

5. Impact of Socio - Economic Condition on Self - Employment

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Introduction

Microfinance has made great strides towards identifying barriers to women's access to financial services and developing ways to overcome these barriers. It is assumed that increasing women's access to credit will increase women's decision making in the household and the access to income for both production and consumption. Secondly, it is assumed that women's interests coincide with those of the households particularly with that of children. In this context the present chapter examines the borrowing behaviour of the respondents. The saving as well as borrowing activity has multiple aspects. It initiates the process of bringing up the households above their subsistence level living. The process is rather gradual but it certainly indicates that this activity has tremendous potential.

Women workers in unorganised sector lag behind the males in terms of level and quality of employment. Such women, when they have to perform dual duties of outside employment in harsh and hostile working conditions and manage their homes, come across problems, which needs a loud hearing. These women are often illiterate, unskilled, socially backward and economically weak which often hide their work participation. Poverty, lack of access to education and inadequate health facilities are their major problems.

Microfinance: Savings and Credit Operations

The present section examines the role played by Microfinance and SHGs in credit markets in providing the link between lenders and poor women who are the borrowers.

Dhir (2012) suggests that it is not only economic upliftment of women which is achieved through SHGs but they also play an important role as catalysts in wiping out the social maladies. On the similar lines Armendariz and Morduch (2005) have argued that microfinance can also improve long term development as the responsibility of children's health and education mainly rests with the women. In particular, they highlighted the potential of microfinance to play a role in increasing the self-employment opportunities and skill acquisition for the poor women.