



Several Women Cooperative Bank Programmes on the Women Economic Upliftment

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Abstract: The economic empowerment of women is fundamental to achieving gender equity and sustainable development. Women cooperative banks have emerged as key instruments in addressing the financial exclusion faced by women, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas. This study aims to evaluate the impact of various programmes run by women cooperative banks on the economic upliftment of women. The research focuses on savings mobilisation, credit schemes, entrepreneurial support, and financial literacy programmes. Findings reveal that such interventions significantly improve women's financial independence, income generation, and social participation.

Keywords: Women, cooperative Bank, Programmes, Economic upliftment

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INTRODUCTION

Women in many parts of India face systemic barriers to financial access, economic participation, and ownership of assets. Mainstream banking institutions often fail to meet the specific needs of women, especially those from low-income or rural backgrounds. Women cooperative banks, founded and managed by women, aim to bridge this gap by offering gender-sensitive financial services. This research explores the effectiveness of multiple programmes initiated by women cooperative banks in empowering women economically.

The women's cooperative bank was established with a focus on the economic and social advancement of women. Women have recently shown their superiority in every discipline. The only profession in which women had not joined for centuries was banking. Women have shown over the last 18 years that they are capable of managing and controlling financial organizations by joining the profession. Without a question, women have shown their competency in the banking industry over the years, but these institutions still face a variety of issues that call for a complete overhaul of their management strategies.

When these banks were established 18 years ago, social workers who were women were allowed to administer them. In reality, these women social workers initially had success raising the required funds and garnering modest deposits from the general populace. This was first thought to be the primary goal of these institutions. These banks played a significant role in helping women get the consumption loans they needed at this time. Beyond these two primary functions, Bank nevar, a cooperative of women, considered additional services they might provide to society in general and women in particular. The administration of these banks was similarly of a conventional type throughout this time, and it never saw the need for any additional duties. The management adopted a highly conservative approach to banking and only recognized

two activities—collecting deposits and primarily addressing the needs of women in need of consumption loans—as banking.

With the passage of time, the position of women in social and economic life has fundamentally altered, and now, after eighteen years, these banks have attained enough stability to carry out some other crucial functions.* To achieve this goal, managements of these banks must be more professional and forward-thinking, especially when identifying potential borrowers and assessing loan applications. Now that these restrictions are in place, managements of these banks must adopt an entirely new approach in order to keep up with this change. In fact, going forward, they must set the pace for bringing women into the main stream of the nation's economic development. In reality, these banks must play a key role in the development of this new class of borrowers, which will include all types of educated women who are competitive enough to launch and manage their own small businesses and industries. They must designate a new category of borrowers called "Womens Entrepreneurs"*. Women Banks are to carry out the mission of bringing this potential capability of women to the fore. The administration of these banks must organize seminars, workshops, and training sessions where prospective talent may be recognized. They must also create a setting and provide the necessary resources so that this talent can develop to its full potential. At this point, however, consumption loans are sufficient. The management of these banks now places a greater emphasis on productive loans that may help women find self-employment.

METHODOLOGY

Universe and Sample Size

The study was conducted across five districts of Madhya Pradesh, focusing on Women Cooperative Banks functioning within the state. A total of **seven Women Cooperative Banks** were selected for detailed analysis.

Sampling Method

The researcher employed a **convenience sampling method** for data collection, considering the practical constraints and the accessibility of respondents.

Sources of Data Collection

Primary data was collected directly from respondents through

- **Interview schedules** with bank members, board directors, and employees.
- **Questionnaires**, designed with assistance from a professional statistician to ensure reliability and consistency in responses.

Secondary information was obtained from reputable sources including:

- Books and academic literature
- Research articles published in peer-reviewed journals
- Annual reports of the selected Women Cooperative Banks

- Reports from the State Cooperative Department
- Reputed newspapers
- Official websites and digital archives

Tools and Techniques Used for Data Analysis

The collected data was systematically tabulated and analyzed using a range of **statistical tools and techniques**. The following methods were employed to draw meaningful interpretations:

1. Mean and Average Growth Rate
2. Standard Deviation (SD)
3. Correlation and Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's r)
4. Chi-Square Test (χ^2)

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Membership with the sample women banks:

Membership data reflects key indicators such as the duration of membership, challenges faced during enrollment, comparative benefits of women's cooperative banks over other banks, and whether respondents began earning before or after joining. The sample includes members from the following banks:

- *Jabalpur Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Jabalpur*
- *Mahila Nagrik Sahakari Bank, Khargone*
- *Parisamapan Suvidha Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Narmadapuram*
- *Parisamapan Suvidha Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Hoshangabad*
- *Sarvodaya Mahila Cooperative Bank Limited, Burhanpur*
- *Maa Sharda Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Maihar*
- *Rajrajeshwari Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Limited, Shajapur*

Duration of Membership

Table 1: Duration of Membership of Respondents (N = 350):

Period (Years)	Respondents	%	Valid %	Less Than Cumulative %	More Than Cumulative %
Less than 1	70	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%	100.0%
1 to 5	220	62.9%	62.9%	82.9%	80.0%

5 to 10	53	15.1%	15.1%	98.0%	17.1%
More than 10	7	2.0%	2.0%	100.0%	2.0%
Total	350	100.0%	100.0%		

(Source: Compiled by Researcher through Primary Data)

As per Table 1 and its graphical representation (Graph No. 5.4.1), the **majority of respondents (220 out of 350)** have been members of the women's cooperative banks for a period of **1 to 5 years**, which accounts for **62.9%** of the sample. Approximately **20%** of respondents reported being members for less than one year, and only **2%** have had a membership duration exceeding 10 years.

This trend suggests that most women have relatively recent affiliations with these cooperative banks. The data reflects that the **Jabalpur Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Mahila Nagrik Sahakari Bank Khargone, and other regional women's banks** are becoming increasingly accessible and appealing to new female members.

This increasing membership may also indicate the growing trust and perceived benefit among women towards these institutions as reliable sources of financial support and empowerment.

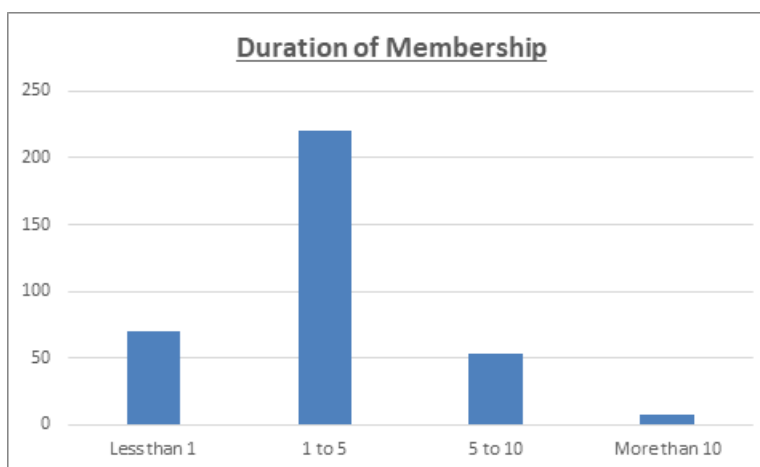


Figure 1: Duration of Membership of Respondents

Table 2: Duration of Membership with Sample Bank (N = 350)

Bank Name	< 1	%	1 – 5	%	5 – 10	%	> 10	%	Total	%
Jabalpur Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Jabalpur	17	24.3	56	25.1	14	28.0	1	14.3	88	25.1

Mahila Nagrik Sahakari Bank, Khargone	4	5.7	11	4.9	2	4.0	1	14.3	18	5.1
Parisamapan Suvidha Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Narmadapuram	13	18.6	33	14.8	7	14.0	1	14.3	54	15.4
Parisamapan Suvidha Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Hoshangabad	17	24.3	56	25.1	14	28.0	1	14.3	88	25.1
Sarvoday Mahila Cooperative Bank Limited, Burhanpur	6	8.6	22	9.9	5	10.0	1	14.3	34	9.7
Maa Sharda Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Maryadit, Maihar	6	8.6	22	9.9	5	10.0	1	14.3	34	9.7
Rajrajeshwari Mahila Nagrik Sahkari Bank Limited, Shajapur	6	8.6	22	9.9	5	10.0	1	14.3	34	9.7
Total	69	100.0	222	100.0	52	100.0	7	100.0	350	100.0

(Source: Compiled by Researcher through Primary Data)

Out of the 350 respondents, a significant number—**222 women (63.4%)**—have had a membership duration between **1 to 5 years** with the respective Mahila cooperative banks. Respondents from **Jabalpur and Hoshangabad banks** together accounted for the highest proportion in this category, each contributing over **25%**. Furthermore, **14.8%** of respondents from **Narmadapuram**, **9.9%** from **Burhanpur, Maihar, and Shajapur**, and **4.9%** from **Khargone** also reported membership durations of 1 to 5 years.

This distribution indicates that the **majority of members have been associated with the Mahila banks for the past five years**, suggesting a stable and sustained relationship. These members are therefore expected to have substantial familiarity with the operational schemes, loan products, and developmental initiatives offered by their respective banks.

Deposit Position of the Respondents

Membership in a Mahila Bank requires women to cultivate a habit of regular saving. Even modest, systematic deposits encourage financial discipline and, over time, greater self-reliance. The following tables compare the situation **before** and **after** joining the bank.

Table 3: Saving Position of the Respondents (N = 350)

Sr. No.	Range of Saving (₹)	Before Membership		Cum. %	After Membership		Cum. %
		<i>f</i>	%		<i>f</i>	%	
1	501 – 1000	111	31.71	31.71	25	7.14	7.14
2	1001 – 1500	83	23.71	55.43	62	17.71	24.86
3	1501 – 2000	65	18.57	74.00	75	21.43	46.29
4	2001 – 2500	61	17.43	91.43	80	22.86	69.14
5	Above 2500	30	8.57	100.00	108	30.86	100.00
Total		350	100.00		350	100.00	

Descriptive statistics

Mean (₹): Before = **1 487.14** | After = **2 012.86**

S.D.: Before = **28.35** | After = **28.45**

Correlation (r) = -0.98

t-value = ** $\approx$ 328.0 ** ($p < 0.01$) | Mean difference = $\approx$ **525.7 ₹**

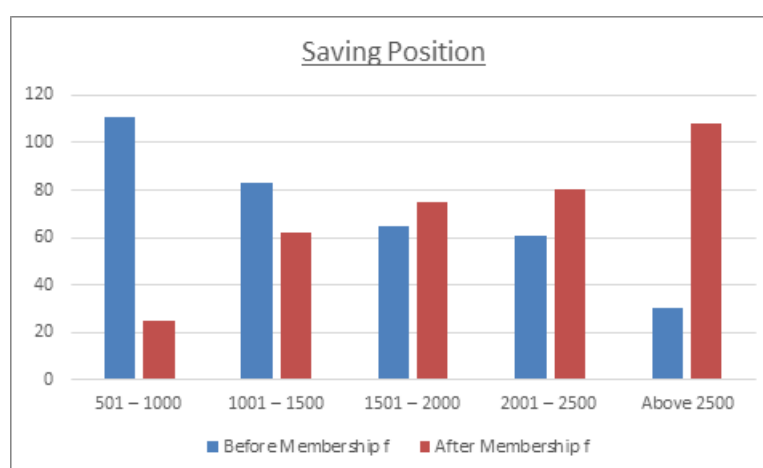


Figure 2: Saving Position of the Respondents

Prior to membership, nearly one-third (31.71 %) of respondents saved only ₹ 501–1000. After joining, the distribution shifts markedly: 30.86 % now save **₹ 2 500 and above**, while the lowest bracket shrinks to just 7.14 %. The sizeable, statistically significant rise in mean savings confirms the Mahila Bank’s positive

impact on women's financial resilience.

Table 4: Types of Saving

Sr. No.	Type of Saving	<i>f</i>	%	Valid %	Cum. %
1	Bhishi/Chit Fund	88	25.14	25.14	25.14
2	Bank Recurring Deposit	157	44.86	44.86	70.00
3	Post-Office Schemes	70	20.00	20.00	90.00
4	Insurance-linked	18	5.14	5.14	95.14
5	Other (MFs, shares, etc.)	17	4.86	4.86	100.00
Total		350	100.00	100.00	

The **recurring-deposit account (44.86 %)** remains the preferred vehicle, underlining members' preference for disciplined monthly savings.

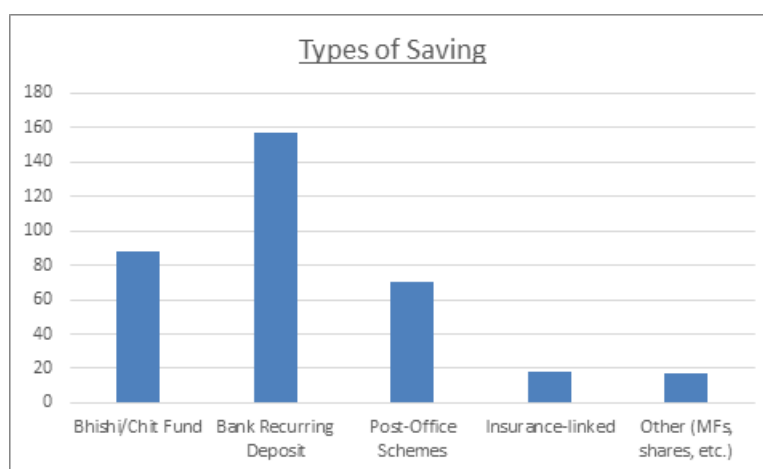


Figure 3: Types of Saving

Overdue of Loan

Table 5: Overdue of Loan

Sr. No.	Overdue of Loan	Members	%
1	Yes	138	39.4 %
2	No	212	60.6 %

Total		350	100.0 %
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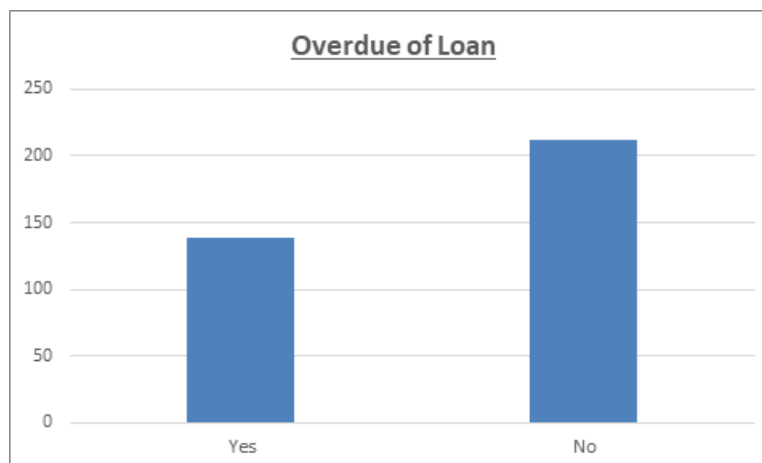


Figure 4: Overdue of Loan

Roughly **two out of five borrowers (39.4 %)** report an overdue balance, while **60.6 %** are current. Overall, overdue loans do **not** appear to be a severe systemic issue across the Mahila Cooperative Banks in the study.

Employment Effects of Mahila Bank Loans

Table 6: Self-Employment Generated by the Loan (n = 350)

Sr. No.	Employment Status	Members	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
1	Self-employed (fully / partially funded)	332	94.9 %	94.9 %	94.9
2	Still unemployed	18	5.1 %	5.1 %	100.0
Total		350	100.0 %	100.0 %	

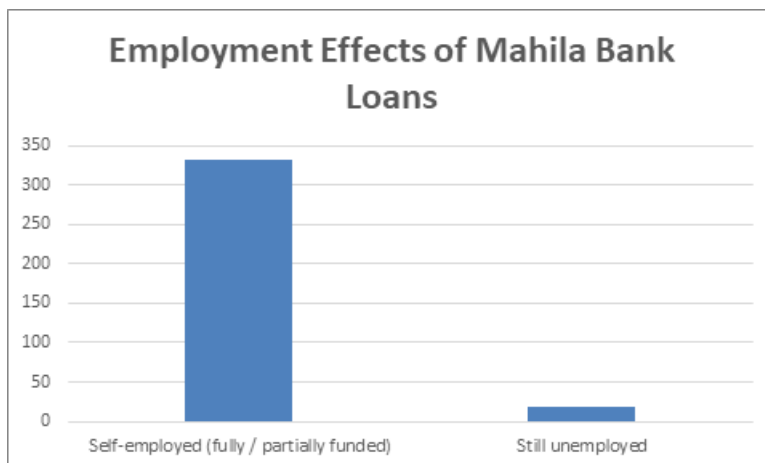


Figure 5: Employment Effects of Mahila Bank Loans

Nearly **95 %** of borrowers have managed to secure or expand a livelihood with the help of the loan, underscoring the strong employment impact of Mahila Cooperative Banks.

Economic Upliftment of Members

Table 7: Bank Participation in Members' Economic Advancement (n = 350)

Sr. No.	Bank Participation	Members	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
1	Participated (loans, training, jobs)	287	82.0	82.0	82.0
2	Not participated	63	18.0	18.0	100.0
Total		350	100.0	100.0	100.0

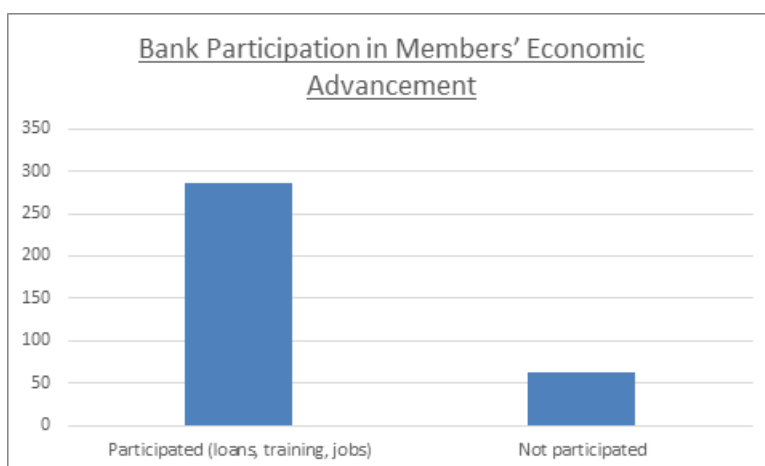


Figure 6: Bank Participation in Members' Economic Advancement

Just over four-fifths of respondents credit their Mahila Cooperative Bank with a direct role in improving

their household's economic condition.

CONCLUSION

Women cooperative banks serve as vital institutions for financial inclusion and economic empowerment. The various programmes they offer contribute to improved income levels, asset building, and entrepreneurial success among women. With strategic support and scaling, such banks can become powerful agents of grassroots socio-economic transformation.

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