

SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN THROUGH SELF HELP GROUPS IN WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

Women are integral part of a society, but her status and participation in decision making as well as economic activities are very low. Women Empowerment also leads to more economic benefits not to the individuals but to the society as well. The present paper is an attempt to trace the role of Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) in empowerment of women through WSHGs in West Bengal. There are 1064 Self Help Groups (SHGs) consisting SHGs of 530 and 534 from Barasat Anweshan and Barasat Sampark respectively in Barasat Block-I and Block-II. 90 WSHGs from each block consisting of total 180 WSHGs were randomly selected from selected revenue villages. Again one woman out of every SHG was randomly chosen for the present study out of which 150 (75 WSHGs from each block) useful filled questionnaires were collected from the selected Development Blocks. The results showed that microfinance has a profound influence on the socio-economic condition of the women participants of self-help group linkage program in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal.

KEYWORDS: *Microfinance, Self Help Group, Women Empowerment*