

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

SGSY scheme helps the poor women through SHGs. It focuses on organisation of the poor at grass roots level through process of social mobilisation for poverty eradication. SHGs have the advantage of the assistance in terms of credit or technology or market guidance etc. Thus SHGs are reacting the poor faster and more effectively. The SHGs formation works for stabilization, micro enterprise development etc. In this way SGSY helps to promote economically and socially deprived members of SHGs. The SGSY has been evolved as the main programme for the all round development of rural areas. Since SGSY is implemented at the district level, it is necessary that programme evaluation must be done at the macro level in order to identify the problems and lapses in implementation, if any, of the programme. Hence for the present study Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu has been selected.

The study is based on both secondary as well as primary data. The secondary data are collected from Mahlir Thittam, and District Statistical Office at Nagercoil. To obtain primary information, a list of SHGs was obtained from Mahalir Thittam Office at Nagercoil. The study is related to the women SHGs formed during the year 2006-2007. It is to be emphasised that a sufficient elapse of time required to generate income from economic assistance and to minimise recall error. In Kanyakumari District 365 SHGs were formed during the year 2006-2007. All SHGs were women groups. Of these 365 SHGs, 100 SHGs were in 99 village panchayats and 100 in 56 town panchayats and the remaining 165 SHGs were youth groups. Since the number of village panchayats in

Kanyakumari District are higher than that of town panchayats the study is solely concentrated about village panchayats. For this all the animators (Group leader/Representative) in 100 SHGs were taken into account by census method. Then two swarojgaries (Beneficiaries) from each group were selected by applying simple random sampling technique. Thus totally 300 respondents (100 animators and 200 swarojgaries) were selected for the present study. To collect information from these SHGs, a questionnaire was prepared at two levels. The first level questionnaire is concerned with 100 animators and it provides information about their socio-economic conditions, nature of organisations involved in formation and nursing of a SHG, possession and maintenance of documents, group meeting, attendance, amount of saving, year-wise amount of saving, number of groups which are involved in inter-loaning, amount of inter-loan, loan repayment, number of animators who participated in government programmes, nature of micro-enterprises, average number of working days per year generated by these enterprises, steps followed for the adoption of micro-enterprises, constraints faced by SHGs for its effective functioning and the suggestions made for smooth operation of SHGs

Questionnaire at level two is concerned with swarojgaris. It consists of their socio-economic profile and impact of SGSY on monthly family income, monthly family expenditure, ownership of land, livestock, home appliances, value of savings, decision making etc before and after becoming a member of SGSY. It also involves purpose-wise amount of SHG loan, its adequacy, repayment positions etc. Besides, data regarding the

performance of banks in financing SHGs under SGSY in Kanyakumari District was gathered from several banks. It consists of number of SHGs linked with banks, number of swarojgaris who assisted through different banks, mobilisation of savings, loan disbursed to SHGs,

Having collected the required information from animators and sample swarojgaris, discussions were held with officials of Mahlir Thittam to verify the statements of sample beneficiaries. The managers of four nationalised banks in the district were interviewed for undergoing the nature and repayment of SGSY loans.

A total of 300 women leaders and members of SHGs were interviewed for the present study by adopting an interview schedule. The interviewer also took the opportunity of observing the functioning of SHGs by being a non-participant observer in the sittings of some of the SHGs during the period of field work.

9.1 Social and Economic Status of Respondents

The respondents hailed from different castes. 53 Animators (53 per cent), 100 Swarojgaris (50 per cent) from backward castes. 21 Animators (21 per cent), 70 swarojgaris (35 per cent) from scheduled castes. 63 Animators (63 per cent), 76 Swarojgaris (38 per cent) belong to Hindu religion. There are 7 Animators (7 per cent) and 24 swarojgaris (12 per cent) muslim and rest of them are Christians.

There are 745 and 840 persons in Animators and sample Swarojgaris households. Among them the number of females are higher in both households 56 per cent and 50.5 per cent respectively. Majority of the Animator's family members belong to the age group of 20 to 30 (18.79 per cent) It is also same in the case of swarojgaris households (22.97 per cent) 40 per cent of the Animators are in the age group of 36 to 45. Likewise 37.5 per cent of the sample swarojgaris are in the age group of 26 to 35. More than half of the Animators (74 per cent) and sample Swarojgaris (85 per cent) are get married. 67 per cent of Animators's households can be seen to have five members each in their family. It is also 45 per cent in the case of sample Swarojgaris households. Majority of Animators (67 per cent) and sample Swarojgaris (72.5 per cent) have got education above the S.S.L.C level. All the Animators are employed as cluster coordinators, PLF members and panchayat ward members. Similarly all the sample Swarojgaris are self employed as tailors, engaged in food, bag, mat, ornament, copra related activities and beauty parlour. 79 per cent of the sample swarojgaris living in their own houses. 64 per cent of the sample Swarojgaris are fetching water from private tap. 89.5 per cent of the sample Swarojgaris have toilet within their houses. All the sample swarojgaris (100 per cent) are utilising electricity as a source of lighting. 77 per cent of the Swarojgaris have had LPG. 59 per cent of Swarojgaris are depending upon Government hospitals for their treatment, 90 per cent of the Swarojgaris have saving in commercial banks. About 44 per cent of the Swarojgaris have had monthly saving of below Rs.5000. The number of Swarojgaris who had demanded credit from SHGs for children's education was the

highest (44 per cent). The average amount of loan (Rs.7708) is higher in the case of minimum number of Swarojgaris (12) and vice versa.

9.2 Working of SGSY in Kanyakumari District

Out of 100 SHGs 43 (43 per cent) SHGs were formed and developed by NGOs 42 per cent of the SHGs have financial linkages with SBI. More than half of the SHGs (53 per cent) have 18-20 Swarojgaris. All the 100 SHGs possessed the all the Eight documents in up to date and are maintained by 100 Animators. 90 per cent of the SHGs held meeting weekly, there are 4680 meeting held during a year. Among them 2340 meetings were not attended by NGOs. 91 per cent of the SHGs have got more than 90 per cent attendance of Swarojgaris. 93 per cent of the SHGs imposed fine on those members who are not attending the group meeting regularly, 30 per cent of the SHGs reported that their members have monthly saving of Rs. 100 to Rs. 150. Year-wise saving of SHGs showed that 60 per cent of SHGs had less than Rs. 50000 saving in 2006-2007. This percentage had been reduced to 35, 30 and 14 during the successive years. On the other hand, 9 per cent of SHGs have saving of Rs. 150001-200000 in 2006-07. This had been increased to 19, 20 and 25 per cent respectively. This reflected amount of saving increases in successive years. All sample SHGs involved in inter loaning. Amount of inter loan from 2006-07 to 2009-2010 was Rs. 1734535. 57 SHGs engaged in micro enterprises. Among them majority of the SHGs (29.82per cent) engaged in food related activities. Of the 57 SHGs, 27 (43.36 per cent) invested more than Rs. 30000. 54 SHGs identified their micro enterprises with the help of NGOs and 3 SHGs by Mahalir Thittam. 40 SHGs reported that they got training by NGO officials, 17 SHGs by Mahalir Thittam.

45 SHGs informed that their training needs met by NGOs and 12 SHGs availed the same through Mahalir Thittam. All the SHGs got credit through banks. 30 SHGs purchased the inputs from NGOs and 27 SHGs got the same by self interest. 35 SHGs marketed their produce with the help of Mahalir Thittam and 22 SHGs did the same with the help of their members. 54 SHGs maintained records properly about the working of micro enterprises (sale, purchase, cash transactions etc). 70 Animators participated in Government programmes like AIDs awareness, Law awareness, children's education, gardening etc.

Health functioning of the group is reflected in regular repayment of the loans taken by the groups In the present study of the 200 sample Swarojgaris 187 (93.5 per cent) are very regular in their loan repayment. None of the SHGs in Kanyakumari district reported irregular repayment. Factor analysis is used to analyse the various constraints faced by Swarojgaris. It concluded that caste based formation of SHGs, lack of financial assistance by Mahalir Thittam, insufficient credit by bank and marketing problems are the major dominant obstacles faced by Swarojgaris among the nine problems as reported by them. Nine remedial measures are also suggested by Swarojgaris to solve these problems. They are Adequate financial help by Mahalir Thittam (43.5 per cent), avoiding the caste based formation of SHGs (41.5 per cent), strengthening the cooperation among the Swarojgaris (37 per cent), sufficient marketing facility for selling the products (33 per cent), eliminating the indifferent attitude of officials (29.5 per cent), selection of group leader on the basis of experience, supervision qualities etc (16.5 per cent), organization of training within the village, (22 per cent), sufficient family support to participate group

activities (28.5 per cent), sharing of domestic work by family members (14.5 per cent) etc.

9.3 Impact of SGSY

To sum up the impact of SGSY on income, employment, expenditure, annual profit, extent of satisfaction, ownership of household appliances, livestock possession, benefits , possession of land holdings of sample women Swarojgaris, it is found that there is 36.5 per cent increase in monthly income in the case of income group of Rs. 5001-10000. Similarly, 14.5 per cent increase in the income group of 10001-15000. The number of Swarojgaris those who are earning monthly income below Rs. 5000 is reduced from 56 per cent to 40.5 per cent. Thus it is found that women are now economically independent and contribute to increase their household income.

SGSY were channelized for a few selected activities termed as “key activities” identified for each block based on their potential, from which the swarojgaris can draw sustainable income. Out of 100 SHGs, 57 opted for economic activities. Majority of the groups 17 (29.82 per cent) engaged in food related activities. Only 3 SHGs (5.27 per cent) in copra making activities. 18 (31.57 per cent) come under the categories of 25001-50000 income group. It seems the economic activities performed by SHGs had a favourable impact on generation of income in the Kanyakumari district. No doubt, the income generation varies from activity to activity and each activity has its own capacity to generate income.

Micro enterprises are business in which people invest small amounts of capital for getting some return. In the present study, the annual profit earned by 6 SHGs (10.53 per cent) at the time of their inception, earning below Rs. 25000, 27 SHGs (47.37 per cent) earn profit between 25001-50000 and only 10 units (17.54 per cent) were earning above Rs. 75000. This shows that women will increase the profit level and run enterprises in a right manner and they become successful women in earning profit.

Extent of satisfaction with annual profit of the micro enterprises in the study area reveals that of the 57 SHGs 20 (35.08 per cent) benefited under SGSY and have enjoyed annual profit more than expected. 35 SHGs (61.41 per cent) have got profit as per expectation and only 2 SHGs (3.51 per cent) have earned much below expectation. Thus majority of the SHGs have got profit as per expectation.

It was observed that in the present study that the selected sample Swarojgaris got gainful employment opportunities. The average number of man days generated under food related activities is higher (1131.35) than other activities (tailoring, mat and bag making, beauty parlour and copra making) Anyhow all activities provided gainful employment opportunities to the sample Swarojgaris.

Employment and income effects of micro enterprises under SGSY in Kanyakumari district indicates that group enterprises are viable options before micro entrepreneurs in terms of higher income flow at household level for sustainable livelihood. Because individual entrepreneurs on an average got employment for 27 days in a month and received an income to the tune of Rs. 1261 per person. Against this, group

enterprises provided average employment for 21 days in a month. However, the average income earned by them were of a higher order at Rs. 1673, which is 33 per cent high compared to the income realised from individual enterprises.

SGSY provides viable livelihood to SHGs and also enrich their economic standard. Before becoming a member of SHGs, swarojgaris could spend a sum of Rs. 268000 on food, cloth, education, health care, transport, functions, rent and miscellaneous. They are strength economically after becoming a member in SHGs, and can afford an average sum of Rs. 319893 towards monthly family expenditure. Thus, monthly expenditure of sample Swarojgaris has been increased due to positive change in their income.

SGSY promotes pro-poor growth as there is considerable hike in number of Swarojgaris who can afford to use refrigerators, scooter, mobile phone, computer etc. Thus the sample Swarojgaris have manifested the impact of SHGs in term of asset accumulation. Similarly, the possession of chicken increased from 93.5 per cent to 96.5 per cent, cow from 35 per cent to 65 per cent, but the percentage of bullock has been reduced from 10 per cent to 6.5 per cent. It shows cost of maintaining bullock was increasing. So the swarojgaris prefer to have other live stocks.

SGSY has made a positive impact on the possession of land holdings because of the 200 sample Swarojgaris 63 (31.5 per cent) became land less prior to become a member of SHG. But this number has been reduced to 14 (7 per cent) after becoming a

member of SHG. Thus it clearly shows that all the sample Swarojgaris are from sub marginal category after becoming a member of SHG.

From the women's perspective it could be underlined that by entering into SHGs the women had become decision makers, received new skills, increased income, saving, health and children education, improved social prestige, leadership qualities, active participation in social activities, increased mobility and become independent etc. Which need to be appreciated.

Thus it has been recorded that SHGs are a media for the development of savings habit among the women folk. It mobilizes a large quantum of resources. It is a window for better technology and skill up gradation. The SHGs collective action and solidarity are important empowering mechanisms. Moreover, the Government and bankers are giving whole-hearted support for providing credit either directly or thoroughly NGOs. This help to develop the entrepreneurial skill of the women in our country.

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