



AN ANALYSIS OF FINANCIAL STATUS OF TEA GARDEN WOMEN THROUGH SELF HELP GROUP OF SIVASAGAR DISTRICT IN ASSAM

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ABSTRACT:

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has remarked that when women move forward, the family moves, the village moves and then ultimately the Nation moves forward. It is a very significant quotation for development and encouragement of women Entrepreneurship. Nobody can deny the contribution of women to the growth and development of the nation. Today women play important role in various fields like medical, engineering, business, science and technology, aerospace, military force, sport, agriculture, farming, industrialist, culture, career counselling, teaching and interior designing, media and journalism etc. India will not progress as a better nation without the support of women who form half of the population. Now the time has come to promote entrepreneurship among women for economic development and empowerment. As a result, it is regarded as one of the most significant issues to investigate the socio economic status of members of Self Help Groups. This paper has primarily focused on income and saving pattern of tea garden women who are SHG members. The prime objective of this paper is to analyse the entrepreneurial activities and financial status of the tea tribe's women of Sivasagar district. The research paper will also discuss the nature of activities of the members and government support and motivation.

Key Words: Women, Entrepreneurship, Economic Condition, Income, Saving

INTRODUCTION:

In a recent trend, entrepreneurship is regarded as a critical aspect for the growth and sustainability of the economy of developing-countries. In India, women are mainly considered as homemakers, with only a few running tiny businesses. Women are now participating in a variety of fields and playing important roles in sectors like medical, engineering, business, science and technology, aerospace, military forces, sports, agriculture, farming, industries, culture, career counselling, teaching, interior design, media and journalism, and so on. As a result, women have been successful in overcoming their confinement inside the confines of their homes by engaging in a variety of professions and services. Women entrepreneurs have proven to be equal to their male counterparts in terms of business expertise, and they are developing as smart and dynamic entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the country's institutional network including government agencies, banks, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has come forward to empower women through the promotion of women entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial awareness among them. Such opportunities and government initiatives have encouraged tea garden women to participate in self-help groups and generate additional income for a better standard of living.

IMPORTANCE OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP:

The advancement of the nation's economy and standard of living is significantly influenced by entrepreneurship. Members of self-help organizations are able to change their financial status and contribute to the economic growth of their communities, states and the nation as business owners and entrepreneurs. They significantly contribute to the nation's economic development by the following ways:

1. **WEALTH CREATION:** Through the formation of SHGs and the establishment of the business enterprises, the entrepreneurs invest their own resources and obtain loan from banks to operate their businesses and achieve their pre-determined goal. Because of this, SHG members succeed and their businesses expand. These actions produce wealth generation and economic growth as a result.
2. **JOB CREATION:** The government of India has developed a number of initiatives like Start-up India, Make in India and National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) to encourage business and economic development and to create employment for job seekers. By accepting the opportunity from government and financial institutions to expand their business activities for self-reliant and self-employment, the unemployed youth and the SHGs can improve their financial status.
3. **BALANCED REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** The members of the self-help groups can make a big difference by establishing new businesses in rural areas. With the expansion of new businesses and industries in these areas, infrastructure will develop. The government steps up to provide new momentum for improving the roads, schools, hospitals, etc. These kinds of initiatives support balanced regional development, advancement of underdeveloped areas, and creation of new direct and indirect jobs. As a result, the self-help group participants develop healthy financial practices.

4. **SELF RESPECT AND STATUS:** The women who are empowered through self-help groups participate more actively in elections and Gram Sabha than other women. SHGs aid in boosting women's status in society, self-respect and social and economic development.
5. **SOCIAL JUSTICE:** SHGs serve as a vehicle for social justice by ensuring that the underprivileged and marginalized populations have easy access to government schemes, bank credit facilities, and NABARD's bank linkage program. Additionally, it makes it possible for government agencies to more effectively perform social audits of their programs and eliminate corruption.
6. **STANDARD OF LIVING:** The main objective of SHGs to raise the standard of living of poor members through establishment of small businesses or enterprises. They planned new programs with innovative ideas for improving the standard of living and creating jobs. The SHGs move forward with cost-controlling and profitable ventures with this goal in mind.
7. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Community development can be possible through Self Help Groups. SHGs assists in establishing micro businesses like grocery stores, tailor shops, clothing stores, stationery stores, agro stores, dairy farms, fisheries, carpentry, welding, etc. The community's revenue can be raised through these entrepreneurial endeavours and any surplus funds can be used for food, health care and education. In addition, SHGs can significantly contribute to improving maternal health and lowering child mortality. In addition, SHGs can significantly contribute towards the improvement of maternal health, the reduction of infant mortality, and the provision of nourishment to both mothers and children through financial inclusion.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is carried out with the following objectives

1. To study the income pattern of the tea garden women through SHGs in Sivasagar district.
2. To analyze the saving pattern of the tea garden women through SHGs in Sivasagar district.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

SAMPLE SIZE:

The sample size is fixed at 340 women members of Self Help Groups in Sivasagar district.

SAMPLING METHOD:

'Expedient' sampling method is used for this study.

SOURCE OF DATA:

Both primary and secondary data are studied and used on this paper. Primary data are collected directly from 340 women members of Self Help Groups in Sivasagar district. Secondary data are collected from journals and publications, books, relevant website etc.

AREA OF THE STUDY:

The Sivasagar district in Upper Assam, India has been selected for the study as it is measured that there are several tea gardens there. The study is conducted with the tea garden women who are involved in SHGs.

TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION:

Primary data are collected through direct conversation and interview schedule. The collection of information from the members of self-help groups of tea garden women are done through questionnaire and interview schedule.

TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS:

Simple percentage analysis statistical tools are used in the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

Human beings are not in good condition until they have a stable financial background. A low financial situation is a barrier to reaching a high level of living. Finance plays an important role in obtaining innovative technology and overall progress. As a result, investigation was made to determine the income and saving patterns of tea garden women who are involved in various entrepreneurial activities through self-help groups.

Income is the most important aspect in any business. The sustainability of self-help groups is dependent on net income of the business after deducting all expenses and obligations. The following attributes have been evaluated in order to assess and examine the present income level of the women self-help groups among the tea tribes -

- ❖ Income Generation Activities
- ❖ Family Income Generation Activities
- ❖ Monthly Income
- ❖ Monthly Saving

INCOME GENERATION ACTIVITIES:**TABLE NO 1: DISTRIBUTION OF PRODUCTIVE AND NON- PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES**

Productive / Non-productive Activities	Block							
	Nazira		Demow		Amguri		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Productive activities	120	66.7	99	82.5	23	76.7	242	73.3
Non-Productive activities	60	33.3	21	17.5	7	23.3	88	26.7
Total	180	100.0	120	100.0	30	100.0	330	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table No 1 above demonstrates that self-help group members participate in both productive and non-productive activities. According to the statistical analysis, 330 of the 340 respondents are engaged in both productive and non-productive activities, but 10 of them are neither involved in productive nor non-productive activities because they lack funds or fail to obtain a loan from a financial institution or a government agency. 73.3% respondents are involved in productive activities while 26.7% respondents spend their money in non-productive activities. The cross-check reveals that Demow block has the highest rank among the other blocks in productive activities with 82.5%. However, the Nazira block has experienced the highest expenditure in non-productive activities with 33.3%.

TABLE NO 2: DISTRIBUTION OF PRODUCTIVE AND NON- PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES

Productive/ Non- productive Activities	Block							
	Nazira		Demow		Amguri		Total	
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequency	%	Frequenc y	%
Productive Activities								
Crop production	44	24.4	10	8.3	4	13.3	58	17.6
Animal husbandry	41	22.8	58	48.3	17	56.7	116	35.2
Petty shop	25	13.9	22	18.3	0	.0	47	14.2
Tailoring & Embroidery	3	1.7	1	.8	0	.0	4	1.2
Weaving & Handloom	2	1.1	0	.0	0	.0	2	.6
Vegetable	4	2.2	6	5.0	0	.0	10	3.0
Cloth Sales/Statio nery	1	.6	2	1.7	2	6.7	5	1.5
Total							242	73%
Non-Productive Activities								
Purchase of Household Assets	8	4.4	1	.8	1	3.3	10	3.0
Purchase of Mobile	6	3.3	2	1.7	1	3.3	9	2.7
Repairing/C	9	5.0	2	1.7	0	.0	11	3.3

Construction of houses								
Purchase of Motorcycle	0	.0	2	1.7	1	3.3	3	.9
Marriage	5	2.8	1	.8	4	13.3	10	3.0
Children Education	11	6.1	4	3.3	0	.0	15	4.5
Festival and Other ceremonies	21	11.7	9	7.5	0	.0	30	9.1
							88	27%
Total	180	100.0	120	100.0	30	100.0	330	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Table No 2 shows the respondents' participation in both productive and unproductive activities in various sectors. 73% of respondents are actively engaged in productive activities like crop production, animal husbandry, petty shop, tailoring & embroidery, weaving & handloom, vegetable, cloth sales and stationery etc. 27% of respondents reported spending money on non-productive activities like purchasing of household assets, mobile and motor cycles etc. Further, the members of self-help groups use loans received from the banks, the government, and other organizations for marriage, children education, festival and other ceremonies. Although the respondents have invested their loan money in variety of activities, it is found that they are unable to generate satisfactory returns.

TABLE NO 3: DISTRIBUTION OF MONTHLY INCOME

Monthly Income	Block							
	Nazira		Demow		Anguri		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Less than 5000	177	93.2	117	97.5	30	100.0	324	95.3
5000 - 10000	9	4.7	2	1.7	0	.0	11	3.2
10000 - 20000	4	2.1	1	.8	0	.0	5	1.5
Above 20000	0	.0	0	.0	0	.0	0	.0
Total	190	100.0	120	100.0	30	100.0	340	100.0

The Table No. 3 narrates the respondents' monthly income from self-help group activities and it reveals that 95.3% of respondents have an income of less than Rs. 5000, 3.2% have an income between Rs. 5000 and Rs. 10,000, 1.5% have an income between Rs. 100,000 and Rs. 20,000, and there are no respondents in the income group above Rs. 20,000. The majority of respondents had incomes of less than Rs. 5000, demonstrating the negligible income of tea tribal women entrepreneurs.

TABLE NO 4: INCOMES OF SHG ACTIVITIES TO MONTHLY HOUSEHOLD INCOME SHARE

Household Income share in %	Block							
	Nazira		Demow		Amguri		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Share Nil	60	33.3	21	17.5	7	23.3	88	26.7
Upto 10 %	84	46.7	97	80.8	20	66.7	201	60.9
Upto 20%	31	17.2	2	1.7	3	10.0	36	10.9
Upto 30%	5	2.8	0	.0	0	.0	5	1.5
Total	180	100.0	120	100.0	30	100.0	330	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The Table No 4 states the share of income contributed block wise towards household income. The data reveals that 26.7% have no impact on household income. 60.9% respondents have 10% contribution to their household income while 10.9% respondents' involvement is 20% and 1.5% members is 30%. It is established that the members have no effect in raising household income through their self-help groups.

TABLE NO 5: AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME FROM HOUSEHOLD AND SHG ACTIVITIES BY BLOCK

Average Monthly Income	Block			
	Nazira	Demow	Amguri	Total
Average Monthly Household income	13,847	13,742	15,400	13,947
Average Monthly Household income from SHG activities	816	492	633	681

Source: Primary Data

The Table No-5 displays the average monthly household income and average monthly household income of self-help groups. The total amount of average monthly household income all the blocks is Rs. 13,947 while the total average monthly household income from self-help groups activities was Rs.681. In comparison to the other two blocks, Amguri block has the highest average household income of Rs. 15,400, while Nazira has the highest average monthly household income of Rs. 816 from SHG activities. It is found that respondents from self-help organizations have a negligible contribution of their average monthly income to household income and are unable to even reach the threshold of one thousand rupees.

TABLE NO 6: AVERAGE SHARE PERCENTAGE OF INCOME FROM SHG

Average share income from SHG income	Block			
	Nazira	Demow	Amguri	Total
SHG Income Share	6.06	3.72	3.80	5.00

Source: Primary Data

The Table No.-6 disclosed the percentage of share of average income of self-help groups from Nazira, Demow and Amguri were 6.06%, 3.72% and 3.80%. The total share income of all the blocks is found 5.00%, but the Nazira block has the highest percentage of income against the other two blocks.

TABLE NO 7: ANNUAL INCOME GROUP OF SHGS MEMBERS

Annual Income Group in Rs.	Frequency	Percentage
Up to 36000	56	16.5
36001 - 60000	114	33.5
60001 - 100000	127	37.4
Above 100000	43	12.6
Total	340	100.0

Source: Primary Data

The above table no-7 portrays the annual income groups of the respondents of the self-help groups. It is found that 16.5% respondents have annual income up to Rs 36,000, 33.5% have annual income from Rs. 36,001 to Rs.60,000, 37.4% have from Rs.60,001 to 1,00,000 and only 12.6% respondents have annual income above Rs. 1,00,000. It is seen that lowest percentage of annual income group is 12.6% and highest percentage of income group is 37.4%. Further, they are not even able to touch the monthly income of Rs. 10,294.80 and annual income (Rs. 10,294.80 X 12 = Rs. 1,23,537.60) as recommended by the office of the labour commissioner of Government of Assam. Thus we can conclude that present income level of the women entrepreneurs among tea tribes is not significant.

TABLE NO 8: DISTRIBUTION OF MONTHLY SAVINGS

Monthly Savings	Block							
	Nazira		Demow		Amguri		Total	
	Frequenc y	%	Frequenc y	%	Frequency	%	Frequenc y	%
No savings	5	2.6	12	10.0	0	.0	17	5.0
<500	164	86.3	104	86.7	30	100.0	298	87.6
500 - 1000	6	3.2	3	2.5	0	.0	9	2.6
1000 - 1500	15	7.9	0	.0	0	.0	15	4.4
Above 1500	0	.0	1	.8	0	.0	1	.3
Total	190	100.0	120	100.0	30	100.0	340	100.0

The saving position of the respondents of the self-help groups is shown in Table No. 8, where it is found that 5.0% have no savings, 87.6% have savings less than Rs. 500, 2.6% have between Rs. 500 and Rs. 1000, 4.4% have between Rs. 1000 and Rs. 1500, and only 3% respondents have savings more than Rs. 1500. It can be concluded that the saving condition of respondents is really bad and low and that their income is not enough for saving.

CONCLUSION:

The constitution of India has given equal rights to Indian women to participate in every field for employment. This paper explores the effectiveness of self-help groups in promoting women entrepreneurship and empowering them. SHGs are regarded as a crucial forum for educating women and inspiring them to pursue entrepreneurship. It aids SHG members in decision-making, boosts self-esteem, encourages saving, offers leadership skills, and raises the standard of living of the women members.

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