PREFACE

Self Help Groups are gaining popularity in rural and urban areas. The SHGs started playing an important role in the rural development. The World Bank Report (1991) has observed “Women are central to success of poverty alleviation effort in the short and medium as in the long run”. SHGs not only provide the member with an opportunity to carry out economic activities but also discuss and analyse their social and economic situation to arrive at the root causes of their problems and strive to find out the solution. SHG is the basic “for action and change”. It is important to promote SHG for the poor in a systematic fashion. Looking into it conceptually, self help groups emerged as an institution which is small but a powerful agent. It acts as a social institution at the grass root level.

Manipur, a small land locked state belongs to the North Eastern Region of India. There is no industries, private companies or public sectors companies worth mentioning in the state of Manipur. Traditionally women are physically strong and carryout rigorous hard work in agricultural sectors. At the same time, they have acquired a special skill of traditional handloom, weaving, shawl making, knitting etc. They want to be economically independent and contribute in bringing the state out of economic crisis. Self Help Groups are becoming a significant
market force in Manipur due to its socio-economic factors. SHG was started in 1998-99 in Manipur with low institutional response. Although efforts were made by NGO and other bodies since 1990’s, they couldn’t achieve momentum as in the case of other state. The programme started fairly late in Manipur. In 2001, the number of SHGs in Manipur were 122 but it has increased dramatically to 571 in 2004-2005. The number has also increased to 2338 by the end of 2006-2007. Now, the number of SHGs has increased to 7229 in 2008-2009. In fact, if we could act on time, the capital and human base of the SHGs operating in Manipur could have been strengthened much more than what we see today.

Empowering women through entrepreneurship is essential for achieving the goals of sustainable development. Present day women started taking full participation in decision making processes in all walks of life. The only means to remove poverty from our society is cooperation and understanding among us. The status of women in our society is directly or indirectly influenced on the growth and development of women entrepreneurship.

Economy never sleeps. Gainful self employment is one route in getting themselves free from the crushing incidence of poverty and deprivation. The Self Help Group is potential instrument for self employment. It can now claim as a meaningful position in the policy framework for future planning and development of Manipur. These tiny
industries encourage self-confidence, social harmony, economic independent etc. specially for rural and urban backward women of Manipur. Women entrepreneur and labourer is a major thrust in the present economic scenario of Manipur. In the present study, an attempt has been made to study the various means for solving unemployment problem and tapping locally available resources through fostering entrepreneurship in SHG in Manipur.

The present thesis is divided into six chapters. In the first chapter introduction of the topic, concept of entrepreneurship, Self Help Groups, entrepreneurship and women development, objectives of the study and research methodology have been discussed. Reviews of related literature has been done in the second chapter. The role of Self Help Group promoting institutions has been discussed in the third chapter of the thesis. In the fourth chapter, the various entrepreneurial activities undertaken by sample SHGs have been elaborated. The analysis of data collected and the result found by using statistical tools and technique have been mentioned in the fifth chapter and the findings, suggestions and conclusions of the whole study have been presented in the sixth chapter which is also the last chapter.

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