

International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 9; Issue 7; July 2026; Page No. 597-598

Received: 24-04-2026
Accepted: 28-05-2026

Indexed Journal
Peer Reviewed Journal

Spatial variations in multidimensional empowerment of tribal women through self-help groups: A study of Daringbadi block in Kandhamal, Odisha

¹Malaya Ranjan Pradhan, ²Narayan Bar, ³Mahamaya Prasad Nayak and ⁴Jeebanjyoti Behera

¹M.Sc. Scholar, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, College of Agriculture, Bhubaneswar, OUAT, Odisha, India

²Senior Scientist and Head, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kandhamal, OUAT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

³Professor & Head, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, College of Agriculture, Bhubaneswar, OUAT, Odisha, India

⁴Assistant Professor, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, College of Agriculture, Bhubaneswar, OUAT, Odisha, India

DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2026.v9.i7h.3917>

Corresponding Author: Malaya Ranjan Pradhan

Abstract

The study is based on Self-Help Group (SHG) participation and its impact on tribal women in Kandhamal district of Odisha comprising Daringbadi block. Total number of 120 tribal women from Dasingbadi, Badabanga, Bramhunigam, Gadapur, Simanbadi and Sraniketa of Daringbadi block were selected for the study. A self-structured personal interview schedule was used to collect the data to see the spatial variation in multidimensional empowerment of tribal women through SHG participation across selected villages. The data was analyzed by using frequency, percentage etc. that psychological, political, social and economic empowerment like 91.66 percent tribal women shown self confidence, 83.33 percent shown leadership role within SHG, 91.66 percent had freedom to work outside family, 89.16 percent had freedom to visit hospital/doctor, also 96.66 percent women participation shown in decision about marketing of farm produce.

Keywords: Self-help group, women empowerment, spatial variation, tribal women

Introduction

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) have emerged as one of the most significant grassroots interventions for advancing women's empowerment in rural and tribal India. By pooling savings, extending micro-credit and creating platforms for collective action, SHGs have enabled women to move beyond the confines of household roles and engage more actively in economic, social and political spheres. In tribal regions, where women historically face compounded disadvantages arising from geographic isolation, limited infrastructure and entrenched patriarchal customs alongside tribal social structures, the SHG movement carries particular significance as a vehicle for change.

Kandhamal district in Odisha, predominantly inhabited by the Kandha and Kutia Kandha tribal communities, presents a distinctive setting for examining this process. The district's hilly and forested terrain has historically restricted mobility, market access and institutional outreach, resulting in uneven development across its blocks. Within this district, Daringbadi block, marked by its high altitude, remote hill terrain and dense tribal population, presents notable internal variation across its villages and Gram Panchayats in terms of connectivity, market access and the density and maturity of SHG networks. These contextual differences raise an important question: does empowerment through SHG participation manifest uniformly across space within the

block, or does it vary according to local geographic and socio-institutional conditions?

While a substantial body of research has documented the positive association between SHG membership and women's empowerment, much of this literature treats empowerment as a uniform outcome and pays limited attention to intra-block spatial variation, particularly within tribal contexts. Few studies have systematically examined empowerment outcomes across villages within a single tribal block with differing accessibility and socio-institutional conditions.

This study addresses this gap by examining the spatial variations in multidimensional empowerment i.e. economic, social, political and psychological among tribal women SHG members across villages of Daringbadi block, offering a location-specific, evidence-based understanding of how local context shapes empowerment outcomes.

Objective

This study aims to assess how multidimensional empowerment among tribal women SHG members varies spatially across different locations within Daringbadi block of Kandhamal district, Odisha.

Methodology

For this study, a sample of 120 tribal women was drawn from six villages of Daringbadi block i.e. Dasingbadi, Badabanga,

Bramhunigam, Gadapur, Simanbadi and Sraniketa. Data collection relied on a personal interview schedule developed specifically for this research, designed to capture how SHG participation influences multidimensional empowerment differently across these locations. Frequency and percentage analysis were the primary statistical tools applied to interpret the collected data.

Results and Discussion

Participation in Self-Help Groups offers tribal women a structured space to develop confidence, express their opinions, and gain greater independence across social, economic, and political domains of life. This study examined such empowerment along four distinct dimensions: psychological, political, social, and economic.

Table 1: Allocation of tribal women on the basis of empowerment (n=120)

S. No.	Statement	Yes		No	
A.	Psychological empowerment	F	%	F	%
1	Self confidence	110	91.66	10	8.33
2	Courage	102	85.00	18	15.00
3	Self reliance	100	83.33	20	16.66
4	Feeling security in family	99	82.50	21	17.50
5	Career ambition	105	87.50	15	12.50
B.	Political empowerment	Yes (%)		No (%)	
1	Participation in Gram Sabha	55	45.83	65	54.16
2	Contesting or holding position in panchayat elections	25	20.83	95	79.16
3	Raising issues in village level meetings	90	75.00	30	25.00
4	Leadership role within SHG	100	83.33	20	16.66
C	Social empowerment				
1.	Self education	80	66.66	40	33.33
2	Freedom to work outside family	110	91.66	10	8.33
3.	Freedom to visit hospital /doctor	107	89.16	13	10.83
4.	Freedom for adoption practices for maintaining health	103	85.83	17	14.16
D	Economic empowerment				
1	Opportunity for economic development	89	74.16	31	25.83
2.	Free for selection of job	97	80.83	23	19.16
3.	Participation in local market activities like fair /SHG stall etc	112	93.33	18	15.00
4	Freedom to attend meeting/seminar/workshop	114	95.00	6	5.00
5	Participation in decision about marketing of farm produce	116	96.66	4	3.33

The table data reveal that self-confidence was the most commonly reported psychological outcome (91.66%), followed closely by career ambition (87.50%) and courage (85.00%). Among political indicators, women exercised leadership roles within SHGs most frequently (83.33%), yet their involvement in contesting or holding panchayat positions was markedly lower (20.83%) suggesting that while SHGs foster internal leadership capacity, this authority does not readily translate into formal political participation. In terms of social empowerment, the greatest gains were seen in freedom to work outside the home (91.66%) and freedom to access healthcare independently (89.16%). Economically, women reported the highest agency in decisions related to marketing farm produce (96.66%), closely followed by attending meetings, seminars, or workshops (95.00%) and taking part in local market activities such as fairs or SHG stalls (93.33%).

Conclusion

The findings suggest that Self-Help Groups have meaningfully contributed to raising awareness, strengthening self-confidence, and expanding social and economic freedom among tribal women factors that collectively support stronger livelihood security. Overall, SHG involvement appears to have a favourable influence on women's empowerment across multiple fronts. Most participants experienced gains in psychological confidence, social independence, and household-level economic decision-making after joining SHG activities, alongside broader improvements in social, economic, and political standing. That said, political

empowerment particularly participation in Gram Sabha meetings and panchayat elections lagged behind other dimensions, even though women demonstrated clear leadership capacity within their groups. The study also points to a visible improvement in living conditions linked to SHG participation, reinforcing that SHG membership has been broadly beneficial to the empowerment and livelihood of tribal women in Daringbadi block.

References

1. Kondal K. Women empowerment through self help groups in Andhra Pradesh, India. *International Research Journal of Social Sciences*. 2014;3(1):13-16.
2. Nayak AK, Panigrahi PK. Participation in self-help groups and empowerment of women: A structural model analysis. *The Journal of Developing Areas*. 2020;54(1):1-17.
3. Suguna B. Empowerment of rural women through self help groups. New Delhi: Discovery Publishing House; 2006.
4. Suja S. Women empowerment through self-help group—An evaluative study. *Global Management Review*. 2012;6(3):1-10.
5. Tiwari MV, Shukla A, Tripathi VK. Impact of vocational training courses on tribal farm women of Dediapada. *International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development*. 2024;7(SP6):75-77.
6. Tyagi R, Kathpalia J. Role of self-help groups in women empowerment rural communities of Haryana. *The Pharma Innovation Journal*. 2021;10(4):416-426.