

IMPACT OF SHGS ON WOMEN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SAVASIHALLI VILLAGE, HASSAN DISTRICT

P Manjula

Associate Professor

Department of Economics, A.V. Kanthamma College for Women, Hassan

ABSTRACT

The study titled “Impact of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) on Women and Rural Development: A Case Study of Savasihalli Village, Hassan District” explores the role of SHGs in promoting women’s empowerment and rural development. Based on primary data from 50 SHG members collected through structured interviews, the study analyzes their socio-economic status and participation in income-generating and community activities. The findings show that SHGs have enhanced women’s financial independence, confidence, leadership, and decision-making abilities. They have also contributed to improved living standards, reduction of social barriers, and greater participation of women in family and community affairs. Empowered women have become active contributors to rural progress, strengthening the local economy and social fabric. Despite these positive outcomes, the study identifies areas requiring further attention, such as education, awareness, and inclusion of marginalized groups. It recommends expanding training, employment opportunities, and government support to ensure sustainable empowerment and equitable rural growth. Overall, SHGs act as powerful instruments for achieving both women’s empowerment and holistic rural development.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Rural Development, Socio-Economic Status, Financial Independence, Leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Women’s empowerment is a key goal of social and economic development, recognized globally and nationally through policies like India’s National Policy for the Empowerment of Women (2001). In rural India, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have become a powerful means to achieve this goal. Formed by women from similar socio-economic backgrounds, SHGs promote savings, credit access, and income-generating activities, fostering financial independence, leadership, and confidence. By enabling women to start enterprises, contribute to family income, and participate in community decisions, SHGs reduce poverty and drive rural development. In villages like Savasihalli, Hassan District, SHGs have transformed women from passive recipients to active agents of change, linking economic growth with social progress.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Auroville Village Action Group (2009–2010) studied women’s empowerment in rural areas using indicators like self-esteem, awareness, and decision-making. It found that group participation in SHGs greatly boosted women’s confidence and social awareness, with empowerment linked more to group membership than specific programs.

Elly Arnoff (2011) emphasized defining empowerment contextually and noted that most studies focus on married women, overlooking unmarried women who also face gender inequalities.

Esther Duflo (2012) highlighted the two-way link between women's empowerment and economic growth, stating that while development reduces inequality, sustained empowerment requires continuous policy support and commitment to gender equality.

RESEARCH GAP

Previous research on Self-Help Groups (SHGs) has mainly focused on their impact on women's empowerment and factors influencing social and economic upliftment. However, little attention has been given to the socio-economic conditions of SHG members in Savasihalli, Hassan District, and their role in rural development. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the socio-economic status of SHG members and assessing how SHGs promote women's empowerment and rural development in Savasihalli village.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Since the mid-1980s, Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have played a key role in poverty reduction, women's empowerment, and rural development in India. Primarily women-centric, SHGs promote savings, credit access, and income-generating activities, helping women achieve financial independence and leadership skills. Supported by government and NGOs, SHGs have fostered micro-enterprises and strengthened the socio-economic fabric of rural areas, including Savasihalli village in Hassan District.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To analyze the socio-economic conditions of SHG members in Savasihalli, Hassan District.
2. To evaluate the level of women empowerment achieved through Self-Help Groups in the study area.
3. To examine the role of SHGs in promoting rural development through income generation, skill training, and community participation.

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

1. SHGs significantly contribute to improving the socio-economic status of women in rural areas.
2. Women's Empowerment has significantly influenced on rural development.

METHODOLOGY

This empirical study is based on primary data collected through structured interviews with 50 SHG members in Savasihalli Village, Hassan District, using a systematic random sampling method. Data were gathered from women engaged in savings, micro-enterprises, and livelihood programs. The area was chosen for its active SHGs that promote financial independence, cooperation, and self-reliance.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study focuses on the role of SHGs in empowering women and fostering rural development in Savasihalli. It examines how SHG participation improves women's economic status, confidence, and decision-making, and how it supports entrepreneurship, skill development, and income generation in the community.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The survey is conducted only in Savasihalli village in Hassan District.

2. The study largely is based on the perception of the respondents.

SAVASIHALLI VILLAGE PROFILE

Savasihalli village is a village in Belur Taluk in Hassan District of the Karnataka State, India. It belongs to Mysore Division. It is located 26 km towards South from District headquarters Hassan. 22 km from Belur. 206 km from State capital Bangalore. Savasihalli local language is Kannada. Savasihalli village total population is 1224. The data for this report is obtained for Gram Panchayath office Savasihalli as per 2010-11 census

Census Parameters	Census Data
Total population	1224
Total number of houses	456
Female population %	45.58%(558)
Male	54.41%(666)
Total literacy %	65.52%(802)
Female literacy rate %	65.77(367)
Working population %	58.49%(716)

Source: 2011 Census, Savasihalli Gramapanchayath

Table-1: Educational Qualification of SHG Members

S.No	Qualification	Members	Percentage
1	Primary School	25	50%
2	Middle School	10	20%
3	High School	10	20%
4	PUC	3	6%
5	Degree	2	4%
	Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

In this survey, the educational qualification chart shows that **50% of the SHG members have only primary education, 20% have completed middle school, and 20% have studied up to high school.** A small percentage—**6% hold PUC and 4% possess a degree.** This indicates that all most all selected respondents are educated. Empowered women are capable to provide quality education facilities to her family members in study area. It is also one of the positive impacts on rural development.

Table-2: Ownership of Houses among SHG Members

House	Member	Percentage
Own	50	100%
Rent	-	
Total	50	100%

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that respondents are living in own house or rented house. As per this table, all the respondent are living in their own house. When the women's are empowered no doubt about it, the capable to obtain own house and enjoy all needs. This is become a positive impact on rural development in study area.

Table-3: Annual Income of the Family

	Member	Percentage
10000-50000	08	16%

50000-100000	10	20%
100000-200000	24	48%
200000-300000	08	16%
Total	50	100%

Source: primary Data

The above table shows the annual income of the respondents' families. Out of 50 respondents, 08 families have an annual income between ₹10,000–₹50,000, 10 families between ₹50,000–₹1,00,000, 24 families between ₹1,00,000–₹2,00,000, and 08 families between ₹2,00,000–₹3,00,000. This indicates that the majority of respondents' families are above the poverty line, showing signs of economic improvement among empowered women in the study area.

Table-4: Contribution of Empowered Women to Family Income

	Member	Percentage
10000-20000	26	52%
20000-30000	14	28%
30000-40000	7	14%
40000-50000	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Source: primary Data

The above table shows women's contribution to their family income. Out of 50 respondents, 26 contribute between ₹10,000–₹20,000 annually, while others contribute up to ₹50,000. This reflects that **empowered women are significantly contributing to household income**, indicating their growing financial independence and positive role in family welfare.

Table-5: Status of Empowered Women in Their Family

	Member	Percentage
High Position	36	72%
Middle Position	14	28%

Source: primary Data

The above table indicates the position of empowered women in their families. Among 50 respondents, 36 women have achieved a **higher position** in their families, while 14 women hold a **middle position**. This shows that the majority of empowered women have attained a **good social and decision-making status** within their households. After empowerment, women are actively participating in family matters, managing finances, and maintaining household budgets. Their exposure to education and media has improved their knowledge, awareness, and confidence, leading to **enhanced family roles and social recognition**. Overall, women empowerment has brought about **positive changes in rural lifestyle and development** in the study area.

Table-6: Healthy Facility for Empowered Women

Answers	Member	Percentage
Yes	50	100%

Source: primary Data

The above table shows that **all respondents (100%)** reported having access to health facilities. This demonstrates that empowered women are now capable of availing health services using their own income sources. As a result of empowerment, women have gained

financial independence, which enables them to secure healthcare for themselves and their families. Additionally, the study area has witnessed growth in healthcare infrastructure — including hospitals, clinics, and medical shops — reflecting the **positive impact of women empowerment on rural development**.

Table–7: Health Condition

	Member	Percentage
High Position	44	88%
Middle Position	6	12%

Source: primary Data

As per the above table, out of 50 respondents, **44** reported being in good health, while **6** did not. This shows that the **majority of empowered women** in the study area maintain good health due to better access to healthcare facilities. Empowerment enables women to take care of their physical well-being, as they have financial means and awareness about health practices. Health is a vital indicator of **rural development**, as healthy citizens contribute productively to the nation. When women are empowered, they not only ensure their own well-being but also provide **better health facilities for their families**, fostering a healthier rural society.

Table–8: Children Education

Answers	Member	Percentage
Yes	50	100

Source: primary Data

After empowerment, all the respondents (100%) stated that they are able to **provide quality education** to their children. This clearly indicates that empowerment has created a **progressive impact** on rural families — especially in promoting education for the next generation. Empowered women invest their income and awareness in improving their children's educational standards, which contributes directly to **long-term rural development and social upliftment**.

Table–9: Equality in working place

Answers	Member	Percentage
Yes	43	86%
No	07	14%

Source: primary Data

The above table shows that **86%** of respondents feel they experience **equality in the workplace**, while **14%** do not. This implies that the majority of empowered women have gained **confidence and recognition** at work, participating equally with men in employment and income-earning activities. However, a minority still faces challenges, suggesting that **continued efforts are required** to achieve complete workplace equality in rural areas. Overall, empowerment initiatives have significantly contributed to enhancing **gender equality, social respect, and professional opportunities** for women.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. Socio-Economic Upliftment:

Women's empowerment has played a crucial role in improving the **socio-economic status of women** in rural India, enhancing their ability to contribute meaningfully to household and community welfare.

2. **Economic Independence:**
Empowered women have become **economically stronger**, generating and managing income through occupations, small enterprises, and self-help group (SHG) initiatives.
3. **Reduction in Superstitions and Social Barriers:**
Traditional beliefs and superstitions that once prevented rural women from accessing education and financial opportunities are gradually diminishing, fostering **greater awareness and self-confidence** among women.
4. **Improved Family Status:**
The study found that a **majority of empowered women enjoy higher status** within their families. They now participate actively in household decisions, financial planning, and children's education.
5. **Equality and Social Justice:**
Empowered women in the study area have achieved **equal status with men**, reflecting a decline in gender inequality and an increase in mutual respect within both households and workplaces.
6. **Increasing Workforce Participation:**
Women's **work participation rate** has risen substantially in recent years. Women are now contributing to multiple sectors of the economy, strengthening their **economic, social, and political status**.
7. **Employment and Empowerment:**
Employment has emerged as a **key driver of empowerment**, providing women with financial independence, self-sufficiency, and a stronger voice in family and community matters.
8. **Enhanced Standard of Living:**
Empowered women are now able to afford modern household goods such as **mixers, televisions, refrigerators, and fans**, reflecting improvements in their quality of life and family comfort.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Employment is an effective tool for reducing poverty and enhancing women's capacity.
2. Women's community and political participation should be strengthened since many employed women remain voiceless in decision-making spaces.
3. The government should provide more facilities and schemes to uplift the economic and social status of **SC and ST women**.
4. Awareness about **women empowerment programmes** must be increased.
5. Women should be provided **equal rights** in workplaces.
6. Steps should be taken to **increase literacy and employment** among women.
7. The number of opportunities for women in education, employment, and politics should be expanded to raise the **female participation rate**.
8. Programmes must be accelerated through **consultation, coordination, and collaboration** between government and local organizations.

9. Practical, skill-based training should be provided to women to make them **self-reliant and employable**.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that employment has a positive impact on the women of Savasihalli village. Empowerment enables women to recognize their potential, identity, and power in all aspects of life. Empowered women play a vital role in rural development, actively participating in the village economy. The study emphasizes that economic and social liberalization of women is essential for true empowerment. Only when women are given equal opportunities and participation in development processes can real rural development occur. Thus, women's empowerment is a key driver of rural progress in India.

REFERENCES

1. Somashekaraiah, N.T. (2015). Rural Women Development Empowerment. In **Conference Proceedings in Karnataka**, Volume 11, Equality and Sustainable Human Development: Issues and Policy Implications (pp. 41–46). LULU Enterprises UK Ltd, United Kingdom.
2. Batliwala, S. (1994). The Meaning of Women's Empowerment: New Concepts from Action. In G. Sen, A. Germain, & L.C. Chen (Eds.), **Population Policies Reconsidered: Health, Empowerment, and Rights** (pp. 127–138). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
3. Deepak, K.V., & Prakash, R.P. (2014). A Conceptual Study on the Role of Financial Inclusion in Economic & Social Development of India. **International Journal of Management Research & Review**, Vol. 4, Issue 12, Article No. 1151–1157, ISSN: 2249-7196.
4. **Elly Amr off (2011)** A literature reviews on "The conceptualization of women's empowerment April 18,2011.
5. **Daisy Chung B. et.al., (2013)** Indicators of Women's empowerment in developing nation workshop in international public affairs spring 2013
6. Shetty, M.A. (2016). A Study on Role of SHGs in Financial Inclusion of Excluded Sections of Society with Special Reference to Udupi District. **Global Journal of Finance and Management**, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp. 89–95, ISSN: 0975-6477.