

EMPOWERMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY THROUGH SELF HELP GROUPS IN RURAL AREA OF PRAKASAM DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

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In India, there are many schemes and programmes by the government and nongovernmental organisations for persons with disabilities, including legislation. However, these programmes have not proved sufficient to address the needs of all persons with disabilities in the country. In recent years, persons with disabilities have been organizing themselves into self-help groups (SHG), that are a forum to meet, discuss their problems and interests and collectively access public facilities and services which are due to them. A well known programme in India is the World Bank assisted poverty alleviation programme in the state of Andhra Pradesh, covering over 13 districts, and reaching over 2900000 persons from the rural poor population. One of the important dimensions of this project was to include persons with disabilities under its umbrella by mobilizing them to form SHGs as part of a community based rehabilitation (CBR) strategy. The SHG activities include working together to create awareness to protect their rights and responsibilities, fighting against discrimination, acting as a support organization for external links, and promoting livelihood activities of the group members.

Objectives of the study:

1. To study the profile of persons with disability of Self Help Groups in three rural mandals of Prakasam District.
2. To analyse the impact of SHGs in the socio-economic, psychological and political empowerment of persons with disability in the study area.

Hypothesis

1. **Ho:** There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards social empowerment by their education.
2. **Ho:** There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards psychological empowerment by their sex.
3. **Ho:** There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards economic empowerment by their religion.
4. **Ho:** There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards legal empowerment by their age.

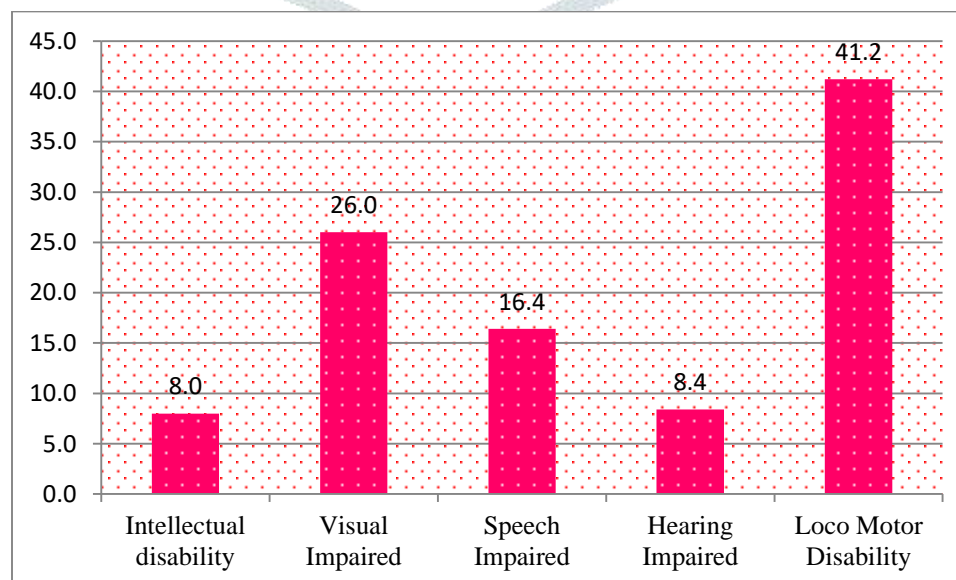
Universe and Sampling:

The study is taken up in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh. However, for the study purpose SHGs which were formed before the year 2015 are only selected, because the SHGs with limited period of experience may be less on its members in terms of empowerment. Thus, 120 SHGs have been functioning in these three mandals. Mandal and village wise SHG list is prepared alphabetically according to the name of the SHG. 30.0 per cent of the total SHGs in three mandals are selected by using random sampling method. These 36 SHGs consisted of 250 members. The SHGs of PWD begins the number shall be minimum 5 members to form the group, because the PWD are not available in large number in the villages, so that with the limited number they form SHG range from 5 to 10 members group. The SHGs are mixed groups of male and female. In the sample, the members in the group consisted of 5 member groups (10), 6 members groups (5), 7 members groups (5), 8 members groups (5), 9 members groups (5) and 10 members groups (5) formed as SHGs. Thus, sample size for the study is 250 members.

Table -1: Type of Disability of Respondents

Sl. No	Type of disability	Frequency	Percentage
1	Intellectual disability	20	8.0
2	Visual Impaired	65	26.0
3	Speech Impaired	41	16.4
4	Hearing Impaired	21	8.4
5	Loco Motor Disability	103	41.2
Total		250	100.0

Figure-1: Type of Disability



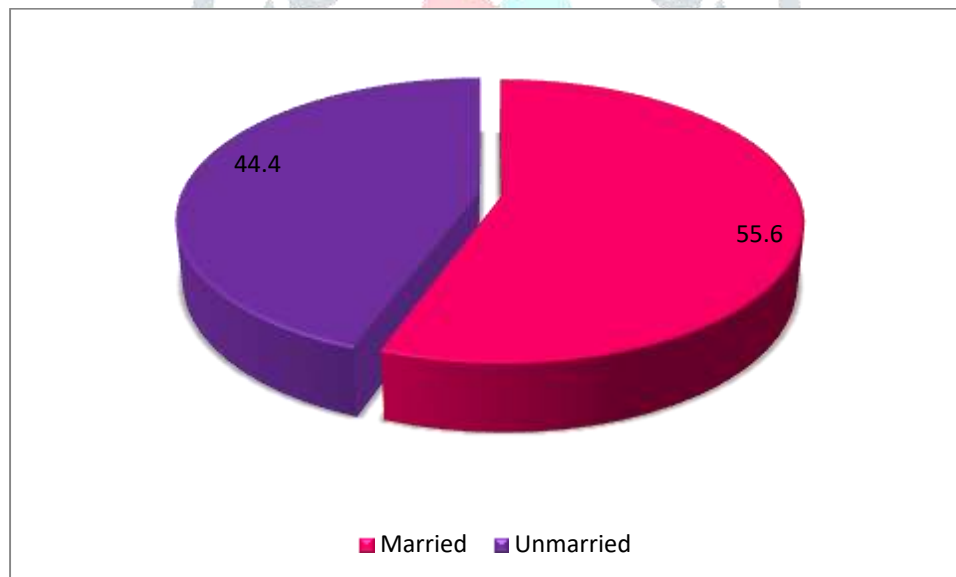
Disability is the consequence of an impairment that may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, developmental, or some combination of these. A disability may be present from birth, or occur during a person's lifetime.

A disability is an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. Thus, disability is a complex phenomenon, reflecting an interaction between features of a person's body and features of the society in which he or she lives (WHO, 2011).

The table 1 and figure 1 depicted that, the type of disability indicate that, out of 250 about 41.2 per cent are loco motor disability followed by visual impaired respondents are about 26.0 per cent, whereas, disability in speech are about 16.4 per cent, 8.4 per cent are hearing impaired and 8.0 per cent are intellectual disability.

All these five categories of disability persons both male and female formed as mixed Self Help Groups. Due to this we could not find more PWD members in the rural areas.

Figure-2: Marital Status of Respondents



Marital status of the members indicates that 55.6 per cent are married, 44.4 per cent are unmarried. It is large number who are unmarried which they face no matches come forward to marry them due to disability.

Table -2:

Education of Respondents

Sl. No	Education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	124	49.6
2	1st - 5th class	43	17.2
3	6 - 10th class	39	15.6
4	Inter	23	9.2
5	Graduate	21	8.4
Total		250	100.0

It is evident that most of the members (49.6 per cent) are illiterate and 17.2 per cent had their primary education. This is not surprising because in most parts of the rural areas, the literacy level is low among the population in general and persons with disability in particular.

Table-3: Perceptions of Respondents towards Social Empowerment

Sl. No	Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total N=250
1	I have become a person with social concern and awareness	16.8	24.8	26.0	16.4	16.0	100.0
2	I believe in self-help and mutual-help as best approach of life in defining and working to achieve life goals	32.8	42.4	8.4	8.4	8.0	100.0
3	I participate in decision making for social change and development	51.2	24.8	8.0	8.0	8.0	100.0
4	Sense of possessing essentials for living (Toilet facilities, Drinking water, electricity)	49.2	17.6	8.4	16.4	8.4	100.0
5	I am capable to express my opinions, interact and	32.8	16.4	17.6	24.8	8.4	100.0

communicate effectively							
Total	36.6	25.2	13.7	14.8	9.7	100.0	

Figure-6.16:

The table 3 shows the perceptions of respondents towards social empowerment . About 16.8 per cent of the respondents strongly agree that I have become a person with social concern and awareness, 24.8 per cent are agree, 26.0 per cent are neutral to the I have become a person with social concern and awareness. Whereas, 16.4 per cent and 16.0 per cent are disagree and strongly disagree to I have become a person with social concern and awareness.

As regard to I believe in self-help and mutual-help as best approach of life in defining and working to achieve life goals 32.8 per cent of the respondents strongly agreed, 42.4 per cent are agree and 8.4 per cent are neutral. Therefore, 8.4 per cent and 8.0 per cent disagree and strongly disagree to I believe in self-help and mutual-help as best approach of life in defining and working to achieve life goals.

The table reveals that majority 51.2 per cent strongly agree, 24.8 per cent agree, 8.0 per cent are neutral to I participate in decision making for social change and development and 8.0 per cent and 8.0 per cent are disagree and strongly disagree to I participate in decision making for social change and development.

The majority 49.2 percent of the respondents strongly agree that sense of possessing essentials for living (Toilet facilities, Drinking water, electricity, 17.6 per cent agree and 8.4 per cent are neutral and 16.4 per cent are disagree and 8.4 per cent are strongly disagree to sense of possessing essentials for living (Toilet facilities, Drinking water, electricity).

I am capable to express my opinions, interact and communicate effectively, the majority (32.8 percent) were strongly agree, 16.4 per cent were agree and 17.6 per cent were neutral to I am capable to express my opinions, interact and communicate effectively. Whereas, 24.8 per cent were disagree and 8.4 per cent strongly disagree to I am capable to express my opinions, interact and communicate effectively.

On the whole 36.6 per cent are strongly agree, 25.2 per cent are agree and 13.7 per cent are neutral. About 14.8 per cent are disagree and 9.7 per cent are strongly disagree to perceptions of respondents towards social empowerment.

Table -4:

Perceptions of Respondents towards Social Empowerment Vs. Education

Ho: There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards social empowerment by their education.

Statement	Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
I have become a person with social concern and awareness	Illiterate	124	3.1935	1.41810	15.709	.000
	1st - 5th class	43	2.9302	1.00937		
	6 - 10th class	39	3.0256	1.01274		
	Inter	23	2.7826	.73587		
	Graduate	21	1.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.9000	1.31182		
I believe in self-help and mutual-help as best approach of life in defining and working to achieve life goals	Illiterate	124	1.5161	.50177	98.340	.000
	1st - 5th class	43	3.4419	1.48488		
	6 - 10th class	39	3.5128	.50637		
	Inter	23	2.0435	.47465		
	Graduate	21	1.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.1640	1.20287		
I participate in decision making for social change and development	Illiterate	124	2.3952	1.50780	18.971	.000
	1st - 5th class	43	2.4186	.58686		
	6 - 10th class	39	1.0000	.00000		
	Inter	23	1.3478	.88465		
	Graduate	21	1.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	1.9680	1.27966		
Sense of possessing essentials for living (Toilet facilities, Drinking water, electricity)	Illiterate	124	2.2097	1.32072	9.835	.000
	1st - 5th class	43	3.0465	1.97549		
	6 - 10th class	39	1.9744	1.01274		
	Inter	23	1.7391	.44898		
	Graduate	21	1.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.1720	1.40224		
I am capable to express my opinions, interact and communicate effectively	Illiterate	124	2.2419	1.07727	45.486	.000
	1st - 5th class	43	4.3488	.89665		
	6 - 10th class	39	2.5385	1.51911		
	Inter	23	2.7826	.59974		
	Graduate	21	1.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.5960	1.38000		

ANOVA descriptive table 4 discussed to find whether there is any significant difference between I have become a person with social concern and awareness and their education. The ANOVA table shows that the calculated F - ratio value is 15.709 which is higher than the table value at 0.01 level of significance and P value is 0.000. Since the calculated value is higher than the table value. So it is inferred that there is significant difference improvement of social empowerment by education wise categories on I have become a person with social concern and awareness. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

The opinion on I believe in self-help and mutual-help as best approach of life in defining and working to achieve life goals by their education. The ANOVA Table described that the calculated F value is 98.340 and which is higher than table value so it is inferred there is a significant difference of improvement by their education wise categories at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

The table revealed that I participate in decision making for social change and development by their education. The table portray that calculated F value is 18.971 which is higher than table value. There is significant difference of improvement in I participate in decision making for social change and development at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

Sense of possessing essentials for living (Toilet Facilities, Drinking Water, Electricity), the ANOVA table shows that the calculated F - ratio value is 9.835 which is higher than the table value at 1% level of significance. Since the calculated value is higher than the table value it is inferred that there is significant difference of improvement by education wise categories on sense of possessing essentials for living (Toilet facilities, Drinking water, Electricity). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

I am capable to express my opinions, interact and communicate effectively by their education. The ANOVA table described that the calculated F value is 45.486 which is higher than table value so it is inferred that there is a significant difference improvement by their education wise categories. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

Table -5:

Perceptions of Respondents towards Psychological Empowerment Vs. Sex

Ho: There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards psychological empowerment by their sex.

Statement	Sex	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
I am confident and capable of feeling my worth	Male	123	2.1626	1.10419	4.795	.029
	Female	127	2.5039	1.34444		
	Total	250	2.3360	1.24148		

A Person more self-expressive (courage to express myself)	Male	123	2.5854	1.29265	1.248	.265
	Female	127	2.4173	1.07969		
	Total	250	2.5000	1.18982		
Able to control my personal environment (ability to create, choose and manage opportunities for my own future and personal growth)	Male	123	2.4797	1.79411	3.098	.080
	Female	127	2.1496	1.09891		
	Total	250	2.3120	1.48846		
Capable of distinguishing and balancing personal, family and professional life	Male	123	2.9593	1.47880	7.197	.008
	Female	127	2.5039	1.19439		
	Total	250	2.7280	1.35845		
Ability to manage stress and in multiple tasks effectively	Male	123	2.9431	.97763	.349	.555
	Female	127	3.0394	1.52961		
	Total	250	2.9920	1.28629		

ANOVA has been applied to find whether there is any significant difference between perceptions of respondents towards psychological empowerment and their sex. A person more self-expressive (courage to express myself) and the descriptive table 5 displays the sample size, mean, standard deviation, F value and P value and there is no significant difference among male and female at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted and research hypothesis was rejected.

Able to control my personal environment (ability to create, choose and manage opportunities for my own future and personal growth) F value is 3.098 which is lower than table value, so there is no significant difference of able to control my personal environment among male and female at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted and research hypothesis was rejected.

Ability to manage stress and in multiple tasks effectively F value is 0.349 which is lower than table value and there is no significant difference among male and female at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis was accepted and research hypothesis was rejected.

The study shows the results of the ANOVA test that there are significant difference responses on psychological empowerment by their sex. I am confident and capable of feeling my worth F value (4.795), P Value (0.029), capable of distinguishing and balancing personal, family and professional life F value (7.197), P Value (0.008) are (0.000) at 0.01 levels. The results show that there are significant difference improvements of psychological improvement at 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

Perceptions of Respondents towards Economic Empowerment

The economic empowerment of Persons with Disability assessed in different parameters of SHGs. The occupation, monthly income, expenditure before and after presented in economic empowerment.

Table -6:

Perceptions of Respondents towards Economic Empowerment Vs. Religion

Ho: There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards economic empowerment by their religion.

Statement	Religion	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
I feel economically independent	Hindu	209	2.6077	1.55327	11.226	.000
	Christian	21	2.0000	.00000		
	Muslims	20	4.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.6680	1.48276		
I gained a better access to financial and other productive resources	Hindu	209	2.4737	.94081	84.369	.000
	Christian	21	2.0000	.00000		
	Muslims	20	5.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.6360	1.11556		
I am also participating actively in household financial decision making and resource management	Hindu	209	2.9713	1.12196	8.611	.000
	Christian	21	2.0000	.00000		
	Muslims	20	3.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.8920	1.06058		
My banking and financial management knowledge has improved	Hindu	209	2.3780	1.12903	75.839	.000
	Christian	21	4.0000	.00000		
	Muslims	20	5.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.7240	1.31099		
My saving habit improved after joining the Self-Help Group	Hindu	209	2.3684	1.11509	25.601	.000
	Christian	21	2.0000	.00000		
	Muslims	20	4.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.4680	1.11982		
Acquired training on entrepreneurial skills – agriculture, agricultural allied activities, business skills, etc.	Hindu	209	2.7799	1.10043	14.035	.000
	Christian	21	4.0000	.00000		
	Muslims	20	3.0000	.00000		
	Total	250	2.9000	1.06137		

ANOVA has been applied to find whether there are any significant differences between their economic empowerment and religion. The responses of respondents of their feeling economically independent the descriptive table 6 displays the sample size, mean, standard deviation, F value and P value. The study shows the results of the ANOVA test

that there are significant difference responses on economic empowerment by their religion. I feel economically independent F value (11.226), P Value (0.000), I gained a better access to financial and other productive resources F value (84.369), P Value (0.000), I am also participating actively in household financial decision making and resource management F value (8.611), P Value (0.000), My banking and financial management knowledge has improved F value (75.839), P Value (0.000), my saving habit improved after joining the Self-Help Group F value (25.601), P Value (0.000), Acquired training on entrepreneurial skills – agriculture, agricultural allied activities, business skills, etc F value (14.035), P Value (0.000), and its corresponding P-values are (0.000) at 0.01 levels. The results show that there are significant difference of economic empowerment in between religion wise categories. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

Table -7:

Perceptions of Respondents towards Legal Empowerment Vs. Age

Ho: There is no statistical significance difference of perceptions of respondents towards legal empowerment by their age.

Statement	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
I am aware of PWD act of 2016	< - 20	21	4.0000	.00000	11.951	.000
	21 - 30	61	2.3115	1.25885		
	31 - 40	64	3.1250	1.66667		
	41 - 50	62	2.3548	.94256		
	51 - >	42	2.5000	.50606		
	Total	250	2.7040	1.26760		
I am aware of the rights and privileges that PWD enjoy constitutionally	< - 20	21	2.0000	.00000	12.183	.000
	21 - 30	61	2.6557	.94667		
	31 - 40	64	3.6250	.93435		
	41 - 50	62	2.6774	.47128		
	51 - >	42	3.0000	2.02424		
	Total	250	2.9120	1.18231		
I am aware of the PWD grievance redressal agencies and modus operandi to seek protection at the time threat to the dignity	< - 20	21	4.0000	.00000	13.748	.000
	21 - 30	61	2.0000	.00000		
	31 - 40	64	2.9375	1.40153		
	41 - 50	62	2.6935	1.71387		
	51 - >	42	2.5000	.50606		
	Total	250	2.6640	1.24148		
I have no fear to approach the police and judicial authorities (court) if necessary for the	< - 20	21	4.0000	.00000	80.831	.000
	21 - 30	61	1.0000	.00000		
	31 - 40	64	2.3125	.46718		
	41 - 50	62	2.9677	1.41384		
	51 - >	42	2.5000	.50606		

self-protection	Total	250	2.3280	1.16699		
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ANOVA has been applied to find whether there are any significant differences between acquiring legal empowerment and by their age. The responses of respondents of their legal empowerment the descriptive table displays the sample size, mean, standard deviation, F value and P value. The study shows the results of the ANOVA test that there are significant difference responses on the legal empowerment by their age. I am aware of PWD act of 2016 F value (11.951), P Value (0.000), I have no fear to approach the police and judicial authorities (court) if necessary for the self-protection F value (80.831), P Value (0.000) and its corresponding P-values are (0.000) at 0.01 levels. The results show that there are significant difference responses on legal empowerment in between age wise categories. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected and research hypothesis was accepted.

Perceptions of Respondents towards Political Empowerment

The participation of SHG members in political meeting, Gama Sabha and participation in local self Government elections such as Panchayat, Mandal Parshad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) etc.

Table -8:

Participate in Gram Sabha meeting due to influence of SHG Vs. Sex

Sex	If yes, due to influence of SHG		Total
	Yes	Not applicable	
Male	81	42	123
	32.4%	16.8%	49.2%
Female	87	40	127
	34.8%	16.0%	50.8%
Total	168	82	250
	67.2%	32.8%	100.0%

$\chi^2=0.199$, $df=1$, $P < 0.378$, Not Significant at 0.01 level

The majority (67.2 per cent) of the respondents agreed that they participated in Grama Sabha it is due to influence of SHGs, whereas, 32.8 per cent are not influenced by the SHGs either to participate not participate Grama Sabha.

The study shows the results of the Chi-square test that there is no significant difference between sex and participated in Grama Sabha it is due to influence of SHGs ($P= 0.379$) at 0.05 levels. The results show that there is no statistically significant difference in participated in Grama Sabha it is due to influence of SHGs by their sex.

Table -9:**Participate in Political Meeting due to influence of SHG Vs. Religion**

Religion	If yes, due to influence of SHG		Total
	Yes	Not applicable	
Hindu	123	86	209
	49.2%	34.4%	83.6%
Christian	21	0	21
	8.4%	0.0%	8.4%
Muslims	20	0	20
	8.0%	0.0%	8.0%
Total	164	86	250
	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%

$\chi^2=25.718$, $df=2$, $P < 0.000$, **Significant at 0.01 level**

About 65.6 percent of respondents are participated by the influence of joining in SHG. It is revealed that leadership and active participation in group further would improve political acumin and eventually help successful political empowerment.

There is significant association between religion and participate in political meeting due to influence of SHG at 0.01 level. There is association between religion and participate in political meeting due to influence of SHG.

Conclusion:

Persons with Disability are socially and politically aware after associating with SHGs. It can be concluded that the impact of PWD SHGs is not uniform in all the sample villages. This could be attributed to several factors like due to disability, motivating persons, satisfaction over functioning, percentage of increase in monthly income, non-food consumption expenditure, percentage of increase in monthly savings, level of knowledge, participation in various activities, political activeness and problems faced.

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