

Microfinance Initiative- a way for Women Development in Rural Area (With Special Reference to Golaghat District)

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Abstract-- In male dominated society of us the women clusters in most of the cases is ill-treated, underweight and are hardly recognized of productivity utilization, as such their potentiality never got a chance to explored. Utilization of women potentiality become normal case of ignorance. But thanks to the concept of microfinance which coined from Bangladesh by Md.Yunus(the Nobel laureate) that has able to cover the ignorant of all sides and section, the poor,especially rural poor and women and the deprived of formal financial system. Under the shadow of microfinance leading towards financial inclusion. Microfinance has become important components of development, poverty reduction, providing utilization and social development and economic generation.

Objectives of the study-- keeping in view the objectives of the study is to highlight the performance of SHG model of microfinance in aiding production productive utilization of women towards rural development.

Methodology-- The study has been made taking both the primary and secondary data and questionnaire being used and survey in the district.

Keyword-- Microfinance, women, rural development, empowerment etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

In male dominated society of ours, the women clusters in most of the cases is ill treated, underweight and are hardly recognized of productive utilization, such as , their potentiality never got a chance to explore. For India, where providing employment avenues or meeting unemployment is remains a matter of anxiety, where the gap of demand and supply of employment is still healthy, thus, utilization of women potentiality become a normal case of ignorance, But thanks to the concept of microfinance which coined from Bangladesh by Md. Yunus, (the Nobel laureate) that has able to cover the ignorant of all sides and section, the poor, especially rural poor and women and the deprived of formal financial system, under the shadow of micro finance and also leading towards financial inclusions' micro finance has become an importan component of development, poverty reduction and economic regeneration, women empowerment strategy around the world.

By the early twenty first century, tens of millions of people in more than 100 countries have been obtaining services from formal and semi- microfinance institution(Humble,2009). Again women are found more sincer, dedicated and loyal, while they are in economic activity, than male counterpart, and that is being evidenced by many success stories of microfinance, world wide. Those success stories and achievements became a revolutionary mechanism in the world and every country accelerated to adopt some programme of microfinance, especially by developing countries.. Considering their potentiality with microfinance programme many initiatives had been taken, as in 1997, Micro Credit Summit, held in Washington DC, adopted a resolution to reach 100 million of the world's poorest families, especially the women of families with credit for self employment. Again by proclaiming 2015 as the International Year of Microcredit, the General Assembly of United Nations requested that " the year's observance be a special occasion for giving impetus to microcredit programme through the world" (Sharma Borah, 20018). This was in response to microcredit occupying a commanding position in economic development and purposive social change as evidence by its continuing growth in terms of volume, geographical coverage, and influence over social, economic and political processes, especially women empowerment. The institution, such as FWWB and RMK are two organizations charged with growing the seeds and sapling of the sector and preparing them for commercial financing by the banks. Friends of Women's World Banking(FWWB) is a private NGO and RMK an NGO funded and controlled by the Department of Women and child Development, (Ghate, 2009), are the replication of women performance.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives have been drawing for our study

1. To highlight the performance of SHG model of microfinance in aiding productive utilization of women towards rural development in Golaghat district.

III. METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

The study has been made taking both the primary and secondary data and for primary data questionnaire being used and surveyed in Golaghat district. Primary data has been collected from the sample of 5% of the total village of the district. Again from the selected sample village the microfinance beneficiaries of SHGs (Active SHG), they were categories in terms of 'age' in three groups(i.e.SHGs>7yrs; SHGs>5yrs but<7 yrs; and SHGs> 3yrs but < 5yrs;) accordingly 3173 no's of SHGs has been selected and 5% (i.e. 159 SHGs) of such selected SHGs has been considered as sample of the study. Hence the present study is confined to the performance study of microfinance under SHG model in Golaghat district of Assam. Again, those SHG operated under the blocks of the district are only considered for this study, other SHG under various MFIs/NGOs of the district will be out of the scope of this study. Statistical tools and measures are also used in interpreting the data, using charts, diagrams, percentage etc. to highlight the message more clearly and easily.

IV. WOMEN'S PERFORMANCE IN MICROFINANCE

The world summit for Social Development, which was held in Copenhagen, in March 1995, had underscored the importance of improving access to credit for small producers, landless farmers and other low-income individuals. Particularly women and disadvantaged groups. It is the SHG model which able to attract huge women clients world-wide, The SHG-Bank linkage programme, in India, which commenced in 200 2, with a target to link of 500 SHGs, has grown phenomenally (Sundaram, 2019), As per NABARD report(220-2021), that figure reached to 7.462 million SHG covering over 97 million rural households. Of the total 7.462 million SHG, over 4.78 million SHGs have access to direct credit facilities from banks with an outstanding loan amount of Rs.312.21 billion as at end of March 2021. As dominating model of microfinance, the SHG model has made rapid growth in terms of numbers of SHGs, loan disbursement and outstanding and also in linking of SHGs to banks, what is called SBLP. The growth trend can be observed as follows:

Table:1
Overall Progress of SHG model of microfinance during the last four year:

Year	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021
Total SHGs linked to Bank	5009794	6121147	6953000	7462000
Exclusive Women SHGs	3986093	4863921	5310000	6098000
Loans Disbursed all SHGs(in crore)	8849.26	12253.51	14453.30	14547.73
Loan disburse ed to exclusive women	7474.26	10527.38	12429.39	12622.33

Source: *Status of Microfinance in India, NABARD*

The performance of women in SHG model of microfinance can be considered satisfactory in terms of SHGs formation, loan disbursed or linking towards banks, because they become the key factors of the model. Interestingly, the performance scenario of women in this model is not an over-look for India, but it is an average scenario all over the world.

As for example, the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, is women dominated organization, where all the executive members are women, thus an replication of unveiling of women potentiality in practice. The dealing organizations and agencies like NGOs, Bank etc. feel confident and secure, as women are more sincere and honest in transactions and those intermediaries are willing to execute more transaction with them and the high recovery rate has been encouraged by many banks,(Purkayastha, 2023)

V. WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN MICROFINANCE IN THE GOLAGHAT DISTRICT

The district Golaghat is one of the leading districts in terms of numbers of village and population, as such, it is got good numbers of microfinance clients, which in majority are women.

Again, among the various models of microfinance, the SHG model is the only dominating model in the district and is under the domain of women clients, thus the study is confine to the said model.

VI. BENEFICIARIES OF MICROFINANCE IN THE DISTRICT:

The beneficiary of microfinance here means the clients, who deal in microfinance. The study reveals the following position of SHG beneficiaries.

Table:2
Clients under SHG model in Golaghat District in 2024

S.L	Name of Block	SHG & Members				Loan granted to SHG(00's)			Loan granted(Amount)
		Nos.	Male	Female	Total	Active	Dealing	Active(%)	
1	Golaghat	1400	588	1036	3024	612	708	42.71	5322000
2	Padumoni	1233	452	854	2539	887	346	71.94	7917000
3	Kathalguri	1045	386	680	2111	763	280	73.21	4365000
4	East block	1421	426	994	2841	1309	112	92.12	7952000
5	Gamari	2219	1442	1160	4821	726	1491	31.81	1146000
6	Dergaon	327	113	285	725	182	145	35.66	364000
7	Bokakhat	1122	392	729	2243	202	920	18.00	1332000
8	Sarupathar	1958	818	1333	4109	332	1426	27.17	476000
9	Khumtai	924	267	850	2041	198	726	21.34	3163000
10	Morongi	1143	457	914	2514	748	395	65.44	3168000

source: recorded by office report.

To consider the performance of women in microfinance and to reach to the objective of the study i.e to rural development, some factors which generally taken as the performance indicators are replicated here. But studies reveal that among the others factors'(i.e. income generation factors) can be considered as dominating one in a developing country, (Morduch & Haley, 2010), so more

stressed has been given in economic factors and efforts are also made to know the saving behaviour of the women.

Thus the study primarily focuses on the following

1. Nature of economic activity initiated,
2. Income and savings position of women members.



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VII. NATURE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

During field investigation, the respondents were asked about the nature of activities, they involved in. Though, microfinance, government are not designed to follow any particular category of activity , but considering her basic nature of thrift, small size credit, group approach etc.. It is generally influences the microfinance clients to have small and ancillary types of activities/ industries, which mainly required small amount of investment, (Soile, et al., 2013)

The types of activities noticed during investigation in the district are weaving, farming like piggery, dairy, fishery, goatery, poultry, making plates out of area nut-leaf, making various types of product out of puffed-rice, Biscuit bakery etc. The weaving and farming activities are found to be two major economic activities in the district and become the main earning source, and following diagram is being used to present the proportion of microfinance clients in various activities:

VIII. CONCLUSION

Once women start enjoying freedom in the areas like formal education, independent decision making on economic matters and policy matters as well, access to better health care and health facilities, one can say that they are empowered, which will contribute to better self-image and will encourage her to perform in a better way for herself for her family, to the society and the nation as a whole.

The microfinance become a driving force of society, especially for poor and women, in economic empowerment, poverty alleviation, productive utilization and social development. The same have been seen among the women of Golaghat district, deals in microfinance under SHG model. Result depicted that, performance of microfinance is not up to the mark and that is owing to small size loan, lack of training, SHG management etc.. The positive aspect is that, women of the district are more productive and hardworking, though as of now they are engaged basically in traditional activities, but special training about innovative business ideas or for small industrialization etc. will materialize and can make the involved clients more beneficial.

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