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National rural livelihoods mission in Bihar: results from a survey of self-help groups formed under Jeevika

Abhishek

Research scholar, Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
abhishek51186@gmail.com

Abstract

Objectives: The study tries to look at how the SHG movement unfolding in Bihar is not only being a stable and reliable source of finance for the familial needs but also empowering the for women coming from marginalized sections.
Methods/Statistical Analysis: This study is based on the survey conducted among selected SHGs in Muzaffarpur, Saran and Vaishali districts. Along with the direct interview done with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire about the use of the loans taken the details of financial transactions of the SHGs were taken from Len-Den Pustika. For understanding the socio-economic background of the areas covered, the census, government documents, research papers and news materials were used.
Findings: JEEViKA has been quiet successful in bringing financial inclusion, developing a habit of saving and providing poor the reach to financial institutions. SHGs are doing well in providing timely and swift help in the case of emergency especially health-related emergencies (33% of the laons are realated to medial issues). Here the corpus funds are being of much importance as the percentage of health-related loans are more in the relatively younger SHGs than in the older ones. Although, the main purpose of the NRLM ius to help women in developing livelihoods, the loans taken for the purpose of establishing an enterprise are few only. Much of the laons taken for the commercial activities are those who has been taken for the expansion of already established business rather than the establishmentof a new enterprise. A large number of laons has been taken for the asset creation (17.77%), especially, building the toilets (62.50%), which shows how JEEViKA is being helpful to another government scheme i.e. Swachh Baharat Abhiyan.
Application/Improvements: Paper argues that the effectiveness of the interventions increases when the socio-politico situation of the area and economic intervention works in a tandem, a case which needs further study.
***Keywords*:** Micro-finance, Financial Inclusion, Self-help Group, NRLM; BRLPS, Women empowerment.

1. Introduction

Despite of the remarkable success achieved in past decades, in 2013, there were still 767 million people living on less than US$1.90 a day poverty line, defined by the World Bank on the same parameters, the share of people living below poverty line be12.8% (902.0 million) and 9.6% (702.1 million)in year 2012 and 2015 respectively. According to poverty line defined by the “Expert Group constituted by the Planning Commission” under the Chairmanship of Dr. C. Rangarajan to Review the Methodology for Measurement of Poverty, 29.5% of Indians are poor [1]. Another, Suresh Tendulkar Committee’s national poverty line which considers a person who spends below or equal to ₹ 27.2 in rural areas and ₹ 33.3 in urban areas a day as poor which when we calculate for a family of five on monthly basis comes out to be₹ 4,080 and ₹ 5,000 in rural and urban areas respectively, found that there are 21.9% Indians who lives in poverty [2].

The poverty in India has a fixed spatial and social pattern with rich and poor states (even within the states there are districts which can be said to be historically marginalised), certain regions and certain segments of population. The rural-urban difference is also there. The same rule seems to be applying on the social distribution, the historically marginalised sections which constitutes scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and women are more affected with poverty than the historically well-offs.

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The majority of the poor households of the rural areas are resource-poor, engaged in low productive jobs which can be due to various reasons like traditional exclusion or unfavourable inclusion. The changing nature of Indian economy can also be said to be contributing to this pattern of poverty because what we witness since the opening of market that a rapid decrease of 8.5% - from 26% in 1998to 17.5% in 2008 - happening in the share of primary sector in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), just in a decade, without having significant change in the percentage of persons engaged in the primary activities especially in the case of rural population. These issues have been highlighted by the Programme Implementation Plan (PIP) of National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) also. PIP while taking in account the highly complex and greatly differentiated – not only geographical but demographical and also social class – nature of the rural poverty, finds it to be a product of systemic factors as well as structural changes in the economy. PIP further argues that even if we exclude the traditional factors of exclusion it has been found that lack of credit-linkages, market linkages and collective voice can be said to be the three most important factors responsible for the present poverty scenario [3].

All over the world women are more prone to poverty than men, they face systematic discrimination own less resources in comparison to male members, have lesser participation in decision and faces violence. As UN women notes that "It is estimated that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or sexual violence by a non-partner at some point in their lives" [4]. All over the world situation of a women further deteriorates when if they belongs to the marginalized sections, as in these situations along with gender discrimination they also faces racial and class discrimination. In Indian situation the factor which plays a dominant role is of caste. For the women all over the world the ways out of poverty are narrower than men. For example, by economic participation women can enhance their skills forms own networks and these networks can be used to challenge discrimination, improve access to resources and increase the income. But, the women's access to the decent work is fairly curtailed; women all over the world are excluded from the decent work and are over-represented in low-paid, informal work without security [5]. The global average gender pay gap is 24% but in some countries like in India, Ethiopia, Japan etc. it is much higher 32.6, 31.5 and 28.7% respectively. Which means that women are not only denied access to the decent wage but also to the living wage. Evidences shows that although there has been some progress made but the barriers being faced by the women and girls largely remains same in last twenty years as acknowledged by the UN Secretary General [4].

McKinsey in its report in 2015 noted that "If all countries were to match the momentum toward gender parity of the fastest-improving countries in their region, $12 trillion a year could be added to global GDP by 2025". And India is one of those countries which will be benefited the most, as "India could add $700 billion of additional GDP in 2025, upping the country's annual GDP growth by 1.4% points" [6]. This potential can be tapped not only by increasing the women's participation in the labour market but we will have to make sure that they don't remain concentrated only in low-pay sectors. Another reason which hinders the women's participation in economy is the lack of credit which is crucial for the self-employment, in developing countries women is less likely than men to have an account at a formal financial institution. They face lots of restrictions which includes legal requirements for women to have a male family member's permission to open a bank account, a lack of ownership of assets that could be used as collateral, or a lack of credit history and even in the case they have a bank account they are less likely to use it as they may not have access to technology.

This study which is presented in three sections gives an account of the silent revolution is unfolding in Bihar where the women from marginalized sections are organizing themselves in Self-Help Groups which not only being a stable and reliable source of finance for their familial needs but being source of empowerment. SHGs are being a medium of credit-worthiness, financial literacy and sustainable livelihoods. It is fueling entrepreneurial abilities and helping the women to excel in other walk of life also, especially politics. In the first part of the paper we will try to develop our understanding about the financial inclusion and the role of microfinance by examining various literatures available. An overview of financial inclusion in India will be taken and introduction to the NRLM will be made, in the second part of the paper. In the third and the final part we will look at the findings of the survey. Which proves the success of the NRLM promoted SHGs in developing a behavior of saving among the marginalized women and bringing them out of debt-trap by providing timely and economical credit?

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2. Microfinance: Definitions and objectives

There are enough empirical evidences from various countries showing how an inclusive financial system not only helps in raising growth significantly but also in alleviating poverty and expanding economic opportunities for the downtrodden. Financial inclusion is more than credit-linkage; it means the "delivery of financial services at an affordable cost in a fair and transparent terms and conditions to vast sections of disadvantages, weaker and low-income groups including household enterprise, small medium enterprise and traders" [7]. World Bank visualizes financial inclusion as "a multidimensional, pro-client concept, encompassing increased access, better products and services, better- informed and -equipped consumers, and effective use of products and services." Highlighting recent developments Ledger wood and Gibson argues that "putting this concept into practice requires more than institutional expansion and portfolio growth, goals that drove early development of the microfinance industry, balancing clients' interests and providers' viability, financial inclusion incorporates effective policies, legislation, industry and consumer protection standards, and financial capability" [8].

An inclusive financial system capable to provide micro-finance to the needy can prevent lots of poor from falling into a debt trap. Microfinance is not only about credit but "refers to small-scale financial services for both credits and deposits — that are provided to people who farm or fish or herd; operate small or microenterprises where goods are produced, recycled, repaired, or traded; provide services; work for wages or commissions; gain income from renting out small amounts of land, vehicles, draft animals, or machinery and tools; and to other individuals and local groups in developing, in both rural and urban areas" [9]. As ADB reports that "even though approximately two-third (62%) of the world's adult population have a bank account, less than one-third (27%) save in banks, less than one-fifth (18%) use them to receive wages or to pay bills, and just more than one-tenth (11%) are borrowing from the banks. For the women, only 58% of them have a bank account, compared to 65% of men, and on a regional basis, the gender gap in account ownership is largest in South Asia (55% of men versus 37% of women)" [10]. The unavailability of the financial services, when they are needed the most, forces the poor to take the loans from the local money-lenders who charges extremely high interest rates. The lack of credit-linkage at one hand act as an impediment in the agricultural growth and on other it becomes a havoc in the case of medical emergency. It has been found that almost half of the total rural poor (45%), in order to access better health facilities either turn to high cost borrowing from local money-lenders or sell their productive assets. Second, it is inimical to the development of the habit of saving among the poor. Lack of financial services impacts even those who are recipients of the remittances. As Asian Development Bank (ADB) highlights that "in Bangladesh, 84% of remittances are spent, and only 14% is saved. The low rate of savings is mainly due to high transaction costs (such as fees to open a bank account), lack of trust in financial institutions, and regulatory barriers (such as official identification documents that many poor people lack), among other factors. Studies suggest that providing financial education could help households save more and these savings, in turn, can be placed into the formal financial system to generate economic activity".

3. Financial inclusion in India

The need of providing each and every household access to financial services has been recognized by the policy makers since a long time. And the Government and the Reserve Bank have undertaken several measures in this direction. But, because of India being a country of huge population and widespread illiteracy it always proved to be daunting task. The step in the direction of financial inclusion was taken in August 2014 with the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY). The growth in the numbers of the Basic Savings Bank Deposit (BSBD) accounts can be the basic parameter for the assessment of the financial inclusion. PMJDY has been a huge success in the number of accounts openings - there were 125473289 total accounts opened under PMJDY as on 31.01.2015, out of these 75016094 accounts (59.78%) were rural one [11]. As Economic Survey tells as that "prior to the launch of PMJDY, since introduction of BSBD accounts in 2005 till July 2014, the numbers of such accounts had grown to 25.54 crore. After the launch of PMJDY, the number of BSBD accounts rose rapidly to 51.50 crore by December 2016, of which 26.20 crore (50.87%) were accounts opened under PMJDY.

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There were total 28.76 crore accounts opened under PMJDY as on 31.5.2017" [12]. Out of all saving accounts women with 33.69 crore accounts shared 28%. It rose significantly and as of March 2017; the women share was 40%. The figures show that the PMJDY has been a huge success in increasing the number of accounts but the same cannot be said about the use of those accounts. As the Global Findex database reveals "India, with a dormancy rate of 43%, accounts for about 195 million of the 460 million adults with a dormant account around the world" [13]. The poor and marginalized even if they own a bank account they don't use any facility other than deposit. Even we have a lot of empirical evidences proving that the poor don't default, banks don't have a good track record of extending credits to the poor. As the loans which they require, usually, are of very small amount and from the perspective of a commercial bank they don't worth the time and money spent on their processing. Other than there are serious doubts that in the case of accounts being opened on the name of women that do they really own it?

NRLM which was launched in 2011, with "the primary objective to reduce poverty by promoting diversified and gainful self-employment and wage employment opportunities for sustainable increase in incomes" [3] tries to bring about a sustainable change in the livelihoods of the rural poor. It replaced Ministry of Rural Development's Swarnajayanti Grameen Swarojgar Yojana, whose objective was same to promote self-employment among rural poor and was launched in 1999 by restructuring Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP). NRLM has "set out an agenda to reach out to and support 70 million BPL households across 600 districts of the country, to come out of poverty" [14]. It, identifies the absence of credit-linkage as one of the key challenge in the development of the poor as "facilitating access to financial services from banks and other specialized financial institutions and necessary linkages for livelihood promotion would be critical to promote sustainable livelihoods and enable the poor to overcome poverty" [15]. It notes that "the financial services did not have the systems and procedures suited to the poor" [16] and argues "for investing in institutional systems and processes that would enable the rural poor to organize themselves into functionally effective collectives and emerge as clients of the banking system and the micro-finance sector". Highlighting the desirability to create some other institutions which can provide loans easily, economically and timely it calls that "the poor households to form their own institutions" which will be "an important investment for an effective poverty reduction program." The basic idea here is that "the thrift and credit based Self Help Groups and their federations can serve as support system for the poorest to meet their financial and social needs" [3].

3.1. BRLPS and financial inclusion in Bihar

Access to microfinance, especially in rural areas, is essential for a state like Bihar whose economy is dominated by agriculture constituting around one-fifth of state's GDP and employing three-fourth of the labor force. As notes while dealing that Agricultural Livelihoods can be Enhanced through Community Institutions in Bihar that "92.8% of the farmers in Bihar are small and marginal (small holders), which is much higher than the all India average of 83.5%. In addition, only 29% of households own any land and the average landholding size is approximately 1 acre" [16].

In state of Bihar the agency through which NRLM is being implemented by Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society (BRLPS) popularly known as JEEViKA, established, in 2005, well before the rolling of NRLM, by Government of Bihar (GoB) with the assistance of World Bank for Poverty Alleviation in the state. It was established with the objective "to enhance social and economic empowerment of the rural poor in Bihar" and it sought to accomplish it by "improving rural livelihoods and enhancing social and economic empowerment of the rural poor, developing organizations of the rural poor and producers to enable them to access and better negotiate services, credit and assets from public and private sector agencies and financial institutions, investing in capacity building of public and private service providers and playing a catalytic role in promoting development of microfinance and agribusiness sectors" [17].

The World Bank assisted Bihar Rural Livelihoods Project was launched in 2006. In this first phase it was covering 22 villages across 5 blocks. Then in 2007, the project expanded to 18 blocks in 6 Districts. In 2009, 24 more blocks were added. JEEViKA commenced operations in 11 more blocks of 3 districts in Kosi area under Bihar Kosi Flood Recovery Project in December, 2010.

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In April 2011, JEEViKA was designated by Government of Bihar as State Rural Livelihoods Mission to roll out National Rural Livelihoods Mission in entire state. JEEViKA has up scaled its interventions in 533 blocks across 38 districts in February, 2014.

BRLPS's manual for microfinance enlists following ten points as the utilities of microfinance [18]:

1. To help poor households in their development by delivering financial services to them.
2. To develop good financial practices among poor.
3. To provide poor the reach to financial institutions.
4. To protect the poor from the exploitations of money-lenders.
5. To make poor self-sufficient by developing the skills of poor.
6. To enhance the confidence of financial institutions in the poor.
7. To provide financial protection to the poor in the case of needs e.g. health problems, accidents etc.
8. To enhance self-confidence of the poor and help them in developing decision-making capacities.
9. To help the poor in developing livelihoods.
10. To help poor in making their voice heard.

4. Areas of field survey and Methodology

In an order to understand the pattern of loans being taken five SHGs each, from three neighboring districts Muzaffarpur, Saran and Vaishalisituated in north Bihar were surveyed. These districts feature in the 250 most backward districts of the country who receives grants from the Backward Regions Grant Funds (BRGF) established by Government of India on 19 February, 2007, designed to "address regional imbalances in development". Till 1972 both Viashali and Muzaffarpurwas one district. Muzaffarpur district, occupying an area of 3,175.9 square kilometres and population of 4,778,610, which makes it the 24th most populous district in India and the third most populous district of Bihar. The district has a population density of 1,506 inhabitants per square kilometre (3,900/sq. mi) and literacy rate of 65.68%. Saran district occupies an area of 2,641 square kilometres and as per the 2011 census it has a population of 3,943,098. Saran has a sex ratio of 949 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 68.57%. Out of twenty blocks in the districts, six (Sonepur, Dighwara, Revelganj, Chapra, Manjhi and Dariyapur) are regularly flooded. Six others are partially affected by floods (Parsa, Marhoura, Amnaur, Jalalpur, and Ekma). Vaishali district occupies an area of 2,036 square kilometres and according to the 2011 census Vaishali district has a population of 3,495,249, literacy rate of 68.56% and 892 females per 1000 male. It has 16 blocks. It is also one of the districts who are receiving grants under the BRGF.

The survey was phase conducted in Mushahri, Dariyapur and Hajipur blocks of Muzaffarpur, Saran and Vaishali districts respectively. The surveyed SHGs of Mushahri were of first phase whereas that of Hajipur were of second phase and of Dariyapur were of third. We used secondary data for understanding the socio-economic background of the areas covered whereas for the information about the SHGs direct interview was done with the help of a semi-structured questionnaire which included question about the financial transactions of the SHGs. The questions were both close-ended as well as open ended. For the quantitative part the questions were close-ended where for the qualitative part there were open ended questions. The survey covered all 185 members of the 15 SHGs.

5. Findings

Out of 185 members surveyed only 22.70% members (42) had bank accounts prior to joining the SHG. The percentage of people having an account prior to joining SHG decreases in the SHGs of earlier phases and rural areas. As, in the SHGs of first phase, who were surveyed, only one person had a bank account prior to joining the SHG even while all of them were located in Muzaffarpurtown. Lots of account was the result of the PMJDY. The exact number can't be said as in many cases the respondents were neither knowing about scheme nor they were able to bring pass-books.

But the year of opening of the accounts it seems that they opened it under Jan-Dhan Yojna. Most of the accounts were non-operational and some of the members told that they have joint accounts. Very few members

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were able to tell the exact name of the bank in which they had their accounts. In most of the cases what we get is a paper on which the name of bank and account number was written. So, quantitatively it can be 42 but qualitatively it is well below it. When asked that do you know about ATM machine and can you operate that they were almost clueless. For almost all of the members the corpus fund of the group remains the main source of credit. In order to understand the reason for the loans being taken and how well they utilized we decided to go through the Len-Den Pustika (LDP). For the sake of simplicity, in the case of older SHGs, we will go through only the last seven loans or the loans taken after July 2016. Whereas in some of relatively younger SHGs we will look at all the loans. In our survey we covered altogether 135 loans. Which were divided under six different heads i.e., personal, agricultural, health, asset creation, business/commercial and other. Now what comes out is that 33% of the loans taken are related with the health followed by 18.51 % loans taken for business or commercial activities and 17.77% for the asset creation, 16% for other, 8% for agriculture and 6per cent for the personal (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptions of loan taken in all three districts

Serial no.	Purpose	Frequency
1	Personal	08
2	Agricultural	11
3	Health	45
4	Asset creation	24
5	Business/commercial	25
6	Other	22

In district-wise break-up, it comes out that in Muzaffarpur, out of 36 loans which were surveyed, 42% were for asset creation, 25% were for the business purpose, 19% were other and 14% were for the health. It worth mentioning here that all the SHGs surveyed in Muzaffarpur were of the first phase so here what we are getting is an analysis of only the last seven loans taken or the loans taken after July 2016 (Table 2).

Table 2. Descriptions of loan taken in Muzaffarpur

Serial no.	Purpose	Frequency
1	Personal	00
2	Agricultural	00
3	Health	05
4	Asset creation	15
5	Business/commercial	09
6	Other	07

In Vaishali, out of 47 loans which were surveyed, 36% were for the business purpose, 27%were for the health, 16% were for asset creation, 14% for the agriculture and 7% were other (Table 3). In Saran, out of 52 loans which were surveyed, 54% were for the health, 23% other, 10% for agriculture, 9% for personal and only 4% were for the asset creation. Here no one took loan for business or commercial purpose (Table 4). These findings clearly tell us that in the relatively older SHGs the share of the loans taken for the health purposes is less in comparison of the relatively younger SHGs of Saran.

Table 3. Descriptions of loan taken in Vaishali

Serial no.	Purpose	Frequency
1	Personal	03
2	Agricultural	06
3	Health	12
4	Asset creation	07
5	Business/commercial	16
6	Other	03

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Out of total 45 loans for health, 28 (62.22%) were taken in Saran, 12 (26.66%) in Vaishali and only 5 (11.11%) in Muzaffarpur. Other than it what need to be observed is the average amount of the loans taken in each district. Overall average of the loans taken for the health is ₹7285.70, but among the districts it is ₹857.10 for Saran, ₹2,000 for Vaishali and ₹19,000 for Muzaffarpur. So, what comes out here that in Saran women are taking small amount of loans but frequently whereas in Muzaffarpur loans are being taken only when there are some serious conditions.In Saran women were happy with the SHGs because now they can have easy and quick loan when needed whereas in Muzaffarpur women were happier about the savings which they are having. One woman from Saran told me that earlier they used to go here and there but now they have an option which is not only always available but dignified. They told that in sudden circumstances it was not easy to get the small amounts, even if you have money in the banks it is not possible to withdraw at the time of need but now they say that they just contact the treasurer of their SHG and use to get it.

Table 4. Descriptions of loan taken in Saran

Serial no.	Purpose	Frequency
1	Personal	05
2	Agricultural	05
3	Health	28
4	Asset creation	02
5	Business/commercial	00
6	Other	12

5.1. Business/Commercial loans

In the case of business and commercial loans we observe an opposite trend. Here as the SHG becomes older the number of loans taken for business and commerce rise. Out of total 25 loans which were taken for the business or commercial purposes, 09 happened only in Muzaffarpur, 16 in Vaishali and none in Saran. Here we need to note down another very interesting phenomenon that is the impact of business opportunities already present. As both, Muzaffarpur and Hajipur are the town areas so in both the places there was not much difference in the overall opportunities available, other than it the SHGs of Muzaffarpur were relatively older and had trained members also. But Hajipur takes the lead, because in Hajipur there is well-developed market of plant nurseries in which traditionally women used to participate. Here out of the total 16 loans taken for the business 9 (56.25%) were for the business of nursery, 3 (18.75%) were to buy cow and sell the milk. So, what is happening here is synergy between the financial support of JEEVIKA and prevailing social and market conditions?

5.2. Loans taken for the asset creations

A large percentage of loans were taken for the asset creation. Under this head we included construction of house, repair, purchasing of livestock (if the milk is not being sold), construction of toilets, purchase of consumer durables and other similar activities. If we divide these loans district-wise out of total 24 loans taken for the asset creation, 02 (8.33%) were taken in Saran, 07 (29.16%) in Vaishali and 15 (62.5%) in Muzaffarpur. Here the most importan point to be noted is that 15 (62%) loans were taken for the construction of toilets. This tells us that even in the government's attempt to erdicate open defection, with the schemes like Swachh Bharat Mission on all-India level and Lohia Swachh Bihar Mission – State-sponsored scheme of Bihar - SHGs are playing an important role by not only motivating the women to have a toilet but alos by providing them finance for having.

5.3. Loans taken for the agriculture

It was very surprising that the percentage of loans taken for the agriculture is very low. Only eleven loans, six in Vaishali and five in Saran and no loan in muzaffarpur, were taken for the agricultural purpose. When asked them why they are not taking loans for the agriculture the common answer was that first of all they don't have much land and second, agriculture is a men's affair so they usually don't interfere. The second part is very important becaue it tells us that bringing change is not only about providing financial help but it also about giving financial help in a way in which society wants it to be.

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Here what we can see that highest number of loans for agriculture was taken in Hajipur, Vaishali. This can be understood easily, as we have already seen that in Hajipur we have a well develped nursery business and women have good say in it so automatically it gets transferred to the agricultural fields.

5.4. Loans taken for the personal use

Under this title we have included the loans taken for the home expenses, personal expenses like buying small things, to go to some other places etc. There were 8 loans taken under this head, here Saran tops in the list with five loans followed by Vaishali with rest of three loans and Muzaffarpur score zero.

5.5. Other

Whatever is not included anywhere is included here. It is last but not the least, because it includes one very important thing that is loan repayment. In each and every district women take a large sum from the SHGs to repay their outstanding loans. They told me that if you have any loan which is not from the group it directly mean that you are paying a huge interest without any reason. There were total 22 loans taken under this head. Saran tops here with total 12 loans (54.54%) followed by Muzaffarpur with seven. There were only three loans made under this head in Vaishali.

5.6. Impact on the money-lending business

One of the major impacts of SHGs can be seen on the local money-lending business. Because in the pre-JEEVIKA days the only source of finance for the poor were the personal contacts and local money lenders who use to enjoy monopolistic powers so they use to charge interest rates ranging between 5- 10% monthly, depending upon the severity of the situations and the duration in which it was agreed to pay back. Only in Hajipur, some of the members told us about the micro-finance institutions. But once again when asked that whether they took loans or not they said that because it was difficult to understand the rules and regulations they never tried to approach them. All the women interviewed told that the interest rate use to be highest in the case of medical emergency and marriage, in some of the situation you may be forced to pay an interest rate as high as 20% per month. In some of the cases they use to charge weekly interest which use to vary in between 2-5%. Which means that the loans use to be double in less than six months? Now in most of the villages this business is going down? The interest rates are coming down regularly and are exceptional to charge an interest rate of 10 per cent. In Saran and Vaishali many women said that the easy and cheaper loan as the most attractive aspect of JEEViKA.

6. Conclusion

JEEViKA is quite successful in bringing financial inclusion, developing a habit of saving, providing poor the reach to financial institutions, protecting the poor from the exploitations of money-lenders, enhancing the confidence of financial institutions in the poor, providing financial protection to the poor in the case of needs e.g. health problems, accidents etc. and enhancing self-confidence of the poor and help them in developing decision-making capacities. In other words fulfilling the objectives of microfinance.It is not only bringing the inclusion in quantitative trems but also in qualitative terms. Women are not only coming to the bank but coming with a purpose as they are getting their initial training of saving and investment in the respective SHGs. Based on the above data it can be said that JEEViKa is performing satisfactorily on the parameters like helping poor households in their development by delivering financial services to them, developing good financial practices among poor, in JEEVikA. They are putting a pressure on the banks – who still shy away in disbursing loans to these individual women - by proving their creditworthiness. Inside the house, the JEEViKA women are handling the money and playing a role of leadership in dealing with the banks. For those members who already had accounts in the bank, earlier they usedto think that handling the accounts is the job of male members and were doing whatever dictated to them, but now they are taking interest in understanding the banking process. And even the banking staff behave differently when they go in a number.

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Other than briging the poor to the banks, the SHGs performs tremendously well in providing timely and swift help in the case of emergency, through the corpus funds. As the findings suggest that the majority (33%) of the loans taken is related with the health and it is more in the relatively younger SHGs. in overall survey it comes out that what follows the loans taken for the health are the loans taken for commercial activities (18.51%) and asset creation (17.77%). SHGs are helpful even for the other missions, especially Swachh Bharat Mission as under the heading of asset creation majority (62%) of loans was taken to build toilets. The proportion of loans taken for agriculture activities depends on the location of the SHGs. But, while JEEViKA is performing extremly well in providing a financial security-net to the needy one, especially in the case of health, the loans are not being utilised for developing the skills of poor, helping the poor in developing livelihoods. As we can see that the loans taken for the business or commercial purposes appears in very late phases. One of the reason behind this can be the lack of confidence and training among the members who still find that they cannot successfully run a commercial enterprise i.e. lack of entrepreneurship in the women due to the traditions and customs. As we have seen that in the case of Hajipur where social situations are favourable we have seen that JEEViKA is having a good amount of success. Other than it, what is more important here to note that in the older SHGs there are some women who are coming forward to undertake business and commercial enterprises. So, it can be said that in the short run livelihood development depends largely on the relations developing between the prevailing socio- politico situation of the area concerned and the financial practices promoted by JEEViKA.

In order to make the model more effective we need to take further studies highlighting the relationship between socio- politico situation of the area concerned and the financial practices promoted for the promotion of sustainable livelihood and resource creations.

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