10(43.47)	60(57.69)
Monitoring by authorities	12(54.54)	13(50.00)	16(48.48)	14(60.86)	55(52.88)
Educated/literate office bearers	11(50.00)	17(65.38)	21(63.63)	14(60.86)	63(60.57)

* Multiple responses

The data regarding reasons for sustainability in Table-7 revealed that the main reason for sustainability of SHGs was cooperation among the members (85.57%) followed by trust among the members (78.84%) and education of office bearers (60.57%). Other reasons in order of importance were no problem in taking loan (57.69%), monitoring by the authorities (52.88%) and having knowledge about the SHGs (46.15%). The findings were supported by Das(2015).According to him, majority of respondents are motivated by the PACS. Primary Agricultural Credit Societies are playing a very significant role in organizing SHGs and motivating them to take up farming and non-farming income generating activities. Majority of the respondents are motivated by the PACS to join the SHGs. Almost all respondents revealed that their participation in the SHG has facilitated to take part in farming and non-farming income generating activities.

Distribution of groups according to reasons for discontinuation and dormancy:-

Out of the total groups surveyed, only 8.75 percent groups were active and rest 91.25 percent were either dormant or discontinued. Efforts were made to study the reasons for discontinuation and dormancy of the groups.

Table 8:- Percentage distribution of groups according to reasons for discontinuation and dormancy.

Reasons	Kaithal n=60	Panipat n=60	Rewari n=60	Mahenderg arh n=60	Total N=240
Lack of interest	11.70	25.00	8.33	15.00	15.00
Lack of time	16.70	35.00	11.70	13.33	19.10
Non cooperation	31.70	30.00	31.70	38.33	32.90
Conflict among members	31.70	28.33	31.70	38.33	32.50
Lack of contact with members	10.00	5.00	11.70	10.00	9.16

Lack of trust	31.70	-	-	-	7.91
Lack of trainings	11.70	30.00	26.70	31.70	25.00
Lack of govt. support	8.33	1.70	1.70	-	2.91
Lack of knowledge	33.33	26.70	15.00	20.00	23.70
Problem in taking loan	33.33	28.33	25.00	35.00	30.40
Marketing issues	15.00	-	1.70	-	4.16
Poor monitoring	35.00	28.33	40.00	38.33	35.40

*Multiple responses

The distribution of groups according to reasons for discontinuation and dormancy points to the fact that more number of respondents (35.40%) reported poor monitoring by authorities followed by non-cooperation of members (32.90%), conflict among members (32.50%) and problems in taking loan (30.40%) as the main cause for discontinuation and dormancy of SHGs. Nearly 25.00 percent of the respondents reported lack of trainings and lack of time as the main reason for the discontinuation and dormancy of their SHG's. The other reason could be the lack of trust and lack of contact with members of the groups.

Conclusions:-

Out of 240 SHGs surveyed in Haryana, more than fifty percent groups were discontinued (56.66%) followed by 34.58 percent groups in dormant category and only 8.75 percent were active groups. The sustainability of 43.33 percent SHGs was for five years and more. Out of total 240 groups only 8.75 percent groups were involved in income generating activities. Group survival was based upon the efforts of one or two members who were engaged in some income generating activities before the group formation and had been using the Self Help Group platform for seeking loans and to scale up the marketing of their produce. The main reason for sustainability of SHGs was cooperation among the members (85.57%) followed by trust among the members (78.84%) and education of office bearers (60.57%). Other reasons in order of importance were no problem in taking loan (57.69%), monitoring by the authorities (52.88%) and having knowledge about the SHGs (46.15%). Poor monitoring, non-cooperation and conflict among the members were the major issues among members leading to dormancy or discontinuation beside problem in taking loan, lack of training and knowledge.

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