



IMPACT OF MICROFINANCE ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT

Women's economic empowerment means the ability of women to participate in the markets equally with men. They play a valuable role in productive resources and control over their own time. They give their contribution equally to men in all spheres of life. Empowerment for women is very important for the growth of an economy. The objective of this study is to know about the impact of microfinance on women's empowerment. For the collection of data, a convenience sampling technique is used. The survey was conducted in Panipat City, Haryana, India. A group of women from both rural and urban areas participated in the survey. The study highlights that MFI has a positive impact on various employment-generating activities for women which helps them for a better standard of living, self-confidence, and a better status in the community. Since this research was limited by survey scope (only one city) and small sample size, future researchers can address these limitations and further study the outcomes of microfinance on women's empowerment.

KEYWORDS: Empowerment, Impact, Microfinance, Positive, Women

INTRODUCTION

In past years, women in our society have faced a lot of problems. They were not getting an education like men. They were married at early age without education and they were dependent on men because of it. There was discrimination between men and women. They were not able to take the decisions on their own. With the help of microfinance, women can make decisions for themselves independently. Microfinance has increased the opportunities for women to grow in various fields like agriculture, business, job, etc. Many microfinance institutions have been set up that provide micro-loans to women to strengthen their empowerment. The government has introduced many schemes for women entrepreneurs. With the help of microfinance, women can create their financial wealth and become financially sound and independent. Microfinance is such a tool that helps people to come out of their problems and generate additional income.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The studies on microfinance and stress have been focused on women who have taken the help of microfinance for their empowerment. Women are not getting equal opportunities as men in many fields. The number of women entrepreneurs is very less than male entrepreneurs. This huge gap is because of a lack of financial resources, income, availability of loans, and credit for women. Most of the women are busy in handling their household work, child's education, and care. They are so busy in their houses that they are not getting any income-generating opportunities. For that purpose, they are totally dependent on men. But microfinance can remove these problems for women. It is important to study the impact of microfinance on women's empowerment.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To study the effect of microfinance on women's empowerment.
- To study the benefits of MFI to women for their empowerment.
- To study the improvement of decision-making after microfinance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Irshad Ahmad Reshi¹ and Dr. T. Sudha (2023) highlighted the importance of a more united and aggregate approach to women's economic empowerment that included the hindrances due to structure in full participation by women in the economy. This involved some laws and policies which have promoted equal opportunities for education, training, and participation by women in the economy.

Monika, Dr. Ramnjeet Singh, Dr. Amit Kumar (2023) emphasized that microfinance is a powerful tool for reduction in poverty and providing authority to women. They have included SHGs in their research. There are many uncertainties but SHGs are rising rapidly. In India, SHGs are new microfinance organisations. India has made various efforts for supporting the microfinance. NABARD has also played a significant role in the development of microfinance. Along with many hurdles, microfinance and SHGs have helped for poor women's authorization.

Amechi Fabian Anoke (2023) described that MFIs provide various services like lending, savings and client training which have an important and positive effect on growth of women



businesses. MFIs are behind in one of the management strategies which is very important to help business in problematic situations. When women business owners will hire well qualified and experienced professionals, it will bring many positive changes like growth, efficiency improvement, new projects, and profitable opportunities.

Bhajan Chandra Barman (2022) described that microfinance has a very strong impact on motivating women entrepreneurs to open small businesses in rural areas. Nowadays, rural poor females are not only limited to agriculture or household work, but they are also opening their small business. There is a great number of rural women involved in micro-enterprises, baking, handicrafts items, disposals making. All this contribute in improving their income, their child education, poverty reduction, growth of society and GDP. So, we can say that women entrepreneurs are bringing a positive change in the society and economy. Further, he called all this as sustainable development.

DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Age Frequency

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	10	20
30-40	16	32
40-50	18	36
Above 50	6	12
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

There were 10 females under the age group 20-30 which constitutes 20%, 16 females under the age group 30-40 which constitutes 32%, 18 females under the age group 40-50 which

Sruthymol Joseph (2023) said that financial institutions have an important role in the economic development. In India, there are various financial institutions but their functioning is not satisfactory. Micro business owners and rural people are dependent on microfinance. In developing countries like India, microfinance is very important because it helps in reduction of poverty with the help of improvement in social and economic aspects. The economic growth of any country is dependent on the financial services. This will improve their standard of living. Central Bank and Government should take various steps to improve microfinance in India.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design has been used with a quantitative research approach to study the problem. The target population of this study was rural and urban women who have availed the services of microfinance. For data collection, the convenience sampling method was used. A self-report questionnaire was prepared for this purpose.

constitutes 36%, and 6 females above 50 which constitutes 12% of the total.

Table 2: Education Level

Education Level	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	7	14
Primary	11	22
High School	10	20
Graduation	15	30
Post Graduation	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

There were 7 illiterate women which constitutes 14%, 11 primary which constitutes 22%, 10 high school which

constitutes 20%, 15 graduate which constitutes 30%, and 7 post graduate which constitutes 14% of the total.

Table 3: Occupation

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Agriculture	10	20
Business	15	30
Job	18	36
Other	7	14
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

There were 10 females in agriculture which constitutes 20%, 15 in business which constitutes 30%, 18 in job which constitutes

36%, and 7 in other occupation which constitutes 14% of the total.



Table 4: Improvements after microfinance

Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Decision making	14	28
Standard of living	13	26
Social status	17	34
Confidence	6	12
Total	50	100

Source: Primary Data

14 women were able to take decisions on their own which constitutes 28%, 13 women have improved their standard of living which constitutes 26%, 17 women have gained social status which constitutes 34%, and 6 women have improved their confidence level which constitutes 12% of the total.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that microfinance has a positive impact on women empowerment in Panipat, Haryana. More aged women have gained a lot of benefits from microfinance.

Some measures should be taken for improving the women empowerment. These can be simplified procedures of microfinance for women, subsidies to women entrepreneurs, less interest rates, easy availability of loans. There is a need to understand the phenomena of microfinance in more depth. Future research may look into the antecedents and consequences of microfinance.

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