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# Social Interaction Pattern Within the Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Rayagada District of Odisha, India

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## ABSTRACT

The role of women in society has undergone a transformative journey, evolving from compliant domestic roles to becoming crucial contributors to community development. Despite historical inequality, women have demonstrated their capacity to drive economic and social progress when given opportunities. In this context, self-help groups (SHGs) have emerged as a vital mechanism to empower rural women by promoting financial independence and collective problem-solving. This study focuses on the social interaction patterns of SHGs in the Rayagada district of Odisha, emphasizing their socio-economic profiles, institutional linkages, and collective actions. Using an ex-post facto research design, data were collected from 90 SHG members across three villages: Akhusingi, Anjali, and Arei. The findings revealed that SHGs are instrumental in fostering social cohesion, enhancing financial access, and promoting skill development. However, varying levels of education, income, and institutional interaction highlight disparities in empowerment and resource utilization. Sociograms generated for each village demonstrated the dense interaction patterns among SHG members and with NGOs, though connections with government institutions were limited due to educational and geographical constraints. Key actors within the SHGs played pivotal roles in disseminating information and resources, enabling collective action against socio-economic challenges. While agriculture remained the predominant occupation, participation in skill development events varied significantly, influencing economic outcomes. This study underscores the potential of SHGs as agents of change for rural development and women's empowerment. It calls for enhanced institutional support, targeted skill development programs, and stronger governmental engagement to maximize the impact of SHGs on poverty alleviation and social transformation. This study is significant for the scientific community as it provides critical insights into the dynamics and effectiveness of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in fostering community development and empowerment. By employing innovative tools such as sociograms and analyzing group cohesion and individual participation, the study advances the understanding of how group structures and interactions contribute to collective decision-making and problem-solving.

*Keywords: SHG; social; women; economy; growth.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Our scriptures see women as divinities, the manifestation of sympathy, the eradication of evil, and the bread supplier (Abraham, 2013). However, for ages women have played a compliant role within the home. Since birth, the social mindset has been one of inequality against women. Women have an important role in every community. Whenever women were given the opportunity, they played a vital role in

the progress of their communities and our country. Women are crucial human infrastructure and their empowerment would accelerate social progress (Akter et al., 2018). Investing in women's capacities and allowing them to pursue their own choices and chances is the most effective method to contribute to overall growth and economic progress. As a result, the administration has emphasized empowering women at the grassroots level. Self-help groups are informal gatherings of people that meet to

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discuss shared problems. This concept encourages poor rural women to form groups for mutual benefit (Alam & Nizamuddin, 2012; Dahal, 2014). Self help group is a group of rural poor who willingly systematize themselves into a group to wipe out poverty. The to eliminate poverty (Amutha, 2011). They regularly keep to build up a regular finance known as cluster quantity. The constituents of SHGs utilize this general support when they need. Self-help groups are necessary and enviable for the general public and for social renewal mostly to overcome misuse, create self-confidence for the economic self-reliance of rural people particularly. The SHGs unit come together to authorize women for collective aim or target and consenting them to get strength in voicing their views of exploitation and social issues, which they are facing in several forms and also permitting them to get experience to the outside world (Baghel & Shrivastava, 2015; Bian, 2019). It becomes the basis for deeds and transformation. It moreover helps in building the relationship for interactive assurance between the financing association and the rural poor through continuous interaction and sincere hard work. SHG as a method aims to help the marginalized and the poor to join hands in stating and solving their problems (Choudary & Chitra, 2012; Das, 2011). Women of today's world are no longer like the olden eras. In contemporary world women are constantly furnished and organized to come forward and need to widen up their uniqueness, where they show their desires toward more economic independence, success, equality in the society and countless independence (Narayan & Pritchett, 2020; Panadian, 2006). As a result, Government of India has provided for Self Help Group to them so that proper dedication and the same aids should be given to their economic liberation through self-employment, groundbreaking advance and security that in the long run lead to its constitution. Self-help group with the association of commercial banks, co-operative, district rural banks, NGOs etc. has existed as one of the large source and motivated approach in the establishment of economic facilities to the deprived section and more supplementary improving their position in the society (Sahu & Mishra, 2020; Sharma & Ghosh, 2022). Thus, SHGs are significant not only in lessening poverty but also in holding rural avings and at greater level with gainful employment. But besides all these, the most important thing is to study the growth of SHGs and also analyzing the current position of women empowerment

ent, enterprising women and their economic improvement after their joining SHGs. Tribal women in India are victims of multiple socio-economic and cultural factors, which are constantly suppressing the development of them (Varsha et al., 2019; Venkatesh & Kala, 2010). In spite of sincere effort of Govt., several NGOs & Vostribal women are suffering from extreme poverty, negligence and deprivation in all spheres of life (Talukdar & Dutta, 2009). On the above background a study has been undertaken entitled "Social interaction pattern of Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Rayagada District of Odisha" with the objectives (i) To study the socio-economic profile of the SHG members. (ii) To trace out the social interaction pattern of SHGs.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The study was based mainly on Ex- post facto research design. Analysis of the collected data through questionnaire and interview of the members of SHG on the subject and were subsequently summarized. The findings have been summarized after throwing light on all the major aspects of the study. The conclusion and the suggestions were made to make the rural development possible through SHG. Odisha is comprised of 30 districts. Out of which Rayagada district was selected randomly for the study. From the selected district Padmapur block was purposively selected. From Padmapur block three villages namely Akhusingi, Anjali and Arei villages were selected purposively. And from these three villages out of 17 SHGs 30 members from each village were selected through random sampling methods. Thus the total sample size of the study was 90 SHG members. The data were collected from the respondents with the help of a pre tested interview schedule developed for the purpose.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 represents that almost all people in Akhusingi village were Sabara Tribes. In that village, more than half of the house hold were male headed (80%) and the rest were female-headed. Among these 30 households, maximum of the household were middle-aged (56.66%) and near about 26.66 percent of them were illiterate. In this Village, more than half of the households were well income [about 20% had less than Rs-2000/Month]. Their main occupation was agriculture (56.66%), near about 10 percent of them worked as landless labour. Apart from agricultural practice, 10 percent house hold practices lives to ckin their house

holds. 70 percent of the respondents had taken loan from the different banks. It was observed that 73.33 percent respondents had joined in the skill development event. 56.66 percent household had only one working member in their family.

Table 2 narrates that maximum people in Anjali village were Sabara Tribes. In that particular village, more than half of the house hold were male headed (60%) and the rest were female-headed. Among these 30 households, maximum of the household were middle-aged (46.66%) and near about 46.66 percent of them were illiterate. In this Village, more than half of the households were well income [only 30%% had less than Rs-2000/Month]. Maximum of them were landless labour (36.66%) followed by agriculture (16.66%). 53.33 percent of the respondents had not any taken loan from any bank. It was observed that more than half of the respondents (76.66%) had not joined in the skill

development event. Half of the household (50%) had only two working members in their family.

Table 3 represents that maximum people in Arei village were Sabara Tribes (83.33%) followed by Christian (16.66%). In that village, out of 30 household twenty seven were male headed (90%) followed by migrant (6.66%). Among these 30 households, maximum of the household were Old Aged (40%) and almost 70 percent of them were illiterate. In this Village, more than half of the households (76.66%) were coming under well income category. Maximum of them (63.33%) were expressed that their main occupation was agriculture. 90 percent of the respondents had taken loan from different banks. It was observed that more than half of the respondents (76.66%) had not joined in the skill development event. 43.33% household opined that they had only one number of working member in their family.

**Table1. Socio-economic profile of the households in Akhusingi**

**(N=30)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
<b>1. Religion</b>		
Tribes (Sabara)	30	100
Hindu	0	0
Christian	0	0
<b>2. Nature of Head of the House Hold (HOH)</b>		
Male headed	24	80
Migrant	6	20
Widow	0	0
<b>3. Age (HOH)</b>		
Young (Up to 30)	6	20
Middle Aged (31-50)	17	56.66
Old Aged (Above 50)	7	23.33
<b>4. Taking of loan from bank</b>		
No. of people have taken	21	70
Not taken	9	30
<b>5. Income Category (Rs/month)</b>		
Up to 2000	6	20
More than 2000	24	80
<b>6. Education(HOH)</b>		
Illiterate	8	26.66
Can read Only	2	6.66
Can read and write	3	10
Primary	5	16.66
Secondary	6	20
High Secondary	4	13.33
Graduate	2	6.66
<b>7. Total no of Working Member in a Household</b>		
None	1	3.33
One	17	56.66
Two	7	23.33
Three	5	16.66

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
<b>8. Skill development event</b>		
Participated	22	73.33
Not participated	8	26.66
<b>9. Primary Occupation</b>		
No occupation	2	6.66
Landless labour	3	10
Agriculture	17	56.66
Dairy	4	13.33
Livestock	3	10
Business	1	3.33
Service	0	0

Social interaction pattern of SHGs with social institutions:

Fig.1 exemplifies the networking of Akhusingj village in regards to social interaction and institutional linkage. This sociogram reveals a dense interaction pattern among the SHG members and institutions. It was also depicted from the sociogram that there were reciprocal

ties among the villagers. Among them, 10, 11, 15, 25 had a great influence in spreading information. The Fig. 1 revealed that most of the interactional pattern was unidirectional. It was found that NGOs (98,93,95,96) had more ties with the SHG members. Interaction/ linkage of government institution were found lesser due to less education and localities.

**Table2. Socio-economic profile of the house holds in Anjali**

**(N=30)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
<b>1. Religion</b>		
Tribes (Sabara)	30	100
Hindu	0	0
Christian	0	0
<b>2. Nature of HOH</b>		
Male headed	18	60
Migrant	12	40
Widow	0	0
<b>3. Age (HOH)</b>		
Young (Up to 30)	7	23.33
Middle Aged (31-50)	14	46.66
Old Aged (Above 50)	9	30
<b>4. Taking of loan from bank</b>		
No. of people have taken	14	46.66
Not taken	16	53.33
<b>5. Income Category (Rs/month)</b>		
Up to 2000	9	30
More than 2000	21	70
<b>6. Education(HOH)</b>		
Illiterate	14	46.66
Can read Only	3	10
Can read and write	5	16.66
Primary	6	20
Secondary	1	3.33

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage(%)</b>
High Secondary	0	0
Graduate	1	3.33
<b>7. Total no of Working Member in a Household</b>		
None	1	3.33
One	11	36.66
Two	15	50
Three	3	10
<b>8. Skill development event</b>		
Participated	7	23.33
Not participated	23	76.66
<b>9. Primary Occupation</b>		
No occupation	6	20
Landless labour	11	36.66
Agriculture	5	16.66
Dairy	1	3.33
Livestock	6	20
Business	0	0
Service	1	3.33

**Table 3. Socio-economic profile of the house holds in Arei**

**(N=30)**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Frequency (f)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
<b>1. Religion</b>		
Hindu	0	0
Tribes (Sabara)	25	83.33
Christian	5	16.66
<b>2. Nature of HOH</b>		
Male headed	27	90
Migrant	2	6.66
Widow	1	3.33
<b>3.Age (HOH)</b>		
Young (Up to 30)	7	23.33
Middle Aged (31-50)	11	36.66
Old Aged (Above 50)	12	40
<b>4.Taking of loan from bank</b>		
No. of people have taken	27	90
Not taken	3	10
<b>5. Income Category (Rs/month)</b>		
Up to 2000	7	23.33
More than 2000	23	76.66
<b>6. Education(HOH)</b>		
Illiterate	21	70
Can read Only	2	6.66
Can read and write	3	10
Primary	2	6.66

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Secondary	2	6.66
High Secondary	0	0
Graduate	0	0
<b>7. Total no of Working Member in a Household</b>		
None	4	13.33
One	13	43.33
Two	4	13.33
Three	9	30
<b>8. Skill development event</b>		
Participated	7	23.33
Not participated	23	76.66
<b>9. Primary Occupation</b>		
No occupation	3	10
Landless labour	6	20
Agriculture	19	63.33
Dairy	1	3.33
Livestock	1	3.33
Business	0	0
Service	0	0

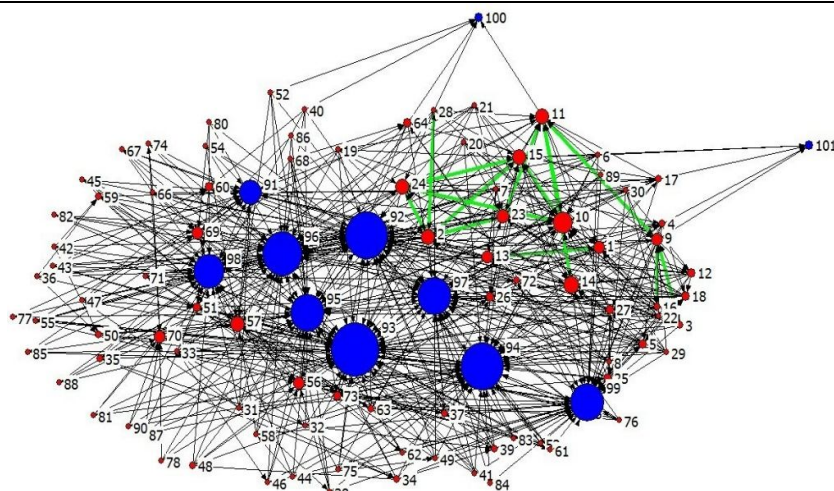
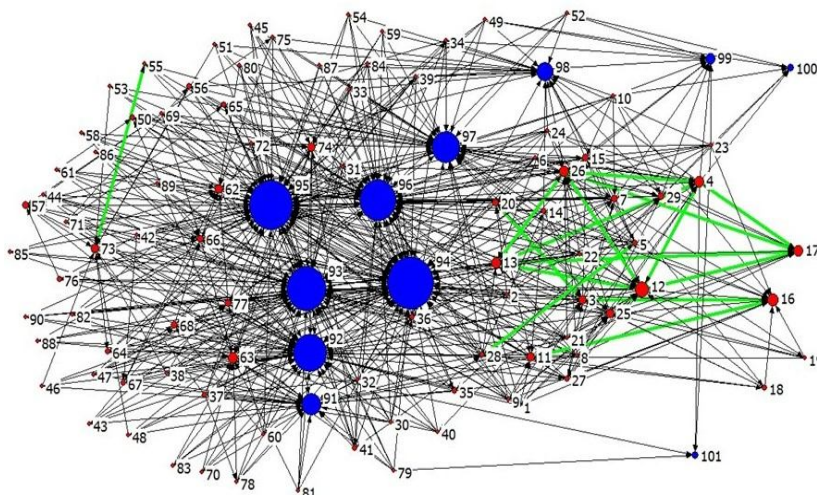
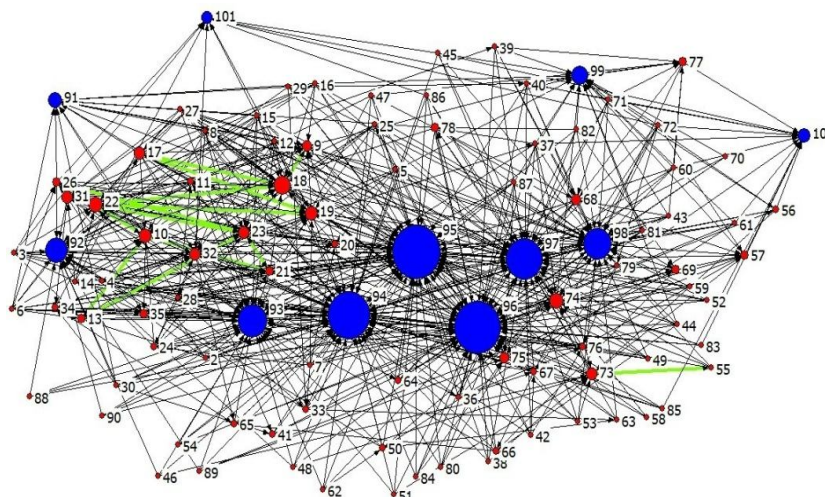


Fig. 1. Sociogram of SHG members of Akhusingi village



**Fig. 2. Sociogram of SHG members of Anjali village**



**Fig. 3. Sociogram of SHG members of Arei village**

Fig. 2 represents the systems administration of Anjali villagewith respect to social cooperation and institutional linkage. This sociogram uncovers a thick connection design among the dwellers and organizations. It was additionally portrayed from the sociogram that there were proportional ties among the SHG members. Among them, 55,73,25,26, had an incredible impact in spreading news. The Fig. 2 uncovered that the vast majority of the interactional example was uni directional. It was found that NGOs(94,95,96) had more ties with the occupants. Collaboration/linkage of government foundation was discovered lesser. Input dealers(91,98) had good social interaction here. 94 and 95 were the major institutions to spread agricultural information there. FGD with the respondents revealed that most of the NGOs and GOs helped the poor through providing them information, technology,

agricultural inputs. This diagram also depicts the interaction between some dwellerst hat had reciprocal allocation of opportunities and resources. Density of the interaction was much deeper in case of 95,94 and 93. KVK (92) had a good network. This might be due to the members are more cosmopolite in their attitude for gathering various information regarding to their activity.

Fig. 3 speaks to the organizations of Arei concerning social collaboration and institutional linkage. This socio gram reveals a thick association plan among the inhabitants and associations. It was furthermore depicted from the sociogram that there were corresponding ties among the SHG members. Among them, 74, 18,76, 75 had a goods way in spreading news. The Fig. 3 revealed that most by far of the interactional case was unidirectional. It was found that NGOs (94, 95, 96, and 97) had more

ties with the inhabitants. Coordinated effort / linkage of government establishment was found lesser. Though KVK (92) had a prominent social interaction here, but it had less tied up among the people in comparison to the private organizations. It might be due to personal conflict, egos and socio economic status etc. among people.

It was found that the couple of central actors (94, 95, and 96) assumed focal part in the every one of the systems. To Fig. 3 out which of the on-screen characters are more vital present researcher analysed degree centrality (connect among farmers), out-degree centrality (impact), in-degree centrality (distinction/conspicuousness), closeness centrality (vicinity) and betweenness centrality (contact/vital position) and chose the hub having more noteworthy than mean + 2SD centrality scores (in-degree scores wherever appropriate).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

While SHGs have been effective in empowering their members economically, they have not been successful in empowering their members socially in that study area. Self-Help Groups members are not appreciably co-related. Again, Self-Help Groups has not been that much successful in providing a platform for political empowerments to their member show ever. Self-Help Group has been successful in providing entrepreneurial empowerment to their members. It is found that social position and economic empowerment have direct relation with social interaction pattern. If the tribal women in India who are under privilege & hardly have any importance in their family, SHG can contribute a lot not only for bringing positive changes in their individual families but also for the development of the society. In this study SHG has served as change agent for cause of women empowerment. The group cohesiveness of the Self-Help Group and the empowerment of the SHG members are not significantly correlated. If the tribal women in India who are under privilege & hardly have any importance in their family, SHG can contribute a lot not only for bringing positive changes in their individual families but also for the development of the society.

#### DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)

Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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