

Changes in Women's Status: A Sociological Study Of Rural Haryana

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Abstract : *The present paper is an attempt to know the changes in socio-economic status of women in rural Haryana. The present study was carried out in village Barsi of Bawani Khera Tehsil of district Bhiwani in Haryana State on random sampling method. The sample of 60 respondents in which 30 are daughter-in-law and 30 are mother-in-law was also selected on random sampling method. In the present study, two age groups were taken of the same number. First age group of the respondents (daughter-in-laws) belonged to the age group of 18-40 years and other group (mother-in-laws) belonged to age group of above 40 years. In the present study, it was found that regarding awareness about women's right? A vast majority of the respondents (daughter-in-laws and mother-in-law) mother-in-laws said that there is more awareness in women about their rights. In terms of role of constitutional provisions and legal rights which help to bring change, a large majority of the respondents (daughter-in-laws and mother-in-law) were agree with this view that constitutional provisions and legal rights can bring change into the socio-economic status of women. Regarding changes come in pardah system, dressing, food habits in comparison to older period, a vast majority of daughter-in-laws mother-in-laws said that major changes have come in pardah system, dressing, food habits. But the numbers of daughter-in-laws who were agree with view are more than mother-in-laws.*

Key words: Women empowerment, socio-economic status, awareness

INTRODUCTION

In India, the society is generally male dominated and patriarchy is strong despite several movements for upliftment of women launched by women's organizations in the pre-independence and post-independence period. Male-superiority emanates from castes, class, patriarchy and sexuality of the male. In fact, we may say that the reason for women's poor condition largely depends on India's social and cultural heritage and strong tradition of patriarchy and male-domination. In Indian society the status of women has been many up and downs. Majority of women are burdened with the dual gaps of gender bias and resource deprivations, gender stereotypes, marginalization, alienation and deprivation are created by the prevailing social order.

More recently, sex selective abortions, in adequate representation in legislatures, wage discrimination, domestic violence, dress code in public, and in adequate entitlements in personal laws have emerged as rallying points. For example, according to a 1998 study. Bina Aggarwal found that rarely 13 percent women in India are able to inherit immovable property. In the field of politics, 16th Lok Sabha and only 11 percent of female members and despite this, it was the highest figure till then. International center for research on women (ICRW) conducted a study in 2010, in which, 38 percent of Indian men admitted that they have physically abused their partners. The 2016 global gender gap report by the world Economic Forum ranked India at the 87th place on gender equality among 144 nations. A 2016 study by Action Aid UK found that 80 percent of women in India had experienced sexual harassment of various forms ranging from unwanted comments, being groped or sexually assaulted. The brutal rape of a girl (which was later called Nirbhya by the nation) on 16 December 2012, in a moving bus, shoot the consciences of the whole nation and it mobilized the government to pass some quick laws.

Empowerment was the buzzword of the nineties. However, there is little consensus on definition and use of the term. Empowerment is about social transformation, it is about radical social transformation, and it is about the ordinary people, common people, rather than politicians, experts and other socially or culturally advantaged persons. It is an active, multi-dimensions process which should enable women to realise their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. It would consist a greater access to knowledge and resource, greater autonomy in decision making, greater ability to plan their lives, have greater control cover the circumstances that influences their lives and free them from shackles of serfdom imposed on them by customs, belief and practice. Generally, development with justice is expected to generate the forces that lead to empowerment of various sections of population in a country and to raise their status. Although, the concept of

power contained in it is generally left unspecified. Empowerment is both a means to an end and an end in itself. The idea of empowerment may be invoked in virtually any context: in speaking about human rights, basic needs, economic security, capacity building, skill formation or the conditions of a dignified social existence. According to Agarwal empowerment is a process that enhances the ability of disadvantaged (powerless) individual and group of challenge and change existing power relationships that place them in subordinate economic, social and political position (Agarwal 1994: 22). Thus it can be said that the empowerment is about power and the distribution of power is not a separate or detachable part of society but permeates every type of arrangement in it.

Women empowerment is now widely employed in the press, on television and in political, academic and even legal circles. The 73rd amendment in constitution is a step forward to empower the women by giving 33 per cent reservation to them in Panchayati Raj institution in local administration to strengthen their positions in local governance. All state governments amended their Panchayati Raj Acts in accordance with the constitutional amendments. While the hopes raised through the amendments are high, the real picture at the grass root level is different and mixed. In the traditional Indian society, politics is still regarded as 'unwomanly' and the traditional attitude also prevent them from participating in politics, even at the grassroots level in panchayati raj institutions. In order to assess the impact of these constitutional provisions and the legal and administrative measures, the present study proposes to inquire whether these measures have strengthened and empowered, the dalit and non-dalit women in Haryana.

Changing Socio-Economic Status of Women

A change in the status of women is a phenomenon that depends on a host of factor including her own efforts, value system of a society as well as state sponsored policies. Its nature and pace of direction depends on a number of complex interlinked and interwoven conditions based on economic, political, social educational and cultural factors etc. The constitution of India provides a comprehensive framework for the socio-economic development of women. With the state initiatives and with the efforts from various social service agencies and of course with their own involvement, the things are relatively changing with the passage of time. The decade of 1990s has remained a watershed in India's history – a time of transition e.g. liberalization of economy, globalization, privatization of economy. With the increase in the literacy rate and level of education, the importance of educated women's role and status in the society has changed during the past few decades. It is no longer a question of what women are capable of doing physically and mentally. Marriage and work for educated women are of great social interest and importance in the present day society. The changes in the institution of family and marriage have been set in motion by the educated women. The pattern of social relationship within the family is changing. These changes in turn contribute to the changes in social structure. The emergence of educated and empowered women is an indication of the significant socio-economic changes taking place in the society.

Due to technical advancement and social development the structure of the family organization is changing, these substantial changes have created new challenging roles and status for women all over the world especially Indian women. Among the women fraternity middle class and lower class women are the worst sufferers. As the member of the family she has to perform certain roles apart from taking an active part in economic, health and educational activities. The impact of education, constitutional provisions, state policies, legal rights, globalization etc. changed women's role and status in the society during the past few decades. It is no longer a question of what women are capable of doing physically and mentally. Women have proved themselves fit for much wider range of activities than the traditional role of housewife. Marriage and work for educated women are of great social interest and importance in the present day societies in India.

Women working outside their homes are not a new phenomenon because women in India have always been working for a living in the fields along with their men. Taking up of employment by the educated middle class and upper class women is comparatively a recent phenomenon. Even the married women are coming out of four walls of their home seeking gainful employment. The degree of freedom given to women to move about in society and to take part in public life gives a good idea of the nature of her changing role and status in the society. Women today enjoy better health and they are better health and hygienic conscious because of the progress in the national health programmes including family planning. Changes in the social attitudes of women themselves as well as those of men have been observed due to widespread use of radio, cinema and television and with the spread of books and newspapers. The status of women in India has been affected significantly by the different provisions in the laws till the year 1954. Indian women did not enjoy a very favourable position in the eyes of law, through the constitution of the Republic of India guaranteed equality to

everyone. It was only in 1955-56, when the Parliament passed statutes reforming the Hindu law relating to marriage and divorce, succession, adoption, minority and guardianship, that Indian women attained a status equal to that of men.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Singh, Sharma, and Henry (2010) showed that SHGs had a significant influence in changing socio-economic status of the beneficiaries. The additional monthly income of the beneficiaries also increased significantly as a result of enterprises taken in SHGs. Thangaraju (2011) revealed that the major problem was not availability of finance but repayment of it. The repayments are difficult due to low paying capacity, which is affected by lack of education, poor skills, and certain problems related to marketing, viz., lack of mobility, biased attitude towards women and caste to which they belong and poor infrastructural support. Das (2013) conducted a study to examine the status of women in the North Eastern Region in comparison with all India average. It is found from the analysis that the status of women in the region is comparatively better than the rest of the country only in some selected indicators. The indicators reveal that women have a very low degree of freedom of movement and low level of control over themselves in North Eastern Region. Chanchan (2013) identified and analyzed the pull and push factors associated with the development of women entrepreneurs in Manipur and found that irrespective of education level and income group, the financial constraints are the main reasons for women taking up entrepreneurship.

Shaik (2015) found that majority of respondents are between the age group of 30-45 years with 43%, 38% of the respondents were between the age of 45-55 years, and only 19% were age of above 56 years. Majority of respondents are illiterate with 70% and literates comprised of 30%. Most of them are engaged in agriculture for their livelihood constituting of about 64% and remaining 30% are wage labours, 5% are working in private jobs and 1% are engaged in government jobs. Nisha, Lekhraj and Kumar (2015) indicated that there are large disparities showed in sex ratio, literacy rate and work participation comparison to male in Haryana. High level of literacy and educational achievement leads to equal status of male and female and this make the women economic empowered. Samria (2015) revealed that the socio-economic status of the women were less significant as compared to the men respondents.

Rani, and Sinha (2016) revealed that lack of family support, non-cooperation of male counterparts, weak bargaining position, psychological barriers, lack of experience, lack of knowledge, lack of society support, harassment, difficulties in getting loans to set up a business, lack of awareness about credit facilities for women, lack of infrastructure facilities, strict regulations and policies, attracting customers, lack of marketing skills and unfavorable market behaviors were the major problems faced by the women entrepreneurs. Ahmad, Sherwani, and Jamshed (2017) showed an encouraging result and identifies significant changes in rural women entrepreneurship through these arrangements. Bairwa, Bairwa, Bairwa, and Bairwa (2017) concluded that the nutritional knowledge of the participant was very low and maximum lactating women were found non-vegetarian. Most of the deliveries were in the hospital and there were some bad practices consumed such as bidi, zarda, gutka

Need and Importance of the Present Study

A powerful lever for change, women's economic empowerment can drive gender equality and broader intergenerational benefits for women, their families, communities, and countries. A major systemic constraint to women's economic empowerment is the adverse social and cultural norms that dictate the unequal status of women, their roles in society, and control over their own fertility and bodies. Adverse norms drive expectations around women's roles as primary caregivers, perpetuate gender bias and stereotypes in the workplace, and contribute to their informal labor going largely unrecognized. Subtle gender bias impacts women's own attitudes and preferences toward work, professional advancement, and their perceptions and sometimes acceptance of violence and inappropriate behavior at work and at home. Mostly the social researchers had tried to focus upon the socio-economic problems and other government plans for the upliftment and betterment of status of women in different parts of India. It is observed that there is a scarcity of studies, which aims at studying the changing socio-economic status of women, the factors which brings change and the impact of change. So there is an ample scope for further studies. Therefore, intensive studies of the rural women are necessary so as to gain a clear and comprehensive understanding of the changing and prospects of women socio-economic status. Keeping in view the above facts, the present study of changing socio-economic status of women has been attempted in village Barsi, Bawani Khera Tehsil of district Bhiwani in Haryana State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research has been designed in exploratory method and comparative so it tries to explore the changing socio-economic status of women of the study area. The main purpose of the study is to explore the changing women status in terms of social and economic. To understand this phenomenon, we have formulated the following objective.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the factors, which brings change into the socio-economic status of the respondents.

FIELD OF THE STUDY

The present study was carried out in village Barsi of Bawani Khara Tehsil of district Bhiwani in Haryana State on random sampling method.

SAMPLE

The sample of 60 respondents in which 30 are daughter-in-law and 30 are mother-in-law was also selected on random sampling method.

TOOLS OF THE DATA COLLECTIONS

In the present study due emphasis is placed on collection of in-depth information. In order to do this, primary data is collected with the help of structured interview schedule.

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED

Percentage method was used to analyze the data.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table 1
Awareness of respondents about women's right?

Sr. No.	Response	No. of Respondents			
		Daughter-in-law	%age	Mother in-law	%age
1	Yes	25	83.33	16	53.33
2	No	5	16.67	14	46.67
	Total	30	100.00	30	100.0

The table 1 shows the awareness of the respondents about women's' rights. A vast majority of the respondents (daughter-in-laws) 83.33 per cent and 53.33 mother-in-laws said that there is more awareness in women about their rights, while 16.67 per cent daughter-in-laws and 46.67 mother-in-laws said that women are not aware about their rights till today.

Table 2

Constitutional provisions and legal rights can bring change into the socio-economic status of women ?

Sr. No.	Response	No. of Respondents			
		Daughter-in-law	%age	Mother in-law	%age
1	Yes	25	83.33	20	66.67
3	No	5	16.67	10	33.33
	Total	30	100.0	30	100.0

When we asked our respondents that constitutional provisions and legal rights can bring change into the socio-economic status of women? A large majority of the respondents (daughter-in-laws) 83.33 per cent and (mother-in-laws) 66.67 per cent were agree with this view that constitutional provisions and legal rights can bring change into the socio-

economic status of women. But the numbers of daughter-in-laws who were agreed with view are more than mother-in-laws.

Table 3

Opinion of the respondents in terms of changes come in pardah system, dressing, food habits, decision making

Sr. No.	Opinion	No. of Respondents							
		Daughter-in-law				Mother in-law			
		Yes	%age	No	%age	Yes	%age	No	%age
1	Purdah system	15	50.00	15	50.00	14	46.67	16	53.33
2	Dressing	20	66.67	10	33.33	18	60.00	12	40.00
3	Food habits	28	93.33	2	6.67	21	70.00	09	30.00

When we asked our respondents that what type of changes came in pardah system, dressing, food habits in comparison to older period. Out of 30, 50 per cent daughter-in-laws, and out of 30 mother-in-laws, 46.67 per cent said that major changes have come in purdah system. In prior, most of the women strictly follow purdah system, but now in these days, few women followed this system. Regarding dressing, majority of daughter-in-laws, i.e. 66.67 per cent, and 60 per cent mother-in-laws said that major changes have in dressing sense. Now in these days, the trend of old traditional dress is not as much as in olden times. When we asked our respondents about the food habits, a vast majority of daughter-in-laws, and 70 per cent mother-in-laws said that major changes have come in food habits, fast food, pizza, tikki, bhalle, chips, bread roles, burger etc. have taken place upon lassi, dahi, rabdi, sag, etc.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the present study, two age groups were taken of the same number. First age group of the respondents (daughter-in-laws) belonged to the age group of 18-40 years and other group (mother-in-laws) belonged to age group of above 40 years. Regarding awareness about women's right? A vast majority of the respondents (daughter-in-laws) 83.33 per cent and 53.33 mother-in-laws said that there is more awareness in women about their rights, while 16.67 per cent daughter-in-laws and 46.67 mother-in-laws said that women are not aware about their rights. In terms of role of constitutional provisions and legal rights which help to bring change, a large majority of the respondents (daughter-in-laws) 83.33 per cent and (mother-in-laws) 66.67 per cent were agree with this view that constitutional provisions and legal rights can bring change into the socio-economic status of women. But the numbers of daughter-in-laws who were agree with view are more than mother-in-laws.

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