
PROGRESS OF SELF-HELP GROUP (SHG)-BANK LINKAGE PROGRAMME IN INDIA

¹Sudhir Sharma ²Chaman Prakash Sharma

¹Professor, ²Research Scholar

Department of Economics

Ch.Charan.Singh. University, Meerut

ABSTRACT:

Microfinance is emerging as a powerful instrument for poverty alleviation in India. Microfinance can be as an umbrella under which financial services including micro credit are provided to the low-income group. India's National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) initiated Self-Help Group (SHG) program, which is currently the largest and fastest growing microfinance program in India. In this paper, an attempt has been made to overview the concept and growth of the dominating model of microfinance delivery in India. The study would also highlight the progress of SHG-Bank linkage program in India, this paper analysis the performance of the SHG-Bank linkage programme in India. The region wise analysis clearly shows that the Southern region alone accounted for 63.66 percent and 79.36 per cent of the SHGs linked and the bank loan disbursed respectively. The different banks involved in the SHG-Bank linkage programme.

Key words: Microfinance, alleviation, self-help group,

INTRODUCTION:

The International year of micro credit 2005, looked to fulfill the goals of development, our collective efforts underscore the importance of microfinance as an integral part. The accessibility of poor people to microfinance helps in reducing poverty by increasing their income level and empowering people to make choices that best cater to their needs. The biggest challenge before us is to eliminate the obstacles that inhibit the full financial participation of individuals. If the full participation in the financial sector is ensured then we can also create an inclusive financial sector, this will streamlining the way for improving the lives of the people. **Secretary General of U.N. Kofi Annan.**

Microfinance in India is a powerful tool for development of the poor. It may be a panacea. Microfinance in India is an influential tool for development and it has brought a huge change in the lives of many in an over-populated country like India. Self-Help Group bank linkage programme is certainly powerful equipment, through which the poor can also reach the hassle free finance without any collateral and also improve their habit of thrift. But in order to make the approaches more useful means for poverty alleviation a sustainable rural development, there is a need for unfeigned intervention by the promotional agencies particularly the banks in the domain of awareness, building skill, development and training, etc. There is a huge potential for maintaining microfinance in India,

DEVELOPMENT OF MICROFINANCE SYSTEM IN INDIA:

The first SHG emerged in MYRADA in 1984-85. In 1986, MYRADA contacted NABARD with the proposal to support the formation of an alternative model of credit provision for the poor. In 1987, after several field studies, NABARD gave MYRADA a sum of rupees one million. The groups were now called Self-Help Groups at NABARD's request. This amount from NABARD was used to train the groups and to match their savings. Between 1988 and 1990, NABARD conducted studies to assess the progress of this pilot. The Self-Help Affinity group (SAG) model emerged as the most cost effective. NABARD organised several meetings with MYRADA. In 1990-1991, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed banks to lend directly to groups and in 1991, NABARD came out with guidelines,

which have been reviewed and updated regularly. In 1992, NABARD launched the SHG-Bank Linkage strategy, which has spread all over the country.

MICROFINANCE DELIVERY MODELS IN INDIA:

Microfinance is being provided through SHG-Bank Linkage and Microfinance Institution (MFI) model in India. Such SHG bank linkage programme developed by NABARD is densely prevalent throughout the country. In this model, the informal SHGs are credit linked with the formal banking system. On the other hand, the MFI model has emerged to reach the rural poor people, who are far beyond the formal banking sector. These MFIs give financial services to the individuals or to the groups like SHGs, JLGs.

SHG-BANK LINKAGE MODEL:

SHG-BLM has been developed in India to provide microfinance with the help of use rural network of formal financial sector. In this model, the informal SHGs are credit linked with the formal financial institutions. This model is flexible and provides the freedom of saving and borrowing as per the requirement of the members of the group. Due to the large branch network in rural areas, SHG-bank linkage programme is more relevant in the Indian context. The Microfinance movement started in India with the introduction of SHG-bank linkage programme. The programme uses SHGs as an intermediation between the banks and the rural poor to help in cutting down transaction costs for both the banks and the rural clients. Banks provide finance and government agencies, organize the poor in the form of Self Help Groups. Under this programme, loans are offered to the SHGs with three different methodologies.

MODEL I. SHGS FORMED AND FINANCED BY BANKS:

In this model, banks themselves take up the work of constructing and nurturing the groups, opening their bank accounts and giving them bank loans after satisfying themselves as to their maturity to absorb credit, about twenty percent of the Self- Help Groups have been nurtured by this model.

MODEL II. SHGs FORMED BY NGOS AND FORMAL ORGANISATIONS BUT DIRECTLY FINANCED BY THE BANKS:

In this model, groups are created by NGOs or government agencies, the groups are nurtured and trained by the agencies. The bank then offers credit directly to the SHGs after observing their operations and maturity to absorb credit. Although the banks directly lend to the groups, but the nurtured agencies continue their communication with the group, begin with this model, where NGOs play an important role. This model has also been noticeable and more acceptable to banks, since some of the difficult functions of social dynamics are externalized. Three models related to SHG-BLP, this continues to have a major share. Under this model, about 70 percent of the total number of groups has been nourished.

MODEL III. SHGs FINANCED BY BANKS USING NGOS AND OTHER AGENCIES AS FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES:

For some reasons the bank is not in a position to fund the group in some areas. In such cases, the NGOs act as both facilitators and microfinance intermediaries. First, they promote groups, nurture them, and train them and then they reach to the banks for bulk credit lending to the SHGs. In other terms, banks take the sole responsibility for promoting, developing, and financing SHGs. Actually; there is a need to make substantial efforts by the bank employees to form SHGs. This model is not so encouraging.

DEMAND FOR MICROFINANCE IN INDIA:

There are three segments in respect to demand for microcredit. At the very bottom, there are landless agriculture laborers and manual laborers. Another segment is marginal farmers and non-urban artisans, weavers, and self employed of informal sectors, such as hawkers and workers in household micro enterprises. The third market segment is of other farmers who have gone in for commercial crops and other engaged in dairy farming, poultry, fisheries etc. Teashops, provisional stores and other manufacturing activities are example of nonfarm activities in this segment.

SUPPLY OF MICROFINANCE SERVICES IN INDIA:

The Indian microfinance sector is characterized by a number of microfinance service providers. These are apex financial institutions like the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Small Industrial Development Bank of India and government possessed societies like Rashtriya Mahila Kosh. Formal sector financial institutions, Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks, member-based institutions like Cooperatives, mutually aided Cooperative Societies, SHG federations, private sector industries, specialized Non Banking Financial Corporation's (NBFCs), societies, trusts etc. areas of priority for commercial banks, loan targets and good returns are major incentives. Encouraged by the early results, the new private sector banks most famously ICICI bank but also AXIS bank and HDFC bank are actively trying exposure in the microfinance sector. Different kinds of MFIs are also scaling up their activities with product diversification. These MFIs are working with a strategy to upscale their service for financial inclusion on commercial basis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

David Hulme (2011) examined that microfinance is one of the best way to deal with poverty. It has been alleged that it has failed to help the poor, it is alleged that charging high interest rates, poorly dealing with its customers and encouraging the poor people to take excessive debt burden. The authors examine these issues and find that the microfinance institution can have a positive effect, which includes democratic banking services. Provision of micro-savings facilities for the poor people and especially social benefits for women, Paper suggests some changes for microfinance, those who need to be implemented by MFI, banking authorities and governments. **Anurag Priyadarshee and Asad K. Ghalib (2011)** explained that in Andhra Pradesh state of India a series of mishaps occurred due to extensive lending in the microfinance sector recently, which resulted over indebtedness and ultimately defaults. Credit institutions resorted to forced measures for recovery of loan, which resulted in suicides amongst borrowers. In this paper we will try to find out the reasons which cause these conditions, we will consider how extensive operations and ubiquitous Self-Help Groups attract private microfinance providers with their relationships with the bank. This resulted in the absence of adequate regulatory mechanism as well as lending more to the poor. It is argued that the rules introduced to solve this issue do not focus on the social structures, regulatory measures, uneven distribution of institutional framework for distribution of microfinance among different states and focused on private sector only. **Dr. Damji B. H, (2011)** observed that the microcredit program focus on the organization of rural poor's at the primary level through the process of social movement. This enables the poor to build their own organization (SHGs) which has 10-20 people, in which they participates directly and decides all issues related to poverty alleviation. Microfinance can be a powerful tool to start the development process. Microfinance activity can improve rural access to financial services, its role in eradicating poverty is very important. The current study tries to highlight it. **Heena K. Bijli, (2012)** discussed microcredit has emerged as the biggest social empowerment strategy for low-income groups across India. The MFIs are playing appreciable roles in providing microcredit to SHGs, in collaboration with the government, NGOs and social organizations. However, experience at the micro level of SHGs tells us that microfinance is not always effective in eradicating poverty, and the questions here related to the knowledge of financial practices and credit usage within the SHGs. Findings revealed that limited knowledge of women regarding value for savings, cash flow management, capital formation, account

keeping, and financial literacy modules were developed for empowerment of SHG members, which has been presented in this study in detail. **Vanishree, (2012)** found that Indian micro-finance is becoming an increasingly viable sector. It has developed a successful and sustainable system, to meet the financial and non-financial needs of low-income population. SHGs have been able to deal with the traditional challenges faced in the field of financial services. The SHG-bank linkage programme is carried out under the guidance of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development with an active participation of NGOs, state development institutions, commercial banks, regional rural banks, district rural development authority's and local bodies like Panchayati Raj institutions. This paper studies the trends and progress of the SHGs bank linkage program, paper also analysis the issues and challenges faced by banks to lend SHGs. **Dr. Sangeeta Arora and Meenu, (2012)** assessed the service industry is a major contributor to the socio-economic development of any country; it is one of the largest and fastest growing industry in the world. In India too, the service sector is contributing a lot towards economic development. The banking sector is one of the important players of the services industry serving the financial needs of the community. Microfinance is such an event, which is emerging as the biggest intervention in the banking world. In this paper attempt has been made to look into the concept and development of microfinance delivery model in India SHG- bank linkage model. **Dr. Dhiraj Jain and Ms. Bhagyashree Jain, (2012)** studied microfinance has come to play a major role in many gender and development strategies because of its direct relationship to both poverty alleviation and to the empowerment of women. Women are the most crucial elements of the society and playing an important role in the socioeconomic scenario of country. Microfinance programs like the SHGs in India have been promoted for their positive economic impact and the belief that they empower women. Various results strongly demonstrate that on an average, there is a significant increase in women empowerment of the Self Help Groups members. However, social backwardness, indebtedness and presence of other microcredit programs have a significant positive influence on women's participation in this program. **M. Radhakrishna, (2012)** observed that microfinance can be described as an umbrella, which provide microfinance services to low income groups. Microfinance plays an important role in the development of rural areas by providing loans to people on low interest. The present research paper describes the role of microfinance institutions in the development of the conditions of people living in rural areas. **Dipti Sharma and Ronald V. Mani (2016)** observed that financing to JLG is a good business proposal. It needs group dynamics, simplified documentation, timely repayment culture, and prospects of credit betterment to clients. Keeping in view the need and findings of the studies, NABARD has issued comprehensive guidelines to banks focusing on small and marginal farmers and other customers under non-agricultural activities. NABARD supports banks for nutrition and financing of JLG for the initial three years **Usha Srivastava and Srinvas Rao (2017)** illustrated that individual savings and investment are important for the economy of a developing country. Investment is important for the capital formation and growth of economy. SHGs bank linkage program has become a strong tool for improve the saving habits of rural people especially women. SHGs of 10-15 women are motivated to save money from time to time, and some are encouraged to invest their savings in income generating activities. Bank linkage programme is playing a pivotal role in rural saving and hence their investment. The present study has been focused to review the effectiveness of the SHG bank linkage program on the saving and investment habit of rural people.

METHODOLOGY:

This study is mainly based on the secondary data. The necessary data are collected from the status of microfinance in India. The other sources include journals, magazines, and websites. The percentage analysis is used to measure the share of each region, the number of the SHGs formed and the bank loan disbursed during the study period. For the purpose of analysis, this study takes into account only the self-help groups, which are linked with Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks, and Cooperative Banks. Moreover, it focuses only on the loan amount disbursed to the SHGs by these three banking units.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The major objectives of the study are as follows-

- 1- To study the cumulative progress of self help group bank linkage programme (SHG-BLP) in India between the period of (1992-93 to 2016-17)
- 2- To analysis the progress under microfinance, bank loan disbursed to self-help groups (SHGs) Region -wise and agency-wise position during the year (2007-08 to 2016-17)

There is no uniformity regards the SHG progress across the regions. It has good success in southern region, whereas in the northeast and northern region, its progress is not satisfactory it is also very low in case of the central region. The growth of the program has been significant in the south, the southern region continuous to lead in term of number of SHGs financed by bank and loan disbursed to SHGs region wise during the year 2007-8 to 2016-17.

PROGRESS OF SHG-BANK LINKAGE PROGRAMME IN INDIA:

The table 01 shows that, there was a slow progress in the programme, as only 32995 groups were credit linked during the period 1992 to 1999. Since then the programme is growing rapidly. The table shows the total number of SHGs credit linked with banks and the bank loan disbursed to these groups from 1992-93 to 2016-17. The table shows that 255 SHGs were given Rs. 29 lakh of bank loans during the period 1992-93. In 1999- 2000 the number increased to 114775 with bank loans of Rs. 19298 lakh. This cumulative number of credit linked SHGs has increased to about 18055883 and the amount of bank loan given to these groups increased to Rs. 23286216.65 lakh up to March 2016-17. Microfinance through SHG has reached to such a position in India that it is acknowledged as the biggest microfinance programme in the world. The data reveals that though the cumulative number of SHGs provided with bank loans increases

Table 01: Highlights of SHG bank linkage programme during 1992-2017**(Amounts in Rs. lakh)**

Year	No. Of SHGs Financed By Banks	Cumulative SHGs	Percentage Increment in no.	Bank loan during the year (Amount)	Cumulative loan	Percentage Change
1992-93	255	255		29	29	
1993-94	365	620	43.14	36	65	24.14
1994-95	1502	2122	311.51	179	244	397.22
1995-96	2635	4757	75.43	362	606	102.23
1996-97	3841	8598	45.77	578	1184	59.67
1997-98	5719	14317	48.89	1192	2376	106.23
1998-99	18678	32995	226.60	3331	5707	179.45
1999-00	81780	114775	337.84	13591	19298	308.02
2000-01	149050	263825	82.26	28789	48087	111.82
2001-02	197653	461478	32.61	54547	102634	89.47
2002-03	255882	717360	29.46	102233	204867	87.42
2003-04	361731	1079091	41.37	185553	390420	81.50
2004-05	539365	1618456	49.11	299426	689846	61.37
2005-06	620109	2238565	14.97	449900	1139746	50.25
2006-07	1105749	3344314	78.32	657038.85	1796784.85	46.04
2007-08	1227772	4572086	11.04	884926.24	2681711.09	34.68
2008-09	1609587	6181673	31.10	1225351.39	3907062.48	38.47
2009-10	1587275	7768948	-1.39	1445595	5352657.48	17.97
2010-11	1196134	8965082	-24.64	1454773.19	6807430.67	0.63
2011-12	1147878	10112960	-4.03	1653476.86	8460907.53	13.66
2012-13	1219821	11332781	6.27	2058536.44	10519444	24.50
2013-14	1366421	12699202	12.02	2401735.85	12921179.8	16.67
2014-15	1626238	14325440	19.01	2758231.06	15679410.9	14.84
2015-16	1832323	16157763	12.67	3728690.13	19408101	35.18
2016-17	1898120	18055883	3.59	3878115.64	23286216.7	4.01

Source-Status of micro finance in India, (NABARD). Several year reports.

but the rate of growth is relatively slow as compared to the previous years. The table also shows that the rate of growth of SHGs is negative during the year 2009-10 and 2010-11. One of the reasons may be that the programme has rapidly expanded in the southern states of India and has reached a saturation point in some of these states.

Table: 02- Regional spread of SHGs with banks on 2016-17 is given in table. It is evident from the table that the Southern Region occupied the highest share spread of SHGs (63.17 percent), out of 14711569 SHGs in the country, 9293613 SHGs are in the Southern Region.

Table: 02- Progress under microfinance-number of SHGs financed by bank Region wise position during (2007-08 to 2016-17)

Region	Northern Region	North Eastern Region	Eastern Region	Central Region	Western Region	Southern Region	All India
2007-08	33680	29119	224937	72748	90441	776847	1227772
2008-09	42689	35506	236789	101060	125173	1068370	1609587
2009-10	37375	49760	277446	77846	149130	995718	1587275
2010-11	42493	39307	247624	48734	91954	726022	1196134
2011-12	30751	51003	201201	58460	101044	705419	1147878
2012-13	31285	25168	182823	64180	70429	845936	1219821
2013-14	23918	16201	297478	66393	87846	874585	1366421
2014-15	43848	18791	351800	109231	97341	1005227	1626238
2015-16	38106	26037	412576	84282	112525	1158797	1832323
2016-17	46567	28961	497063	82012	106825	1136692	1898120
Grand Total	370712	319853	2929737	764946	1032708	9293613	14711569
Percentage	2.52	2.17	19.91	5.20	7.02	63.17	100

Source-Status of micro finance in India, (NABARD). Several year reports.

As against this, the Eastern Region accounts for 19.91 percent of the total SHGs in the country, followed by 7.01 percent in the Western Region and 5.19 percent in the Central Region. The Northern and Northeastern Region accounts 2.51 and 2.17 percent of the total SHGs in the country. The table shows the number of SHGs financed by bank in different six regions of India, i.e. Northern Region, North-Eastern, Eastern, Central, Western, and Southern Region. The Northern Region includes the states of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, and Rajasthan. The North-Eastern Region covers Assam, Sikkim, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Nagaland states. The Eastern Region covers Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Orissa, Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The Central Region includes Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh. The Western Region includes Goa, Gujarat and Maharashtra states. The Southern Region includes Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and U.T. of Pondicherry. The table clearly reveals that the SHGs are mainly concentrated in the Southern Region. The main reason of this is the prevalence of voluntary organisations in the spread of linkage banking programme. The largest MFIs of India, such as SHARE, Spandana, CDF, MYRADA, SKS and PREM are also concentrated in Southern Region. The spread of microfinance programme is almost negligible in the North Eastern states.

Table 03: Region wise loan disbursed to SHGs during the years is furnished in the table spells that though there has been tremendous progress over the years, the Southern region dominates in the SHG–

Bank Linkage Programme in India. Table shows that the share of the loan disbursed to SHGs in the Southern Region is 79.46 percent

Table: 03 Bank loan disbursed to SHG, Region wise position during the year (2007-08 to 2016-17)
(Amount in Rs. Lakh)

Region	Northern Region	North Eastern Region	Eastern Region	Central Region	Western Region	Southern Region	All India
2007-08	19146.56	14871.13	104584.35	48796.6	42329.15	655198.44	884926.23
2008-09	30243.24	24641.79	123766.64	78140.82	58392.85	910166.06	1225351.4
2009-10	30633.33	28981.5	154018.65	63209.88	64697.54	1104053.97	1445594.87
2010-11	37752.11	32095.65	161950.39	60755.08	62591.4	1099628.56	1454773.19
2011-12	33543.2	45128.74	162406.14	70936.83	75285.7	1266176.26	1653476.87
2012-13	34229.7	18021.85	129018.93	69888.96	70994.41	1736382.59	2058536.44
2013-14	28048.36	12819.04	151067.19	61806.9	86443.65	2061550.7	2401735.84
2014-15	42873.33	15794.9	329601.69	110908.64	117080.37	2141972.13	2758231.06
2015-16	48297.94	21968.74	349489.07	119066.73	188632.21	3001235.44	3728690.13
2016-17	57414.19	28420.67	473171.99	67958.46	148818.6	3102331.73	3878115.64
Grand total region wise	362181.96	242744.01	2139075.04	751468.9	915265.88	17078695.88	21489431.67
Percent Region wise	1.69	1.13	9.95	3.49	4.26	79.47	100

Source-Status of micro finance in India, (NABARD). Several year reports.

the Northern Region is 1.69 percentage, the North Eastern is 1.13 percentage share, the Eastern Region is 9.95 percentage share, the Central Region is 3.49 percent share, and the Western Region is 4.26 percentage up to 2017.

Table: 04- Progress under microfinance-Bank loan disbursed to SHGs- Bank wise position during the year (2007-08 to 2016-17)
(Amount in Rs. Lak)

years	Commercial Banks	Regional Rural Banks	Co-operative Banks-	Total loan disbursed
2007-08	540390.35	265184.14	79351.75	884926.24
2008-09	806053.1	319349.01	99949.28	1225351.39
2009-10	978018.55	333386.25	134190.1	1445594.9
2010-11	972455.27	319761.59	162556.33	1454773.19
2011-12	994204.49	502605.15	156667.23	1653476.87
2012-13	1338500.7	562652.22	157383.52	2058536.44
2013-14	1603749.35	628813.35	169173.14	2401735.84
2014-15	1733412.66	772522.19	252296.21	2758231.06
2015-16	2518497.23	916492.88	293700.02	3728690.13
2016-17	2429701.86	1161300.4	287113.38	3878115.64
Grand total	13914983.56 (64.75)	5782067.18 (26.91)	1792380.96 (8.34)	21489431.7 (100)

Source: Status of micro finance in India, (NABARD).Several year reports.

The table shows that the share of loan disbursed to SHGs out of total, up to march 2017, the contribution of Commercial Banks is 64.75 percent Regional Rural Bank has 26.91 percentage and Cooperative bank contributes only 8.34 percentage share in the total loan disbursed during this period.

CONCLUSION:

The main objective of microfinance is to provide an umbrella of services to the poor so that they can enrich their lives. Microfinance in India has helped to raise a number of people above poverty line but coverage is uneven, with large number of people in rural area, still remaining outreach programme. Microfinance has emerged as a vital approach to meet the heterogeneous needs of the poor. In India, microfinance in the formal sector has assumed the form of SHG-bank linkage program. Through this program, the Reserve Bank of India and NABARD has tried to promote relationship banking, i.e., "Improving the existing relationship between the poor and the bankers with the social intermediation of the NGOs." The SHG-bank linkage program in India is rapidly expanding its outreach under the

pioneering initiative of NABARD, the monitoring and supervision of the RBI, and the promotional policies of the government of India. Market is never friendly to the poor people or backward regions it creates sharp regional imbalance. There is now an increasing difference towards the problem of poverty and inequality. Expansionist economic reforms during the end of 1990s boosted economic growth, but high level of poverty and unemployment still persist in India. Despite impressive economic growth, the wave of consumerism and computerization coexists in social life of India. It lays an emphasis on high-tech efficiency of industrial sector and modern urban service sector at the cost of rural sector. One must always remember one simple thing that any model of development, which ignores India's rich endowment of human resources and rich natural resources including land and water resources, is bound to falter. Any development route, which bypasses the rural people of India, is unlikely to be sustainable. Microfinance has emerged as a viable alternative to reach the hitherto unreached for their social and economic empowerment through social and financial intermediation. The SHG-bank linkage is the major microfinance programme in the country. It helped to bring poor families within the formal banking services.

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