CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter makes a modest attempt to review the existing studies on self help groups and micro finance and its impact on women empowerment. The objective to review of earlier studies is to identify what aspects has been covered and what is the research gaps, if any. The review of literature helps to design research question which have not been covered in previous studies specifically in Haryana context. This chapter therefore reviews several recent studies of India and Haryana specific context.

A rich body of literature has tried to examine the impact of SHGs on women empowerment through conducting survey base studies or case studies and using secondary data information at regional and cross country level and provides a better understanding of SHGs, its functioning and its impact on women empowerment. Studies having secondary and primary data background are covered in the chapter.

REVIEW OF EXISTING STUDIES

Impact on Women Empowerment

Kumari Indira (2001)\textsuperscript{43} studied the emergence of women SHGs and its impact on rural development in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh. Findings show that DECWRA groups women started various economic activities like candle making, leaf plates and basket making, internal lending, etc. which helped them to derive sustainable income. Despite certain bottlenecks in the functioning of DWCRA scheme, it helped majority of women to cross poverty line.

Kulkarni (2001)\textsuperscript{44} study classified the women empowerment indicators in to personal and family and reported that SHGs is a win-win situation for both woman and her family. SHGs provides an opportunity to the poor to organize themselves, adopt various programs and strategies for different activities. Through the groups, they

\textsuperscript{44} Vijay D Kulkarni (2001). Empowerment of women through SHGs, Janatha, August, page 12-15.
gradually learn to take decisions for themselves in area relating to social, economic and political.

Mahadeswaran (2001)\footnote{Shashidara B.M (2002), A critical study of the working of self help groups (SHGs) in the rural credit system in Karnataka, Ph.D. thesis, University of Mysore, Mysore, pp. 64.} conducted a survey to examine the impact of SHGs in providing credit to rural women. The findings revealed that SHGs have performed well in improving the savings, loans were given according to priority activities of SHGs, no defaulters among the members. Status of women, both within the household and outside have improved. But groups could not generate sufficient money to meet the demands, still local moneylenders are the dominant source of credit (Shashidara, 2002).

Das, Barman and Baruah (2001)\footnote{Das R., Barman R.N. and Baruah, P.K. (2001). Performance of Self-Help Groups in Sonitpur District of Assam, Indian journal of Agricultural Economic, Vol. 56, No.3, July-Sept.2001.} evaluated the performance of SHGs in Sonitpur District of Assam. Study found that SHGs women evolved in weaving and textile enterprise have derived maximum profit from the activities. It is reported that financial assistance received through SHGs help in building adequate infrastructure which further results in economic prosperity and social stability for them.

Dwarakanath (2002)\footnote{Dwaraknath H D (2002). Rural credit and women SHG a profile of Rangareddy district in Andhra Pradesh, Kurukshetra, November, page 9-15.} study observed that SHGs women became more confident after joining the SHGs. Study also saw an attitudinal change. SHGs transformed the social outlook of its members. SHGs in the sample area emerged as a new paradigm for eradicating poverty. Through SHGs the credit needs of the rural women were also fulfilled. The groups enhance women participation in decision making, democratic political election participation, economic, social and cultural participation. This also helped in sensitizing SHGs women members to take active part in socio economic progress of rural area.

Rangi et al (2002)\footnote{Rangi, P.S. et al. (2002). Economic empowerment of rural women through self- helps groups: A case study of Fatehgarh Sahib District Punjab. Man and development, 24 (30), 65-78.} studied the economic empowerment of women through SHGs in Fatehgarh Sahib District of Punjab. The study was conducted in two development blocks namely Khamano and Khera which were randomly selected from five.
Development blocks in Fatehgarh Sahib District and 26 and 39 SHGs were selected from the respective block. 25 members each were randomly selected from various Self-Help Groups in both the blocks. The objectives of the study was to know the socio-economic profile of members of the Self-Help Groups and to examine the credit availed by the members of the Self-Help Groups. Their study was also conducted to know the impact of Self-Help Groups on income generation for its members. The empirical findings revealed that majority of the respondents of the Self-Help Groups were in the young age group and educated, though their education level was not high. Majority of them belong to the small and marginal farmer families. All the respondents saved money every month; they had taken loans from banks with the help of SHGs. SHGs had provided the women members a big economic support which brought economic empowerment of women. The study also reported that amount of loans taken by the SHGs members from banks was higher than internal borrowing from SHGs. The additional income generated through SHGs have provided the women big moral support and bring new changes in understanding the rural economy. Loan from SHGs have helped in improving their economic empowerment both directly and indirectly.

Anand (2002)\textsuperscript{49} studied the women empowerment through self help groups. The study shows that the SHGs have created awareness about newer economic opportunities available to women and the ability needs to tap them. All the groups have taken up individual economic activities but group activities are very few.

Dahiya et al (2002)\textsuperscript{50} have described the socio-economic empowerment of women though SHGs in Solan District of Himachal Pradesh. They tried to understand the success and efficiency of micro finance interventions at three levels viz. i) outreach and financial sustainability of the programme, (ii) income or poverty impact on the users and (iii) development of financial market at the local level. The economic impact is measured in terms of increase in annual incremental income. Around 94.3 percent of SHGs recorded an increase in income. They have also pointed out that

\textsuperscript{49}Jaya S. Anand (2002). Self Help Groups in Empowering Women Case Study of selected SHGs and NHGs Published by Kerala Research Program on local level development, Centre FOR Development Studies. Thiruvananthapuram, Discussion paper.2002 no.38, P34-38.
various parameters are used to measure the maturity of the households like the homogeneity, feeling of relevance of group formation, awareness about objectives of groups, participation and frequency of meetings, regularity of savings, repayment of loans and group participation in financial transactions.

Lalitha and Nagarajan (2002)\textsuperscript{51}, in his book, presents the experiments of self-help groups in various districts promoted by non-government organization in the field of micro credit to women. It shows how far the strategic alliance and partnership between NGOs, SGHs and banks have resulted in success that can be replicated and multiplied. The volume also presents, vivid and penetrating analysis of factors, which promote or lender the growth of SGHs and empowerment of women through SGHs.

Rajkumar (2003)\textsuperscript{52} examine the SGSY in Karnal District. It was observed that the level of income increased of the SHG members with easy accessibility of the markets and enhancement of knowledge and skills. It was also observed that the scheme plays a vital role in generating social capital and mobilizing the persons for good cause.

Gaonkar (2003)\textsuperscript{53} studied the role of SHGs in empowerment of women in the state of Goa. Total 25 women SHGs promoted by National Co-operative Union of India from Bardez and Bicholom taluks were selected randomly. Data were collected through interviews with group leaders and other members of groups. The study revealed that the SHG were voluntarily formed by women. Whatever they could save every month, they mutually agreed to contribute to a common fund to be lent to the members for meeting their productive and emergent credit needs. These groups were linked to the banks once their activities were stabilized. It was concluded that SHGs had made a lasting impact on the lives of the women, particularly in the rural areas of Goa. Their quality of life has improved a lot. There is an increase in their income, savings and expenditure. There was an improvement in their standard of living and women had gained self-confidence. Women got an opportunity to improve their hidden talent after joining SHGs. They could speak freely in front of large groups of people and also they got recognition in the family and society. SHGs had also given women a greater role in household decision making. The study also revealed that with


improvements in women economic opportunities and their ability to take collective action, there had been a significant decline in gender based problems such as domestic violence, dowry, polygamy etc.

Sarangi (2003)\textsuperscript{54} studied the SHGs activities in Ganjam District of Orissa. His study shows that women led in many part of the country have achieved success in bringing the women to the main stream of decision-making. SHG is also a viable organized set-up to disburse micro credit to the rural women and encouraging them to enter into entrepreneurial activities and how to mobilize and manage thrift, appraise credit needs, maintain linkage with banks and enforce financial self-discipline.

Jain et al (2003)\textsuperscript{55} analyzed the impact of SHGs on socio economic status of their group members. The study was based on primary data collected from 250 SHG members and 250 non-members selected through random sampling method from 25 selected villages of five selected blocks in district Kanpur. The study showed that the SHGs had enhanced the status of women as participant, decision-maker and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. The study revealed that the impact of SHGs on socio-economic status of the women were found to be significant on education, housing facilities, exposure to mass media, external orientation, occupation, size of holdings and material possessions, only caste and type of family factors found to be non significant.

Chiranjeevulu (2003)\textsuperscript{56} conducted a study on self help group women in Warangal. The SHGs women started a chilli processing unit from the fund collected through SHGs. The study reported that women have exceptional energies to start their own enterprises, if right opportunities given. Women have developed abundant self confidence and self-esteem through SHG movement. Through SHGs, not only economic poverty but also social and gender issues can be tackled effectively.

Chatukulam (2003) study observed that SHGs in study area do not only provide a means of survival for poor women but also serve as nascent institutions for the building up of women specific social capital. The impact of SHGs movement in enabling women to arrest the increasing feminization of poverty is considerable. It enables them to acquire skills in conflict management and participation in forums like Gram Sabha. It is also true that some sections of the poorest of the poor find it difficult to participate actively in SHGs.

Rasure (2004) study reported that SHGs can be instrumental in empowering women as they provide easy access to funds for self employment to women. Study concluded that SHGs stimulate savings and help borrowers to come out of vicious circle of poverty.

Joy (2004) observed that SHGs have lead to an expansion in the economic spaces of members. However, the coverage of the poorest of-the-poor is low, while the coverage of non-poor is considerably high. The financial status of households and savings capacities has improved due to access to formal credit institutions. Access to credit has enabled majority of women to expand or strengthen their existing traditional activities and a smaller proportion of women have taken up new occupations. Wherever the activity is diversified to nonagricultural activities, it has enhanced the income of the households by reducing the dependency on risk-based agriculture. The extra income is spent on better nutrition for the children and on health care for the family. Kitchen gardens have enhanced the overall nutritional status of children and mothers. SHGs had an impact on poverty alleviation, empowerment, social inclusion and participation in the political process. However, gender poverty measured in terms of gender bias with respect to norms of eating, male preference in distribution of food and access to clothing has not declined significantly. But food security of member households improved after participation in

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groups. There are improvements in school enrolment, attendance, drainage facilities, toilet facilities and access to electricity and gas.

Nirmala, Bhat and Buvaneswari (2004)\(^6\) evaluated the impact of SHGs on poverty alleviation in Pondicherry. Study found that majority of respondents were engaged in traditional non-farming activities. The major benefit of SHGs was increased participation in social and organised action. The respondents also reported better access to credit facilities as well as to new skills and trainings. Members were also facing some problem relating to difficulty in getting raw material, labour and marketing access, delay in disposal of loans and competition from mechanized better quality product. The study suggests that members should be provided with institutional support, like training, marketing and information on available latest technology.

Azhakappan (2004)\(^6\) conducted a study on SHGs and entrepreneurial development in rural areas to assess the entrepreneurial role of women units namely SHGs to improve their economic and social status for the alleviation of rural poverty. The study showed that the SHGs had benefited the people especially women in every sphere of life in a village community. This enabled the women folk to help themselves through entrepreneurship, to raise their sense of self-work, and make them more eager to be productive member of the society. The study suggested that greater and continued Government support for the entrepreneurial activities was required to further improve the lives of women and community as a whole.

Manimaran (2004)\(^6\) examined the performance of SHGs in the economic and social empowerment of women in Bodinayaknaur districts of Tamil Nadu. The study selected five SHGs through random sampling. The findings revealed that SHGs have managed their economic activities in a better way. Women get empowerment as per their needs, interests and handled the constraints. Women also gained confidence with increased financial independence and security. Most of SHG members were found to

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attend group and gram sabha meetings regularly and has developed the ability to interact and communicate with each other. Some of them even learned to sign, read and write and could also do simple arithmetic calculations. Study highlighted that a kind revolution had taken place in rural areas of the district due to formation of many Self Help Groups. Government should provide additional assistance to resource-less poor women in starting many more SHGs in the rural areas of the country.

Basu (2004)\(^6\) reported that in micro-financing schemes women form self help groups, define their priorities as a collective and obtain access to credit and information for self-employed opportunities. Self-help groups are accepted as critical actors in helping women to achieve economic independence and stability. Micro credit substantially paves the way for women empowerment, self reliance, self-confidence and self-esteem.

Naryanaswarny, Manivel and Baskar (2005)\(^7\) assessed the extent of financial assistance provided to SGHs under the centrally sponsored SGSY scheme. They evaluate the functioning of the groups with specific reference to economic activities in a newly formed district in Tamil Nadu. The study found that the assistance under the scheme reached the intended beneficiaries. The role of NGO’s and federations was appreciable in forming and facilitating the groups in the saving and lending operations etc. It is suggested that efforts should be made to aestivate risk-bearing ability among the members of the groups and to make the working of SGHS effective.

Perumal (2005)\(^8\) study examined whether there is any change in income, expenditure and saving behavior of women after joining the SHGs and the role of SHGs in providing rural credit. The study reported that income and expenditure of the members increased after joining SHGs. SHGs members feel that instead of approaching banks as individuals, the group can easily approach the banks to get loan and they find that this is the easiest way to canvas loan from banks and other financial institutions.

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Reddy and Manak (2005)\textsuperscript{66} studied 400 selected self help groups in Andhra Pradesh. They concluded that self-help groups are promising and proving to be an effective method of poverty reduction. The formation of these groups, which share common-interest, consisting primarily of women has had a substantial impact on their lives. The impact on women empowerment and social security has been invariably an improvement. The status of women has generally improved as they have developed stronger confidence which has changed gender dynamics. Their role in the household has also changed. This helped in improvement in fertility rates, female literacy, participation in development programmes and economic independence. Women are able to fight for their rights and entitlements and have emerged as a force to be reckoned with. SHGs are becoming more than just financial intermediaries. They have emerged into a more political and social unit of society. However, the study felt that the penetration of microfinance to the poorest of the poor is still weak and needs a wider reach. Study has also identified some key weak areas in the movement, such as financial management, governance and human resources. It is reported that performance of self-help groups ranges from weak to average in quality.

Gaiha and Nandhi (2005 and 2007)\textsuperscript{67} made two attempts to study the impact of self-help groups on empowerment in Pune district of Maharashtra. They observed that though in terms of income earned by the members the performance was unsatisfactory, it was better in terms of other indicators of deprivation such as caste, landlessness and illiteracy. The noteworthy point is that the loans were used largely for health and education of children and for production-related expenses especially by the group members. Though it is difficult to ensure their sustainability. The rates of return on such investments were high. Savings mobilisation through self help groups was highly effective, especially in a context of vulnerability of rural households to a range of idiosyncratic and covariant risks, and ineffectiveness of informal social networks in protecting them against such risks. The self-help groups overall


contributed to empowerment of members for instance domestic violence were also reduced. The benefits of women empowerment are substantial and reinforce the case for microfinance through self help groups on both equity and efficiency considerations.

Kalpana (2005)\(^{68}\) pointed out that micro finance initiatives and programmes derived up the poor household from poverty. It provide financial protection and strengthen coping strategies in the event of crises. In order to scale up the successful interventions of SHGs programmes/initiatives in the rural area, there is a need to implement the SHGs effective across the length and breadth of the country.

Gupta and Gupta (2006)\(^{69}\) study observed that income of SHGs families increased after being part of SHGs. The members repaid old debts and started creating own assets. SHGs have not only improved the economic status of women but there is a significant improvement in their social status.

Moyle, Dollard and Biswas (2006)\(^{70}\) assessed the economic and personal empowerment of 100 SHGs women, aged between 16 and 65 years, from two villages namely, Delwara and Shishvi from Rajasthan. The study used qualitative approach to arrive at the conclusion. The study found that after joining SHGs, members achieved both economic and personal empowerment in terms of collective efficiency, proactive attitudes, self-esteem and self efficiency. In case of personal empowerment, 99% of women believed that SHGs members are always able to discuss problems that affect everyone and 91% of women believed that if a problem arises that people cannot solve by themselves, the group as a whole is able to solve it. Similar results were found in case of perceived capability of group members. Around 81 percent members show confidence that our group members can perform the tasks which are assigned to them. Around 85 percent believed that 'our SHG' has the ability to tackle any issue affecting the group. About 60 percent believed that 'as members of the group' we are able to tackle the most difficult situations because we are all committed to the some

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\(^{70}\) Moyle, Dollard and Biswas (2006). Impact and Sustainability of SHG Bank Linkage Programme, NCAER, New Delhi, pp.,10
collective goals. In terms of self-esteem, 91 percent and 71 percent of women strongly felt that they had good qualities and positive attitude towards themselves respectively.

Tesoriero (2006)\textsuperscript{71} evaluated the contribution of SHGs in gender development in Southern states. Study showed that women perceived the changes in their identity by working collectively. This resulted in influencing and changing the decisions at the village and panchyat level. They have also engaged themselves in community and social action programmes. The SHGs contribution was significant in gaining empowerment and participation in democratic processes. It is argued that this change is a significant contribution to broader transformations of oppressive structures.

Kadam (2006)\textsuperscript{72} assessed the contribution of SHGs in women empowerment in Satara District. The SHG members feel empowered in economic, social, political and legal aspects in the study area.

Pandit (2006)\textsuperscript{73} evaluated the impact of (SHGs on women empowerment in Orissa. Study observed that the performance of various women development programmes and schemes like Mahila Vikas Samabaya Nigam (MVSN), Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) were not much encouraging in the state. The study stated that some of the women SHGs were formed not by voluntary action but by the insistence of the Government officials to meet their allotted targets. The group members did not take much interest in the income generating activities and misused the credit provided to them. Government should follow result oriented policy rather than a target oriented policy so that credit may be delivered to the deserving programme participants.

Sahu (2006)\textsuperscript{74} studied the functioning of micro-enterprises/SHGs in rural area of Angul and Cuttak districts of Orissa. The study covered four types of enterprises run by SHGs through scientifically structured schedule. The analysis revealed that the SHGs organized in rural area of Orissa had created both physical and financial assets from their respective enterprises and also improved their socio-economic status during a short span of time. Study also stressed that SHGs were also facing various problems such as inadequate family and society support, political and bureaucratic interference, enterprise of bankers and Government officials choice, inadequate market support, loss of animals, delay in insurance claims, delay in release of bank credit etc.

Kumar (2006)\textsuperscript{75} study focused mainly on the scope and limitations of SHGs in improving the woman health and their empowerment in Ranchi. The findings revealed that the living standard of women particularly their health status has improved significantly through SHGs. The additional income generated through SHGs increasing the welfare of their families, improving food and health status and paying the school fees of their children. The SHGs provided better health to rural women in general because when money is in hands of women, they manage better diet for themselves and their families.

Serramula (2006)\textsuperscript{76} analyzed the public policy with special reference to Self Help Groups in district Anantapur of Karnataka. The objectives of the study were to examine the impact of SHGs on economic, social and political empowerment of rural and urban women before and after joining the group and then to assess the economic development of women as a whole. The data was collected from 450 women SHG members of three mandals namely Goranttr from Penu Konda Revenue division, Atamakur from Anantapur division and Kalyandurgam from dharmavaram division through stratified random sampling technique from March 2001 to November 2002. 150 women were selected from each mandal. The study found that respondents belonging to villages were fully engaged in SHG activities and had taken up various economic activities such as dairy, petty businesses and making soft toys etc.

compared to urban respondents. The study revealed that in all the mandals, the economic, social and political status in society improved through various income generating activities of SCs and OBCs respondents.

Vinayagamoorthy (2006)\textsuperscript{77} examined women empowerment through SHGs in three selected villages from the North Districts of Tamilnadu namely Ponneri from Vellore, Koodamalai from Thiruvannamalai and Paparpatti from Dharmapur district. Primary data were collected by employing structured interview schedule using random sampling covering 134 respondents. The results show that SHGs were working in democratic manner in all the villages. The upper limit of members in a group was restricted to twenty. Among them a member was selected as an animator and two members were selected as the representatives. The group members discussed about the group savings, rotation of sangha funds, bank loan, repayment of loan, social and community action programmes in group meeting. The study reported that create a common fund by the members through their regular savings, flexible working system and pool the resources in a democratic way and periodical meeting and the decision making through group meeting.

Sakunthalai and Ramakrishnan (2006)\textsuperscript{78} reported that SHGs women have shown extraordinary dynamism in organizing themselves in group activities relating to income generation; well bargaining power and improvement in the quality of life. Advantages of SHGs were also seen at both community and village level like the collective action for development, women begin to form similar group seeing the success of the other SHGs, family welfare through social awareness women, enhanced social status, economic independence, voicing and acting against social injustices, problem solving ability and increased consciousness.

Tracey et al (2006)\textsuperscript{79} studied the personal and economic empowerment of rural women through Self-Help Group participation in Rajasthan. Data was collected from 100 rural women from the Udaipur district. The women were imparted a skill

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development training in stitching, embroidery, patch work through a Sewa Mandir NGO working in Udaipur and Rajsamand districts of Rajasthan. The study was based on both the quantitative and qualitative data collected through questionnaires, informal interviews and discussions. The quantitative data found that SHGs women increased personal control over spending, enhanced social networks, reduced boredom, increased decision making power at home and enhanced independence. The inclusion of women in income-generating activities gave support to their personal and economic empowerment.

Singh et al (2006) conducted a study to determine the impact of micro-financing through self-help groups (SHGs) in Karnal District, Haryana. Data were gathered by administering a pre-tested questionnaire to 120 households in 40 SHGs in the district. The 20 non-Swaranjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (non-SGSY) and 20 SGSY members were selected. Results showed that the SGSY members increased their income from Rs. 19546 during 2002-03 to Rs. 27043 during the post-SHG period of 2004-05. The income of non-SGSY members (Rs. 35885) in post-SHG period was higher than non-members (Rs. 19424). Both the SGSY and non-SGSY members increased their expenses in milk and milk products during the post-SHG period. The SGSY members increased their expenses on food to 26.1 percent during post-SHG period. The expenses of non-SGSY members were Rs. 17009 higher than Rs. 12858 of non-members. Both the SGSY and non-SGSY members increased their non-food expenses during the post-SGSY period. The non-SGSY members spent Rs. 10830 higher than Rs. 8626 of SGSY members and Rs. 5969 of non-members. During the post-SHG period, SGSY members had 91 additional numbers of man days and non-SGSY members got 117 additional man days.

Das et al (2006) conducted a study to determine the technological impact of dairy Self Help Group (SHG) on the production performance of dairy animals. 61 respondents from Karnal district, Haryana, India, two respondents selected randomly from each of the 61 dairy SHG of the district, were interviewed in the study. It was observed that the factors which have high relationship with lactation milk yield were found to be land holding size, herd size, milk production, milk sale, income from dairying, annual gross income, extension contact and mass media exposure. The calving interval of dairy animals was found to be more dependent on other factors than the personal traits of the farmer.
of the respondents. It is concluded that increased mass media exposure and frequent contact with extension agencies can influence the members of dairy SHG to adopt the improved scientific practices which can increase the lactation milk yield and lactation length of the animals.

Kakade and Bhosale (2007)\textsuperscript{80} reported that SHGs are playing a multifaceted role in the economic growth of India along with reduction of poverty. The micro finance provided through this institutional arrangement has broken the barriers for accessing finance on reasonable terms. The study of Kolhapur district of SHGs reveals that SHGs have played a vital role in employment generation, income generation of the female workers below poverty line and in enhancing the status of women. The positive impact needs to be strengthened through the policy of concessional loans, entrepreneurial training and awareness programs in other areas. SHGs has helped in creating employment in non-formal sector, it also resulted in reduction in indebtedness, it eliminated the need to borrow at exploitative rates from money lenders. The status of women in economic decision-making increased substantially.

Abul (2007)\textsuperscript{81} examined the affects of SHGs on non-economic aspects of members life. Study tested the hypothesis whether the achievements or empowerment of the microcredit borrower remained limited only to the economic activities or did it reflect or influence the non-economic activities also. The study was based on the data from the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh. The results showed that the self help activity helped the members to reduce the fertility rate, an important achievement in a thickly populated country. The author also concluded that the Grameen Bank transformed its participants from a passive recipient of credit to a well responsive and active agent in economic and non economic aspects of life. This transformation sets up an encouraging context for the effective public policies for economic and social changes at a reduced transaction cost.

Gudaganavar and Gudaganavar (2008)\textsuperscript{82} analyzed the empowerment of rural women through SHG. The study highlighted the region wise progress of SHGs and employment of women through SHGs from 1992-93 to 2006-07. It was concluded that no development was possible without empowerment of women.

Swain (2009)\textsuperscript{83} used a quasi-experimental household sample data collected from five states in India between 2000-2003. The results strongly demonstrate that on average, there is a significant increase in the empowerment of women in the SHG members groups. However, there was no such significant change for the members of the control group. The result shows that the group of SHG participants shows clear evidence of a significant and higher empowerment, while allowing for the possibility that some members might have been more empowered than others.

Kumararaja (2009)\textsuperscript{84} analyzed the impact of SHGs on women in Mahalir Thittam of Tamil Nadu. The study observed that SHG women were involved in economic activities such as production and marketing of agarbathis, candle and soap, readymade garments, pickles, pappad, vathal, fur toys, bags, palm leaf products, ornaments, eatables, coir mat and other coir products, mattresses, chaples, leather goods etc. The SHG women monitor the normal and proper functioning of the ration shops, maintain vigil on brewing of illicit liquor and help the aged, deserted and widows to obtain loan. In addition to savings, SHGs are engaged in village cleanliness, repair to village approach, adult literacy campaign, family planning and child health, pulse polio campaign, backyard garden, health checkup camps, prohibition in the village, banning tobacco consumption and sales, AIDS awareness etc. The project has achieved 100 percent repayment in case of lending by banks and 95 percent in internal lending of Self-Help Groups. Repayment rates of direct borrowers have increased from 30 to 70 per cent. Banks disburse the credit to SHGs within seven days at their doorsteps. SHGs help in forming Village Development Council (VDC). These VDC members are involved in social and infrastructural development works in the village.

NCSW Report (2009)\(^{85}\) stated that Self-Help Groups have taken a movement shape of social and economical development for rural women. SHGs have arisen out of the perceived problems of women’s lack of access to resources at both the household and the village level. In the past 20 years, Self-Help Groups have become significant institutions for rural development in India. This has been particularly true in the case of poor women.

Banerjee (2009)\(^{86}\) study made an effort to estimate the impact of Self-Help Groups created under SGSY programme and has been observed that income generation through group activities has improved the average income of group members. But the inequality of distribution of income is high among the group members than that of the non group members. Further there has been a significant decline in the medical expenditure and school dropout rate in the families of group members than that of non group members.

Rao and Victor (2009)\(^{87}\) conducted a study on women empowerment through self Help Groups in rural area of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh with the objective to understand the working and performance of SHGs. Data was collected from 100 SHG members to assess the usefulness of the group in promoting women empowerment in rural areas. The study revealed that in spite of allocation of more funds, the proper implementation of SHGs scheme was lacking due to unawareness of group members about the schemes, lack of coordination and commitment among promoters of such programmes. The study suggested that there should be a proper coordination between the Government and the rural poor people especially women and more awareness camps should be organized for their real empowerment.

Gupta and Kumari (2009) focused on women empowerment through SHGs Darbhnaga district of Bihar. The study was based on secondary data collected during 2006-07. In the study area, SHGs were engaged in gainful employment generation activities and had formed a major chunk of society. Study had also observed that

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although there was no obvious discrimination on papers against women group member but still the rural poor women had been largely left outside the pool of development. Various policies, rogrammes, workshops and seminars had not changed their status and still they were getting less income and lower status. In addition, they were also facing various problems and difficulties in making groups and lending financial support from banks and financial institutions. Study also found that financial support had been provided by the DRDA, different banks and financial institutions to these sampled SHGs but it was not up to the mark. The study suggested that vocational training programmes for the members of SHGs should be conducted so that they can prove their individual thinking, efficiency and capabilities of decision making. Women members should be made aware of their constitutional and legal rights both in their work and in the social sphere.

Hussain and Zafar (2010)\textsuperscript{88} studied the rural women empowerment among the members of self-help groups in Puducherry. The study selected randomly 50 self-help groups from 5 selected villages of Puducherry. The level of the women empowerment is assessed on the basis of 5 point rating scale i.e. career consciousness, occupation related gender consciousness, social related gender consciousness and economic empowerment. The study had revealed the increasing empowerment of poor rural women through self-help groups. They had got high level of economic empowerment in terms of spending according to own discretion, enhancement in household expenditure, decision making, free from economic dependency, satisfaction of personal needs, increase in bargaining power, independent earning capacity, increase in capacity to manage household economic resources and changes in role and economic responsibility after joining SHGs.

Janagan (2010)\textsuperscript{89} study made an attempt to know the socio-economic conditions of rural women and to assess the level of participation of rural women in SHGs and to analyse the level of empowerment in Thodamuthur village of Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu. Total sample of 126 women members from selected Self-help Groups were taken. Interview schedule was used as tool for data collection. The four and five


\textsuperscript{89} Emmanuel Janagan, (2010). Empowerment of women through Self help Groups in India. Cauvery research journal, 4 (1 & 2), 95-102
point rating scale was used to measure the empowerment of social, legal, political, family and knowledge. The study revealed that the respondents who had high participation in Self-help Groups had relatively high social empowerment; low social empowerment is nil among them and moderate social empowerment was more or less similar as like as moderate participation in Self-help Groups. Among the respondents who had high participation had relatively high legal empowerment and low legal empowerment was relatively less among them and moderate legal empowerment was relatively high among the group of moderate Self-help Groups participators. It was also revealed that respondents who had relatively high participation in Self-help Groups were having more political empowerment. Among those who had high participation in Self-help Groups have relatively more high and moderate knowledge empowerment; low knowledge empowerment was relatively less among them.

Mishra (2010)\textsuperscript{90} examined empowerment of men and women through Self-Help Groups. The primary data were collected through questionnaire and interview of the members. The study covers 37 SHGs out of 41 SHGs of Jamalpur Block in Mirzapur District of Uttar Pradesh. The study mentioned the members before joining SHG have not been very clear about the economic empowerment. Only 12.98% women had been realising economic strength. But after joining SHGs, the members had improved their economic empowerment in terms of self-financing, economic choice, freedom to earn, freedom to consume, freedom to save, freedom to invest, freedom over property, develop family economic activities and risk reduction. The study revealed that after joining SHGs men and women had also been socially improved in terms of greater autonomy, in decision making, freedom of employment selection, improvement of social status, problem solving skills, ability to get support, ability to get defend, ability to negotiate and sense of self dignity. Self Help groups had provided a platform for the poor particularly women to become literate, develop communication skill and conflict resolution skills. The study suggested that SHG is necessary to empower or enable men and women to undertake initiatives to do certain things particularly economic activities and social upbringing.

Mehera, Chaudhary, Punjabi and Dangi (2010) made an attempt to analyse the role of self-help groups in empowerment of rural women. The study covered 80 Self-help Group members of four villages of Indore block of Indore district in the state of Madhya Pradesh. It was tried to explore income generated activities initiated by SHG members and associated problems. In their work they had used four components to assess the empowerment status i.e. influence over economic resources of the family, influence on women own development, influence over decision pertaining to general welfare of the family and influence over local political activities. The study revealed that financial position of majority of Self-help Groups members had improved to the considerable extent. The women in the four villages had developed confidence to a great level by becoming the member of Self-help Groups. Due to their membership in Self-help Groups rural women improved a lot in political activities. It was also revealed that majority (about 87.50%) respondents faced the problems excessive tension of dual responsibility in household and also in Self-help Groups.

Jain (2010) studied the nature and requirement of SHG for sustainable development as well as women empowerment in rural India. Study states that SHG is a sustainable tool of development for the weaker section of society, if all its stakeholders will be capable to pay desired attention towards their role and potential initiatives. This system inculcates the existence of self-sufficiency, self-reliant and self-respect value based elements in the development process.

Shiralashetti (2010) investigated the women empowerment through Self-Help Groups. The present study is based on the primary data collected from the 150 sample members of 15 SHGs from 10 villages of Bijapur district through questionnaires. The Self-Help Groups movement in India has been working in the right direction in empowering women and eradicating poverty in the rural and urban areas. The role of woman has also changed considerably due to changing socio-cultural environment.

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91 Jaya Mehera, Sandhaya Choudhary, N.K. Punjabi and K.L. Dangi, (2010). Role of Self help groups (SHGs) in empowerment of rural women in Indore Block of Madhya Pradesh. Journal of extension education, 17 (18), 118-120
Satpal, Phougat and Hooda (2010)\textsuperscript{94} stated that there is a lack of diversities in the Self-Help Groups activities in the State of Haryana. Highest amount of resource was spent on primary sector primarily on milk and cattle. Attention was little less in other areas such as handlooms, handicrafts and other activities in the State. The problem of marketing of the goods by Self-Help Groups is a big constraint in achieving the targets. The study reveals that there is need for proper attention to solve such type of problems under SGSY.

Parida and Sinha (2010)\textsuperscript{95} examined the performance and sustainability of three different types of SHGs viz., all-male, all-female and mixed SHGs. The analysis was based on data from a primary survey from six states of India namely Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Assam. The study observed that the female SHGs are performing better than other types of SHGs. Not only that the female SHGs performed better in terms of loan recovery but also the per capita savings of female SHGs was also much higher than other types of SHGs. The female SHGs did extremely well in financial management practices such as maintaining book accounts and passbooks and updating them regularly. The study also observed that the female SHGs were more sustainable. The factors that determined their sustainability were loan recovery, per capita savings of SHG members, linkage with SHG federations and formation and financing of SHGs by banks. All-female SHGs were sustainable because they were more focused and united, adhere to basic objectives of groups, utilize borrowed funds for different productive activities and are highly concerned about the wellbeing of their children and family members. Further, female SHG members took membership in the group as a means to educate themselves and confront social, political, and economic problems. On the other hand, the members of all-male SHGs have ego problems, work for their own interest, and do not follow the basic objectives and goals of group formation.


Arora and Meenu (2011)\textsuperscript{96} studied the role of microfinance in socio economic empowerment of women in the Jalandhar district of Punjab. The study reveals that microfinance effectively contributes to women empowerment. It also significantly contributes to the development of their families in terms of getting credit for housing repairs, education and marriage of their children and also for consumption purpose. The study found good saving habit among females. However, they found a number of obstacles in the way of financial inclusion of women such as the lack of awareness regarding micro financing services being provided by the banks. Most of the respondents were dissatisfied with services provided by the banks. Particularly issues like requirement of collaterals, procedural formalities, loan utilization checks and repayment terms were found to be inconvenient and difficult. Because of this, significant proportion of the rural women preferred informal sources of finance. Authors felt that there was a need of attitudinal change on the part of respondents and the banks shall help the respondents in this regard. According to the study banks should introduce some proactive strategies to create more awareness about the micro financing services available with the banks and encouraging the use of such services. The study also found that very negligible use of the SHGs services by the respondents. The study concluded that women should be encouraged to take up entrepreneurial activities by giving them proper guidance and developing their business skills. Women empowerment to a great extent depends upon the economic empowerment of women and microfinance can prove to be a very powerful instrument of women empowerment in the times to come.

Gaonkar (2011)\textsuperscript{97} studied economic, social and political empowerment of women through SHGs in Karnataka. The main objectives of the studies were to examine the saving and expenditure of members before and after joining the SHGs and also to assess the participation of SHG members in upliftment of their society. The study covered five villages of Ghadsi Mandal Panchayat in Karwartaluka of district Uttar Kaunata of Karnataka. 300 women members were selected, representing 10 members each from 30 SHGs with convenient random sample. The studies had revealed that the


economic status of SHG members was improved a lot. There was increase in their income, saving, expenditure, investment and thereby the improvement in the standard of living after joining the SHGs. It was also found that the SHG members had started to participate in the community development activities and got recognition both in the family and also in the society. The study concluded that self-help approach in Karnataka was an important way to help poor women to address their incapability in the journey towards their empowerment.

Ravi et al (2011)\textsuperscript{98} studied women SHGs through a sample survey and structured questionnaire were filled. The study revealed that the microfinance had given women an opportunity to become agents of change. The SHGs movement has made them more confident than ever, helping them to explore new possibilities in the generation of income leading to self-sustenance. It has also helped them to explore new horizons, new dreams and new hopes.

Andotra et al (2011)\textsuperscript{99} studied the impact of micro-finance initiatives on empowerment and inclusive growth in Jammu division of J&K state. The data are collected through primary survey through a random sample of 157 credit linked Self-Help Group beneficiaries. The result were analyzed using exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results show positive impact of SHGs in bringing them within the ambit of growth, steps needed are intensive penetration and publicity of SHG-bank linkage programme. Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and Co-operative Banks to act as Self-Help Promoting Institutions (SHIP), providing training for skill up gradation of group members, enhancing investment in agri-technology, rural infrastructure and encouraging indigenous innovations in various socio-economical and political institution.

Knowles (2011)\textsuperscript{100}, on the basis of the review of literature on self help groups, argued that the contribution of women in communities has enlarged through their

\textsuperscript{100} Gordon Knowles (2011). Collective action and the creation of social capital in Indian villages. www.rug.nl/gsg/Research/Conferences/EUmicrofinconf2011/Papers/5B.Knowles.format.doc.
group participation and enhanced empowerment. One of the significant implications that flow from group activity is that women enjoy a higher degree of respect and credibility in their own communities. This was resulted from the growth of trust and bonding through self help group facilitation and has seen an increased confidence in participation by women in the affairs of the community. Group activity was reflected in the new interest and involvement of women in civic budgets and panchayat elections. An enhanced level of social capital in the community is demonstrated by women who took control of their lives, becoming conscious of their own situation and position, setting their own agendas, gaining skills, building self confidence, solving problems and developing self reliance. The regular group meetings held in the villages focus on topics relevant to social issues concerning them and the community. Another positive achievement of group members and their families was escape from the clutches of moneylenders who charge exorbitant rate of interest. Women have realized the seriousness of high cost of credit. Women access to loans helped their husbands to start new businesses or improve already existing businesses. The savings influence of the group has also spread to adolescents who have commenced savings groups.

Singh, Kaushal and Gautam (2011) studied self help groups in Moradabad District of Uttar Pradesh. The study observed that caste had a negative but highly significant relationship with participation, task function, interpersonal trust and group cohesiveness. It has also a positive and significant relationship with style of influence. In other terms, participation, task function, interpersonal trust and group cohesiveness were low among the members of lower castes. The membership in groups and interaction in the capacity of group members had a positive and significant relationship with education, participation, maintenance function, interpersonal trust and group cohesiveness. The authors also found that economic, political and legal empowerment had a positive and significant relationship with education, family occupation, annual income, task function, maintenance function, interpersonal trust and group cohesiveness. The study concluded that a greater percentage of women were impacted positively by being members of SHGs.

enabled them to discover their inner strength, gain self confidence, social and economic empowerment and capacity building.

Sujatha (2011)\textsuperscript{102} made an attempt to analyse the role of SHGs in economic empowerment of women and social development issues addressed by Self-help Groups. The study was conducted in selected Self-help Groups, which were three years older, promoted and organised by five different facilitators in Coastal districts of Dakhina Kanaada and Udupi of Karnataka State in south India. Study reported that in most of the SHGs, the internal loan taken by the members was highly insufficient to set up or expand a reasonable income generating economic activity. Most women continued to earn low income. Women had faced disadvantages in terms of accessing information, getting the social power network and other resources they need to succeed in business and in life. The study argued that starting a new micro enterprise was difficult for them with only micro credit. The women had not got social and political empowerment by managing their group activities and saving and credit. The study revealed that women still were not decision makers within their family and in case of important decisions, male were the decision maker. Women were regarded as member of SHG and only economic agent to their family. The study shows that most of the members had taken their loan by the SHGs for consumption purpose. In most of the SHGs, the internal loan taken by the members was highly insufficient to set up a reasonable income generating activities.

Manonmani and Prabhakaran (2011)\textsuperscript{103} examined women empowerment through SHGs in Kovilangulam Panchayat, Usilamlampatti taluk of Madurai District. The objectives of the study were to study the income, expenditure and savings of the members before and after joining SHGs and to know the role of SHGs in providing rural credit. Total 80 respondents were selected from 15 SHGs by using simple random sampling. The sample size was 1/3 of the total members in the SHGs. This is purely a descriptive study. The study revealed that the women age group of 40-50 was actively participated in SHGs activities. Because these age groups members were

\textsuperscript{102} Sujatha, K.S. (2011). Economic empowerment of women and beyond SHG as an organizational possibility to find social development spaces. International journal of management research, 1 (5), 317-325

mostly committed in the various family responsibilities. Many women join SHGs for getting loan and promote their personal savings and to get social status. After joining the SHGs women earned more money and increased their income level Rs. 2000-3000. The Rs. 3000-4000 earning group was high. It was also revealed that the increased income not only enhanced the expenditure but also promoted the savings of the family. The study also revealed that members repaid their loan in time. Through the study they found that the women of this area met a big achievement in the area.

Manas and Shidagoudar (2011)\textsuperscript{104} analysed the women empowerment through Self-help Groups in rural areas. The study was conducted in 10 villages of Bidar taluk of Bidar district of Karnataka with an aim to know the socio-economic status of women in rural areas, to understand the role of the women empowerment through the Self-help Groups, to find out the real progress and administrative structure of the Self-help Groups formed by the women in rural areas and to know the role of the co-ordination of the Self-help Groups and NGOs in the rural areas. A field survey was conducted for the purpose and data were collected through an interview schedule. The researcher had interviewed 100 women from 10 Self-help Groups of rural areas. The study had revealed that the women borrowed loan from Self-help Groups for domestic and unproductive use. Majority of the rural women respondents agreed that the women should have work outside the family, so as to get respect and status. Majority of the rural women knew about the self employment schemes of government, but most of them had not got benefit from the scheme. The majority of women respondents did not get help from the village Panchayat and NGOs in solving their problems. The study suggests Panchayats and NGOs should look after the women empowerment activities in the villages, so as to provide equal status for the women in rural areas.

Sindhuja (2011)\textsuperscript{105} examined the economic empowerment of women through self-help groups in Chittor district of Andhra Pradesh and Palakkad district in Kerela. A sample size of 200 women beneficiaries from Chittor and 200 beneficiaries from Palakkad, total 400, were selected. Primary and secondary data were employed to

\textsuperscript{104} Gouri Manik Manas and Uday. B. Shidagoudar. (2011). Women empowerment through Self-help Groups in rural areas. International referred research journal, 3 (32), 11.

\textsuperscript{105} Sindhuja P. (2011). Economic empowerment of women through self-help groups. New Delhi: Discovery publishing house
collect data. The study revealed that in both states almost all women could increase their earning capacity and could improve their financial status after joining self-help groups.

Aruna and Jyothirmayi (2011) examined the role of microfinance in women empowerment. The study was undertaken in order to analyze the relationship between Self-help Group-bank linkage programme participation and women empowerment in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. The work was done on 300 sample respondents comprised of 150 female participants of SHGs who availed microfinance and another 150 female participants who were not availed microfinance loan. The findings of the study indicated that microfinance activities and self-help group participation had a positive impact on the income assets, occupation, savings, access to loans, bank connectivity, knowledge, self worthiness and decision level of the participants. The microfinance loan and its productive utilisation had found to be having a profound role on women empowerment.

Lyngdoh (2011) studied the empowerment of women in Meghalaya through micro finance strategy and self-help groups using secondary data. The study revealed that economic empowerment had been increased through increasing income and it led to social developmental outcomes like decision making ability, increased in self esteem and self confidence, improved mobility, access to various social amenities, increased political decision making, etc.

Dutta and Roy (2011) examined whether participation of women in Self-Help Groups increases empowerment in Karimganj district of Assam. The study examined the cases of 120 members of 40 SHGs of different Development Blocks of Karimganj. The sample was drawn using multistage purposive sampling. Out of seven Development Blocks four Development Blocks were selected purposively. The study

revealed that participation and involvement of women with SHGs had increased women's empowerment in a spectacular proportion and women could make a better position in the family.

Alam and Nizamuddin (2012)\textsuperscript{109} studied the role of microfinance and Self help Groups in women empowerment in Mewat district of Haryana. Main objectives of the study were to know the socio-economic profile of Self-help Group women and to analyse the reasons for joining Self-help Group. The study was also aimed to know the structure and performance of self-help group and to find the impact of Self-help Groups on women. The study used both primary and secondary data sources. To collect primary data, interview schedule was employed in all the five Blocks of Mewat. 16 numbers of women Self-help Groups were selected randomly from each Block. Total sample size was 480. The study revealed that the main reason for joining Self-help Group was not merely to get just credit. It was the part of empowerment processes. After joining the Self-help Group the women were economically and socially empowered. The Self-help Group is responsible for empowering women by the way of promoting self reliance, self-confident, self-dependent and educating them to realize their fundamental rights.

Minimol and Makesh (2012)\textsuperscript{110} studied the role of Self-help Groups in empowering rural women in Kerala covering three villages namely Kuthiathodu, Thuravoor South and Aroor of Chethala taluk of Alapuzha sub-division. The total number of Self-help Groups covered under the study was 18 and total number of members covered as respondents were 200. The objectives of the study were to identify the profile of SHGs members, level of personal, social, economic and financial empowerment achieved by the members of SHGs, to identify the nature and extent of group related and personal problems faced by the members of SHGs, to test the association between group characteristics and empowerment. The study attempted to know group characteristics under the aspects of mutual trust, cohesion, transparency, interaction, leadership, accountability, cooperation, equality, interdependence and satisfaction.
among members. The findings reveals that the characteristics existed at high level among nearly 60-70 percent of members of SHGs. Almost all the groups had very low levels of activities related to dispute resolution, social justice causes and legal initiatives. An important fact that the relevance and utility of microcredit facilities and bank linkage were grossly neglected simply because of low level of education of members. Members who were better educated were more realistic of the existence of microcredit and bank linkage facilities. Regarding the social empowerment of women, study revealed that rural women were generally found to be least participative in social programmes, awareness on rights and social problems was low. Regarding economic empowerment, the study found that the groups undertook commercial activities which could provide direct employment. On aspect of creating employment opportunities for the members or providing entrepreneurial skills, study revealed that the group members faced awfully badly. Very minimal number of women felt improvement in their employment opportunities.

Khobung (2012)\textsuperscript{111} studied the empowerment of tribal women through SHGs in tribal areas of Churachandpur district of Manipur. The study was based on 130 samples drawn from 20 women SHGs promoted by government and Non-Government Agencies and had been functioning for at least two years. Primary data were collected by using interview schedule. The study had revealed that one of the most important activities of Self-help Group was to be resource mobilization. Savings, economic activity, bank loan and capacity building were the four modes of resource mobilisation practice by the SHGs. Members of SHG took active part in contributing a certain amount of money for the purpose of saving and credit activity of SHG. The study had also shown that the empowerment process through SHG movement in Manipur is yet to make any notable impact on tribal women in all aspects of economic, social and political. Especially the movement has shown hardly any relation with political sphere.

\textsuperscript{111} Vanthangpui Khobung, (2012). Women empowerment and Self-help Group: The case of tribal women in the hill areas of Manipur. International journal of research and IT management, 2 (10), 112.
Batra (2012) analyzed the impact of microfinance on household welfare in terms of income, assets generation, expenditure on consumption and health and education. The study observed improvement in assets base among the members however many members had not purchased any productive items and loan amount from bank/MFI as well as group was also the main source of finance to acquire these assets. Members experienced improvement in food, health and education expenditure but again in many cases, the loan amount had been providing main assistance rather than income.

Batra (2012) studied the structure and functioning of SHGs which includes various aspects such as governance and general management, financial management and organizational and financial sustainability. The study covered 90 SHGs from the three sample districts in Haryana. The selected schemes were the Swaranjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Swayam Siddha and one community based organization in the southern part of Haryana named as Social Centre for Rural Initiatives and Advancement (SCRIA). The study identified various problems, such as irregularity in meetings, low level of skills and knowledge, absence of larger goals and lack of training among the group. The study suggested to promote literacy among members, monitoring, proper organization and management of groups, emphasis on social mobilization and sensitization and capacity building.

Pandey and Roberts (2012) made an attempt to study on identification of empowerment of rural women through Self-help Groups. The study had conducted in Gaalipura village of Chamarajnagar district of Karnataka. The study revealed that women were inclined to a greater amount of their earnings on family and domestic expenses, consequently an increase in women’s income had seen a greater effect on family. The study had shown that microcredit facility had enabled women to own tools and means of production to upgrade their skills and improve their business. Aided by microcredit women were running canteens, catering units, cooking for schools, tailoring etc. the study had also revealed that after joining SHGs women had

114 Jatin Pandey and Rini Roberts,(2012). A study on empowerment of rural women through self help groups. Journal of research in commerce & management, 1 (8), 1-10.
realized that they had an important role to play in family and confident about achieving their goals set for their families and make major decisions.

Sharma, Roy and Chakravorty (2012)\textsuperscript{115} study focused on the effects of SHG strategy on women economic activities and possible occupational change. The study also analysed its impact on asset creation and degree of participation of women in decision-making process in domestic issues and group activities. The study showed that after joining SHGs women experienced a great change in their attitudes and capacity. About 94.9 percent women had taken decisions on the domestic matters. Women took part in organizational activities and participated in group discussion. The SHGs has not only mobilized micro- finance and provided micro-credit to the needed members but also provide self-employment training, awareness programmes, promote the leadership qualities and give confidence to their members. The SHG activity empower women, provide adequate financial support, guidance to start small business, technical support which uplift their standard of living.

Swain and Wallentin (2012)\textsuperscript{116} studied the performance of self help groups in five Indian states covering 810 sample members. The authors evaluated the effect of economic and non economic factors on the empowerment of women. They found that economic factors have the greatest direct impact on empowering women. This confirms that programs such as SHGs, which focus on the income generation by women in low-income households, have the double advantage of leading to an improved economic situation of the respondent and being the most effective factor in empowering women. However, they add that greater autonomy and changes in social attitudes also lead to the empowerment of women, although the magnitude of their impact is, relatively, smaller than the economic factor. They further argued that participation in an economic activity, the opportunity to access credit and arrange crucial inputs play a significant role in empowering women. Greater confidence to meet the financial crisis and having independent savings is also a factor that contributes to empowerment. Thus, the provision of minimalist microfinance through


its economic impact remains the most important cause for promoting women empowerment of SHG members.

Suja (2012) found that SHG has enabled women to gain greater control over resources like material possession, intellectual resources like knowledge, information, ideas and decision making in home, community, society and nation. The SHGs across states have paved attention on skill improvement, facilitating invention, gaining access to credit from financial institutions for micro enterprises and projects, inculcating of frugality, and supervision of credit for women from economically weaker sections society.

Batra (2013) studied the impact of microfinance on vulnerability and empowerment of women with regard to social and economic security in the rural areas of Haryana. The objectives of the study were to know the impact of microfinance access on control over use of loan amount, earned income and assets and household decision making; to study the relationship between women accessing microfinance and their involvement in village level activities. The study was based on primary data through investigation, interviews and focused group discussions. The selected NGO was social Centre for Rural Initiatives and Advancement working in the southern part of Haryana. After selection of blocks the list of villages were selected and high level of mature SHGs (total 80) were selected through purposive and random sampling from each selected villages. The study found positive impact of microfinance in reducing vulnerability. It was also revealed that on control over use of loan or income earned and decision making, majority of women claimed joint control and on the issue of ownership of assets, majority of women registered less improvement. Women's participation at village level activities was found satisfactory. The study also recommended that community based microfinance interventions could increase the status of women.

Debnath and Shil (2013)\textsuperscript{119} studied the women empowerment through microfinance in tribal society of Gobardhana Block in Barpeta district of Assam. The study used both primary and secondary data. A random and judgement sampling method were followed to select the sample. 5 SHGs from each MFI viz Bandhana, RGVN and Asomi had been selected and 10 percent members from of selected SHGs and individual loaned members, total 122 numbers of sample, were selected. The study revealed that the types of economic activities were weaving, farming like piggery, dairy, fishery, goatary, poultry, making plates, biscuit bakery etc. It was found that weaving and farming activities were stand as main source of income of tribal women in that particular block. The study considered that though income and saving amounts were small, but it is a movement towards economic empowerment of the tribal women.

Murugupandian and Selavarani (2013)\textsuperscript{120} had examined the impact of SHGs on empowerment of women in Naappatinam district of Tamil Nadu. The study made an attempt to obtain the changes in the savings and borrowing pattern of beneficiaries and to analyse the changes in the annual income of the beneficiaries after getting benefited by the SHGs program. Study also tried to analyse the improvement in the standard of living of SHGs beneficiaries. The study revealed that after joining the SHG the women participation level in decision making process increased within family. They were aware of the various central governmental programmes but the level of awareness was less. The study showed that the women respondents received economic benefits of savings and credit facilities, access to credit for production and marketing and use of credit for undertaking income generating activities.

Anusman Sahoo (2013)\textsuperscript{121} analysed the impact of SHGs on women empowerment in Cuttack district of Orissa. The objectives of the study were to analyse women empowerment through SHGs, economic gains derived by the members after joining

\textsuperscript{121} Anusman Sahoo (2013). Self help group and women empowerment: A study on some selected Self help groups. International journal of business and management invention, 2 (9), 54-61
the SHG, the social benefits derived by the members and the operating system of SHGs for the mobilisation of savings, delivery of credit to the needy, repayment of loans and in building up of opinion of SHG members regarding increase in the power of decision making. The sample size of the study was 150 women members of 15 SHG from 10 villages of Cuttack district of Orissa. The findings revealed that monthly income, savings and expenditure of majority of sample respondents had increased after joining SHG. Women's power had increased in taking decisions after joining SHGs both inside and outside their family.

Reji (2013)\textsuperscript{122} had examined the economic empowerment of women through self help groups. The study was conducted in Ernakulam and Idukki district of Kerela. The study was analytical and descriptive in nature which was based on both primary and secondary data source. Primary data were collected from 100 selected SHGs and 200 randomly selected women members of selected SHGs. Study found that the life of women was improved through SHG. It was also revealed that income of the SHG members after joining SHG was higher than the income before joining SHGs in both districts. The study had shown that SHG is a medium for promoting the habit of saving among the women and to enhance the quality of status of women as participant, decision maker and beneficiaries in the democratic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life.

Singh (2013)\textsuperscript{123} studied the effect of self-help group in economic empowerment of rural women in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. The objectives of the study were to know the pre and post SHGs status of SHGs members and to evaluate the impact of SHGs in empowering women. Stratified random sampling method had been used for the selection of 150 beneficiaries from the SHGs of Mandi district. The study revealed that 32 percent of respondents had no occupation in pre-SHG stage, only 8 percent of the respondents were without occupation in post-SHG. The study revealed that in post-SHG stage women were engaged in other income generating activities and their income level had increased significantly after joining SHG. The study observed that through SHGs women became able to contribute towards their family income. SHG

\textsuperscript{122} Reji, (2013). Economic empowerment of women through self-help groups in Kerala. International journal of marketing, financial services & management, 2 (3), 97-113

\textsuperscript{123} Yoginder Singh. 2013. Effect of Self-help group in economic empowerment of rural women in Himachal Pradesh. Journal of Indian research. 1 (3), 54-61
helped to upgrade their skills, to understand banking operation and to improve communication skill. After joining SHG they became able to take decision in community, village and household activities. The study concluded that SHGs had a power to create a socio economic revolution in the rural areas.

Rajasekaran and Sindhu (2013) reported that women entrepreneur under SHGs has good work force, under the dynamic setting of business. If women entrepreneur is given a proper guidance and training to enhance the profitability of the enterprises the future will be bright and prosperous. As, self-employment is better suited to women. Over the past few decades the women has been breaking traditional role of a mother or a house wife. SHGs can contribute in this in a big way.

In addition to the literature of Indian context, the review from other neighboring countries also reveals a positive impact of SHGs on women empowerment. For instance, Lu and Hasan (2011) conducted a study on the performance of members of self help groups in Monirampur sub-district of Jessore district in Bangladesh. Study concluded that borrowers of microcredit programs are better off in terms of food consumption and household income generation. Their sample shows that the programme enhanced the income and social status of the members of self-help groups. The NGOs played a commendable role in popularizing and promoting the programme. NGOs also motivated the members to invest the money in productive activity, instead of using the loan on some other non-productive activity. They also guided the members in the selection and operation of the selected activity. However NGOs should show more concern in generating more interest in borrowers to invest the money in profit earning business areas and take up the responsibility of training the members with more seriousness. They have recommended that the NGOs should consider some important points such as a repayment system, interest rate and proper training program to generate borrowers household income.

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Functioning, Bank Linkages and Performance of SHGs

Puhazhendi (1995)\textsuperscript{126} studied 19 SHGs and 5 bank branches in the southern states of India. The study commented that the intermediation of SHGs virtually eliminated the time spent by bank personnel on identification of borrowers, documentation, follow up and loan recoveries. There is a effect in 40 percent reduction in transaction costs of banks as compared to direct lending. The default risk was estimated to be negligible through SHGs.

Panda and Mishra (1996)\textsuperscript{127} made a comprehensive study of SHGs linked in the state of Orissa. The analysis shows that volume of credit flow during the five years in the state prior to implementation of SHGs linkage programme in 1992 remained static. The percentage of loan recovery under SHGs was 88 per cent compared to 36 percent under IRDP. The linkage of SHGs with banks has helped the economically depressed sections of the rural poor especially the tribal women.

Lakshaman (2000)\textsuperscript{128} conducted a study on working of self-help Group in Tamil Nadu. It is reported that there was transparency in administration. The group has obtained Rs.25000 as floating fund from Government of Tamil Nadu and Canara Bank. The members are engaged in making of mats, which are of higher quality. The study reveals that SHGs really a boon in the rural areas, which gives financial autonomy to rural women and makes them economically independent.

Manimekalai and Rajeswari (2000)\textsuperscript{129} conducted a study to find out the socio-economic conditions of SHGs women in rural micro-enterprises. The analysis reveals that majority women (66%) belong to petty business units and remaining are distributed among processing, production and service units. Nearly 73 percent had only primary education. Nearly 53% of women were from economically and socially weaker sections which have taken up entrepreneurial activities. The mean

\textsuperscript{127} Shashidara B.M. (2002). A critical study of the working of self help groups (SHGs) in the rural credit system in Karnataka, Ph.D. thesis, University of Mysore, Mysore, pp. 44.
\textsuperscript{129} Shashidara B.M. (2002). A critical study of the working of self help groups (SHGs) in the rural credit system in Karnataka, Ph.D. thesis, University of Mysore, Mysore, pp. 64.
performance of the sample entrepreneurs in terms of income, investment and borrowing indicates relatively better performance over the period. The study also reveals that NGO has provided training to women. The members have learnt through participatory rural appraisal approach to improve their standard of living, takes decisions concerning the community and hence to this extent, the SHG had contributed to women empowerment.

Puhazdendhi and Satyasai (2000)\textsuperscript{130} conducted a first study to assess the impact of NABARD on SHG-Bank Linkage programme. The study assessed the impact of microfinance on social-economic conditions of 560 household members from 223 SHGs located in 11 states of India. SHGs that had completed a minimum of one year of bank linkage as on March 31, 1999 were covered. The result suggests that out of the total sample, 84 percent were belonged to economically weaker sections, 32 percent from agricultural labourers, 29 percent small farmers and 23 percent marginal farmers. Around 24 percent of household members of SHGs were illiterate and 26 percent could only sign their names. About 21 percent had primary education, 23 percent had secondary education and rest had higher secondary education. The study found homogeneity in terms of group members living in the same village or having uniform socio-economic status. Homogeneity in standard living of SHGs members. About 65 percent of groups recorded more than 90 percent attendance during group meetings. Frequency of monthly meetings was highest (54%), followed by weekly (23%), while about 8 percent of groups did not have regular meetings at all. On the question, whether lifestyle have changed after getting into the SHGs, it is found that people who come together to form SHG became better off in social and economic terms.

Dhameja et al (2000)\textsuperscript{131} studied the general profile of women entrepreneurs, the extent of fulfillment of expectations of women entrepreneurs with regards to the various supporting agencies and attitude towards the supporting agencies. They found that for venturing and becoming entrepreneurship the age between 26-35 is very appropriate. Though the experience is not a necessary pre-requisite for venturing into

\textsuperscript{130} Puhazdendhi and Satyasai (2000). NABARD, impact and sustainability of SHG Bank Linkage programme, july-2008, NCAER, New Delhi, pp.3
the business. Women entrepreneurs are found to be ill informed about the facilities given by supporting agencies.

Ramkrishana (2000)\textsuperscript{132} assessed the role of SHGs in meeting the credit needs of rural poor in Andhra Pradesh. The study reported that as compared to IRDP beneficiaries, those covered under SHGs are relatively better in respect of social empowerment and economic progress. Access to institutional credit has been higher for SHGs beneficiaries compared to IRDP beneficiaries. In order to improve the effectiveness, the linkages of the SHGs with banks is warranted.

Gupta and Shrivastava (2001)\textsuperscript{133} highlighted the working of self-help groups in Madhaya Pradesh. The study reported that SHGs members meet weekly or fortnightly. The members save regularly and a common fund created from pooled savings. The members were from homogeneous socio-economic background. The SHGs functions on democratic lines. There was no outside interference in the working of SHGs.

Mishra, Verma and Singh (2001)\textsuperscript{134} examined the functions of SHGs in Uttar Pradesh and impact on income generation and employment. Study reported that loans were utilized for running small trades. The SHGs have helped to increase the income. Repayment performance was reported to be good. However, SHGs face some major problems relating to lack of training, credit and marketing facilities, entrepreneurship, social evils, and high rate of interest.

Gaonkar (2001)\textsuperscript{135} evaluated the impact of SHGs in Goa. The study reported that individual loans are mostly used for productive purposes. The rate of loan recovery reported to be 100 percent. Discussion in the group largely been free and frank, membership, minute, savings and loan record maintained properly. SHGs impacts

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found to be significant in reducing poverty and unemployment and are effective for economic development and social charges.

Singh (2001)\textsuperscript{136} evaluated the performance of SHGs in rural Haryana. Study found that loan recovery was very low about 10 percent in all the seven SHGs reported in the study. Members got the finance simply be producing an affidavit and security of two members. SHGs generally provided loan to members for purchasing animals, start small business, covering marriage expenses, for meeting education expenses and other social obligations. SHGs helped the members to free them from the clutches of the moneylenders.

Kumaran (2001)\textsuperscript{137} studied the features of SHGs and their role in socio-economic development of poor Indian. Study found that SHGs sustain with limited resources generated by their members which are not enough to meet their needs. Banking rules and regulations have been streamlined to have better access of institutional credit to the poor. SHGs suffers the most as many of their members are illiterate and lack of dynamic leadership. Only SHGs having backing of strong promoting institutions are able to link them with banks.

Kropp and Suran (2002)\textsuperscript{138} studied the performance of SHGs and role of NABARD in promoting microfinance in India. Study found that financial outreach made a significant impact on the economic, social and political life of the poor. The programme of microfinance in term of linking SHGs with banks holds a critical role in targeting poverty reduction and empowering women socially, politically and economically. It is reported that a survey of SHGs undertaken by NABARD as case studies of 46 SHGs spread over 11 states. It shows that out of the total SHGs, 17 had savings collection and credit provision as a major activity. Another 13 were engaged in farming activities, five were into social forestry and afforestation, eight engaged in farm activities and three were occupied in diverse occupation. It is easier to form women groups by providing them necessary health care and other facilities and gradually involving them into other activities.

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\textsuperscript{138} Kropp and Suran (2002). NABARD, impact and sustainability of SHG Bank Linkage programme, july-2008, NCAER, New Delhi, pp.2
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Kabeer (2005) suggested some ways to strengthen the micro finance institutions. The success of MFI in building up the organization capacity of poor women provides the basis for their social mobilization that many other development interventions have not been able to achieve.

Katti (2005) observed that growth of SHGs formation is satisfactory in Kolhapur district. However, the bank has still much potential for linkage with SHGs and improving the women conditions.

Kakade and Patil (2005) examined the SHG-Bank Linkage. Study shows that linkage programme has resulted in one of the most pioneering acts in target group oriented rural banking in Asia. The linkage model evolved various models based on magnitude of finance provided by banks SHG. The magnitude of finance provided by banks to SHGs ranges from 16 percent to 75 percent financial assistance. NABARD provided support for linkage programme in terms of financial support and support for capacity building and group building. Other benefits were reported to be improvement in adult literacy, increase in school enrolment, better health, family planning, support for government programmes, and a decline in adherence to the extremist movement. There were also improvement in awareness due to participation.

Ramakrishna (2006) used secondary data and NABARD survey information. The study reported that 61 percent of total number found active SHG members. Commercial banks had 61 percent, RRB had 30 percent and cooperative banks had very small market share of 9 percent in the SHG Bank- linkage programme. The study has defined savings outreach in terms of opening of savings account and amount of money deposited by SHGs in their savings account. The share of SHG's loan in overall loan and advances was the case of commercial banks, RRBs and cooperative banks. The time required for a bank to sanction a loan was found to relatively fast,

142 Ramakrishna(2006). NABARD, impact and sustainability of SHG Bank Linkage programme, July-2008, NCAER, New Delhi, pp.6-7
with an average of only 11 days for the first loan and nine days for subsequent loans. Commercial banks has an on time recovery of more than 90 percent, which compares favorably with the lower recovery rates for their normal lending activities.

Thankom, Imai and Sinha (2006)\textsuperscript{143} analyzed the effect of micro finance institutions including self-help groups on poverty of households. The results are drawn from a national level cross-sectional household data in India for the year 2001. The study proved that the effects are positive and micro finance institutions played an important role in poverty reduction. The results even turned some interesting when collected data from rural and urban households was separated and studied. The results showed that households from rural areas are taking loans from MFIs for productive purposes and in urban areas, significant impact were observed in reducing poverty.

Nayak (2007)\textsuperscript{144} analyzed empowerment of the poor through SHG and micro finance in Kalahandi district. The study found that 89194 families of Kalahandi district benefited from SHGs and bank linkage program and suggested the strengthening of co-operative sector to empower the poor.

Shiralashetti and Hugar (2008)\textsuperscript{145} reviewed the progress of SHGs and their linkage to bank. The objectives of the study are to examine the progress of SHGs and bank linkage in India with a reference to Karnataka. The study is based on the secondary data collected from annual reports of the NABARD. The study includes district wise and bank wise linkage of SHGs in Karnataka State. Study concluded that SHG movement is a powerful tool for alleviating the poverty of the people.

Khare (2009)\textsuperscript{146} pointed out that despite the success of micro-finance institutions, only about 2 percent of the world, approximately 500 million, small entrepreneurs are estimated to have access to financial services. And a large section of the people is still

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outside the ambit of formal banking system. Although the propagator of micro-
finance see credit as a major strategy for women empowerment, but to improve the
micro-finance system some of the vigorous steps had to be taken like easy
accessibility to credit, cheap and timely credit, reduction in migration, greater
awareness and better cohesion among SHGs members. Such efforts will not only
strengthen faith in group activities but also help women to gain confidence.

Ramanathan (2011)\textsuperscript{147} examined the socio-economic impact of SHGs-Bank Linkage
on the SHG members of Aghai, Gorhe, Dahanu and Jawahar villages of Thane
District of Maharastra. The study was conducted during the period of 2004 to 2009.
The main objective of the study was to know whether formation of Self-Help Groups
and linking them with banks had beneficial impact on both economic and social life of
the SHG members i.e. change in level of per capita income, employment and social
conditions. To examine the objective, primary data were collected from the State
Bank of India’s branches at the four proposed villages. The collection of data was
done through structural questionnaire and personal interview with SHGs members and
also with the people outside the groups like Panchayat Samiti and SBI branch
officials. One SHG was taken for study from each State Bank of India branches at the
four selected villages of Thane District. The study had shown that women as a group
were consistently better in promptness reliability of repayment. Targeting women in
this mainstream programmes had been a very effective method of ensuring that the
benefit of increased income accrue to the general welfare of the family and
particularly to the children. The study also revealed that SHG-Bank Linkage were a
bench mark in women’s empowerment and socio-economic development of women at
village level.

Kollusu (2011)\textsuperscript{148} conducted a study on rural women empowerment through self-
help groups and Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs). The study pointed out that MFIs
were playing an active role in the rural regions of Andhra Pradesh where the rural
banks do not exist, and lending credit to the rural poor SHGs without any delay with

Southern economist, 49 (21), 13-16.
\textsuperscript{148} Kollusu, N. (2011). Rural Women Empowerment through Self Help Groups and Microfinance
Institutions: Do they really led to economic development of Poor Women.Proc. Ninth Biennial
Conference on Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India, Gandhinagar,
Gujrat, India.
simple procedures. The SHGs movement has brought a radical change in the position of rural women from a daily wage earner to an entrepreneur. Study also deliberated that MFIs were also pushing women to more vulnerable conditions due to high interest rates and pressure of repayment. Some of the SHGs women in rural Andhra Pradesh were committing suicides and moving to towns due to their inability to repay the borrowed money from the MFIs. The study suggested that the SHGs should establish an effective linkage with rural banks instead of MFIs so that they can become one of the vehicles of development by creating various entrepreneurial activities in the rural areas of the state.

Sadyojathappa (2012)\textsuperscript{149} reported that through SHG-bank linkage program, the Reserve Bank of India and NABARD have tried to promote relationship banking. That is, improving the existing relationship between the poor and the bankers with the social intermediation of the NGOs. The SHG-bank linkage program in India is rapidly expanding its outreach under the pioneering initiative of NABARD, the monitoring and supervision of RBI, and the promotional policies of the government of India. At the grass root level the program is being implemented by the commercial banks, cooperatives, and regional rural banks, with government agencies.

Ansari (2013)\textsuperscript{150} reported that SHG-Bank linkage programme has emerged as the biggest micro-finance programme in India enabling about 70 million poor households to gain access to micro-finance facilities from the formal banking system. The commercial banks are making sincere efforts to increasingly involve themselves directly with the local rural poor people in their socio-economic development. Recovery rate under SHG model is 94 percent which indicates that poor people are ready to use credit facilities from institutional sources at market rate of interest. The NPAs of SHGs was 1.36 percent till March 2007 which was much lower than the NPAs of 5 percent of all scheduled commercial banks, indicating SHG-Bank Linkage programme is economically viable and sustainable.

\textsuperscript{149}International journal of social sciences online available at indianresearchjournals.com & interdisciplinary research vol.1 no. 6, june 2012, issn 2277 3630
CONCLUSION

Since independence, several approaches concerning liberty, development and empowerment of women have been prevailing in India. In recent times, empowerment of women through self-help groups is taken as most effective strategy to abolish gender inequality in the society. Though self-help approach is implemented to empower the women in various multi-dimensional aspects like the health, education and employment of women. The brief review of literatures discussed in the chapter provides an insight into both positive and negative aspects of the SHG programme. Several studies confirm that the empowerment of women is the primary attempt of the formulation of SHGs. The consensus of these studies is that women are oppressed in many aspects and they need to be empowered in all aspects of life. It is reported that a nation cannot make remarkable progress in any field of life, until women are being exploited and discriminated. The studies reveal that the growth of Self-Help Groups is an evidence of the fact that women are coming out of their shells and are using their potentialities and talents for individual and societal benefits. Some of the studies have concluded that SHG programmes have succeeded in improving the status of women in all aspects. Studies also indicated that the Self Help Group concept has a significant positive impact in increasing employment opportunities and reducing poverty.

The studies related to the social impact of SHGs reveal that the participants of SHGs enjoy higher standard of living as compared to the non-participants. Studies also confirm that SHG programmes have made women in attaining greater levels of self confidence, psychological empowerment, development of leadership qualities, enhanced participation in domestic, community as well as in the society, political awareness etc.

The studies related to the economic impact of SHGs reveal that there is a perceptible and wholesome change in the living standards of SHG members in terms of ownership of assets, borrowing capacities, employment opportunities, income generating activities, increased income levels and savings.

As we are aware, in India, the caste system creates a hierarchy in society and shapes the informal institutions. The Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) were given special protection by the Indian Constitution, due to their social
disadvantage. It is reported that women belongs to these categories faces double barriers to empowerment. Some studies therefore analyzed impact of Self Help Group on dalit and tribal women and poorest of the poor women. The SHGs in connection with micro-finance institutions are playing an important role for the improvement of socio-economic conditions of these poor and disadvantage group women.

In sum up, the existing literature review shows that Self-help Groups are working as a tool which accelerates social as well as economic empowerment of women in male dominated society. The studies have revealed that through microcredit Self-help Groups model linking with banks help the rural poor, especially women, to generate income generating activities and have realized them their existence in society.

The literature reviews reveal that there is definitely a need to strengthen the existing working pattern of SHGs and lending norms of SHGs for members. It has been observed that SHGs play a predominant role in poverty alleviation and self-employment generation. Hence there is a greater need to associate the SHGs with commercial/RRBs. The studies have specifically thrown light on certain specific unexplored areas, which need great importance and attention. The present study tries to explore some of them in Haryana context.