

‘A Study of Social and Economical Status of Women Workers in Agriculture with Special Reference to Backward Districts of Marathwada Region’

Dr. Shalinee Uttamrao Kadam,

Assistant Professor in Economics

School of social sciences

S.R.T.M.University Nanded (MS)

E-Mail – Kadamsu@rediffmail.com

M.No.8698963223

ABSTRACT:

The present paper is focused on the Women workers in agriculture in which try to explore the social and economical status of women workers in study area. The study is based on quantitative method in which both Primary and secondary data collections are used. The study is based on empirical investigation conducted among selected women worker in agriculture of two backward districts like Nanded and Hingoli in Marathwada region. From each district 5 villages were selected form backwards area of the district .In each 10 villages, 25 women worker in agriculture were chosen for Interview scheduled purpose. Total 250 samples were selected in 10 villages spread over two district. With the help of receiving data from the respondent the study try to explore the actual economical and social status of the women worker in agriculture which help to conclude that the social and economical status of women workers in agriculture are very low which indicate the backwardness ,poorness and lack of empowerment among them.

KEY WORDS: Women Workers in Agriculture, Social Status, Economical Status.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Women since ages have been looked upon as or second sex. The participation of women in doing life regarding her role as a decision maker has always been questioned. Being an important member she is always deprived from her social and economical rights. Various researches have also proved this fact that the opinion of women is considered least important in day to day family decisions.

When we talk about the development of India as a country we cannot leave aside the 50% women population. India, in real sense will be considered as a developed nation if 50% of women population is given equal right and participation. But, this is not so various researches regarding participation of women in decision making has over and over again proved that women are least considered even though they are earning.

Near about 11% of women in Maharashtra are working in organized sector and are highly educated still they do not have a say in social and economical decisions. Various researches regarding working women indicate that despite of having economical status the opinion of this section is not considered. If the situation of earning women than situation of women in rural areas is very pathetic. 39.92% of the women population of Maharashtra resides in rural areas and are engaged in non-organized sector. They are far away from awareness regarding their fundamental rights. Still in 2019 the problem of education, sanitation, dignified livelihood remains as it for rural women. About 70 percent women in rural area are engaged in agriculture sector and still they depend upon their husband, father, brother, son, etc. for their livelihood. So the women worker in agriculture not empowered due to the lack of social as well as economical development of women.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The situation of women is even worst in backward areas of Maharashtra. The researchers, thus, propose to study and evaluate the social and economical status of women worker in agriculture. Agriculture being source of employment for more than 75 % of rural population is in a state of crisis. The dependency of agriculture on nature is making it more risky day by day and

at the same time the increasing number in migration of male for employment to other areas, poverty, minimum wages, illiteracy and lack of awareness among the women, these parts puts question mark on the status of women in agriculture area. As women worker in agriculture suffered from poverty, backwardness and low socio-economic status. All the central and centrally sponsored scheme and special area components plan have to be addressed to what extent these schemes have benefited these women worker in agriculture. They warrant special attention due to their vulnerability and lack of resources to empower them. Hence a study into the socio-economic condition of these women worker in agriculture is found necessary to identify the areas of deficient and make suggestion to ameliorate their distress and thus researcher proposed to undertake the study of women agriculture workers in backwards districts of Marathwada and try to explore the socio-economic status of women workers in agriculture.

3. RESEARCH QUESTION:

While talking about equal status of women in socio-economic context, it becomes essential to find out the root cause for their under development. Nation is organizing different schemes and program for empowerment of women, but they are far behind in their development in comparison to other developed countries. What are the impediments in their development? What is their socio-economic status? What benefits accrue to them really from the government policies and so on? These are some of the important questions, which need a detailed analysis and study. Against this back ground a study was conducted in backward districts of Marathwada region to access the socio-economic status of women worker in agriculture.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

- 1] The study will help identify the level of economical and social status of women workers of agriculture in backward district of Marathwada.
- 2] The study will help government prepare a model for creating awareness in such backward district of Marathwada.
- 3] This study help to identifying problems faced by the women worker in agriculture and find the different socio-economic factor affection on their life.

- 4] The data can also be used to minimize the social and economic problems which arise because lack of awareness, illiteracy, poverty, among the women worker in agriculture.

5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Ram (1969): Attempt to analyze the changing trends of women's employment in agriculture and non-agriculture sector. The employment opportunity for women especially in rural economy is in agriculture. In his study he found that most of the women labourers due to lack of education and skill depends mostly upon the agriculture sector.

Bina Agarwal (1985): In her study, the facts that the agriculture labourers who are the bulk of women worker in agricultural sector come from the traditionally low social status who are the illiterate, unskilled and have to faces irregular employment, heavy workload and exploitation.

Mishra, Sahu and Agrawal (1999): In their paper have examined the extend and proportion of women labour participation in paddy cultivation and gap in wags between men and women labour in kymore plateau and satpura hill region of Madhya Pradesh. In participation of women labour was higher in paddy, inter-culture and harvesting. The use of women labour (both family and hired) in paddy cultivation constituted 53 percent of the total human labour employment. The hiring of women labour was highly associated with the increase in the size of farm. The result of the study also showed that the wage gap was more than 71 percent between men and women for all operations. This study also suggested that diversified farming such as dairy, poultry etc can help to increase the employment opportunities of women.

Tripathy (2000): Makes an attempt to examine the socio-economic features of contractual agricultural labour in India with special reference to Orissa with the help of both primary as well as secondary sources of data. Analyzing the genesis of the agricultural labour from the historical perspectives, the study has focused light on the various types of labour prevalent in India viz. bonded labour, attached or contract labour, migrant labour, casual labour etc.

6. STUDY AREA:

The universe of the study includes the backward districts in Marathwada. As per 2011 census of Maharashtra there are 13 backward districts in Maharashtra, which are, Gadchroli, Bhandara,

Gondia, Chandrapur, Hingoli, Nanded, Dhule, Nandurbar, Ahemdnagar, Yevatmal, Amaravati, Thane (Palghar), Beed (From-Wikipedia). In these backward districts Nanded, Hingoli and Beed are come under the backward district in Marathwada region. But we have taken here only two backward districts in Marathwada region purposively, which include Hingoli and Nanded. Out of 2 backward districts 5 villages from each backward district were selected purposively.

7. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- 1] To understand the socio-economic condition of women workers in agricultures.
- 2] To study the socio-economic problems of women workers in agriculture.
- 3] To study various health issues of women workers in agriculture

8. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION:

The study incorporates gender, economic and social status as a conceptual framework to explore the status of women worker in agriculture. Socio economic position is the distribution of social class such as occupation, education, income, wealth, health and other social status. It has been operationalised in a variety of ways, most commonly as education, social class or income. In this study we also use education, health and economic status of working women in agriculture.

9. METHODOLOGY:

The study is based on quantitative method in which both Primary and secondary data collections are used. The study is based on empirical investigation conducted among selected women worker in agriculture of two backward districts like Nanded and Hingoli in Marathwada region. Out of 2 backward districts 5 villages from each backward block in the district were selected by purposive sampling method which amount to total 10 villages. In each 10 villages, 25 women worker in agriculture were chosen for Interview scheduled purpose. Total 250 samples were selected in 10 villages spread over two district. From each village, 25 women worker were selected using the snowball sampling method. An eligible women worker in agriculture was interviewed and same sample helped to identify other household where women work on the farm. This process was continued until the desired numbers of sample (25 in each village) were covered.

9.1 DATA COLLECTION:

Primary data was collected, using the interview scheduled method from the female worker in agriculture. The project director and field investigator were meet the respondents in the respective villages in backward district and questions will be filled up using scheduling and also the secondary data relevant to the study was collected. In the secondary source included governmental reports, statistical data, reports, book reviews will be used as supportive source of data in the analysis and interpretation process.

9.2 DATA ANALYSIS:

The interview schedules administered on female worker in agriculture were edited, codified and tabulated. Data processing was carried out with help of SPSS software in which Percentage, sum, and graphical presentation are used.

9.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

The following are the limitation of the study:

1. It encompassed only women worker in agriculture area.
2. This study is limited to socio-economic status of women workers in agriculture.
3. This study is limited for two backward districts (Nanded and Hingoli,) in Marathwada region.

10. OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY:

In the study area, very few of women worker in agriculture are from the upper class, mostly lower class and lower caste women performed agricultural activities like agricultural labourers which indicate the social status of the respondent. Majority of 80.4 percent women were married who are involved in agriculture to supplement their family income, which indicate the double work burden on women. Majority of the women respondents such as 57.2 percent were found illiterate and uneducated in the study area which indicates the social backwardness of women. Maximum respondent family had only one adult male worker (56.8%) and female worker (56%) in the family and maximum 52.2% family had three and more than three dependent member in

the family. Which is badly affected the socio-economic status of the family. It is evident from the data that 57.6 percent of the women worker in agriculture belonged to male headed households which indicate their secondary status in household. Among the total women respondent family, 61.2 percent family of the respondent had no own agriculture land, among the 38.8% respondents, more than 75% families own less than 3 acres land. Which indicate the lack ownership of land in the respondents. 49.2 percent respondent's crop area cover under only Khariff pattern which is depends on rain water.

Out of total respondents 94 percent respondents have their own house but there condition of house is poor. Out of total respondents 45.2 percent respondents were living in semi-pukka house and 20.8 percent respondents were living in kuccha house. 91.2% respondents don't have separate kitchen facility, 40.8% respondents don't have toilet facility, 22 percent respondents don't have LPG gas facility indicate the lack of basic facilities in their household. In both district more respondents used the tank and hand pump water source, which is not safe for drinking water in all weather.

Among the interviewed respondents, only 1.6 percent respondents reported that agriculture i.e. cultivation in their own land was their occupation and 63.6 percent respondent reported Agricultural labourers were their main occupation. About 34.8 percent respondents main occupation was both i.e. Agriculture and agricultural labourers. The respondents, who have less agriculture land that respondents work as cultivators in their own land and agriculture labourers in another land.

Maximum 63.6% respondents reported an Agricultural labourer was their main occupation. It means majority of the respondent's yearly income were below Rs. 10,000 income group. 80.4% women worker household earns less than Rs. 3,000 per month. The proportion of households with monthly incomes of more than Rs. 3,000 is significantly low. Out of total respondents highest 77.6 % respondents getting Rs. 100 wages per day for their work in agriculture as labourers. In the study analysis suggest that maximum 72.8% respondents had not taken loan, because most of them belongs to agricultural labourers who don't have land, any

asset and aware about loan sources. They have taken very few amount of loan through land holders, which is deducted from their wages. Out of total respondents 87.6% respondents had no any type of saving all these indicate the backward economic status among the women worker in agriculture.

Out of total respondents 61.2 % women respondents reported that their husband owned residential houses and also maximum women don't have ownership of land ,83.2% respondent families don't have any type of livestock, which is help to indicate the poorness among the women worker in agriculture in study area .Above 50% of our women respondents reported that they do not have any role in decision making in the household and that it is their father, husband or other male members who take decisions.

Maximum i.e. 50 women respondents facing general pain in the body every day in both district. It is because, the change in women's status from domestic worker to farmer-cum-domestic worker has certainly increased women's work burden. Out of the total respondents 74% women respondents reported that they don't have primary health centre in their village. So the respondents in that area went to the government hospital which has long distance. Lacks of transportation service, hospital at long distance, not available any doctor in their village and the money problem these problems were facing by the respondents in study area. Which indicate the backwardness of the health and health care services in the study area.

Out of total respondents 57.6 % respondents reported that they had not utilized any government scheme or programmes maximum 57% women worker in the agriculture had not benefited from the existing different schemes and programmes of the government. Very few schemes such as Awas Yojna, Toilet facility, LPG gas facility and Rashan card etc. had utilized by the respondents. There is low level of awareness about laws, schemes and programmes.

In this way the more illiteracy, poor condition of medical facilities, double work burden, secondary position in their household, poor condition of houses and lack of basic facilities in the household, male headed family, low income, no saving, marginal worker, less wages, lack of ownership of asset in households, do not have any role in decision-making in the household etc.

indicate the backwardness in social and economical status of women worker in agriculture in study area.

11. CONCLUDING REMARK

In this study we had observed on the basis of the primary data that the majority of women worker in agriculture belongs to small and marginal families. The survey validates that for the sample in backward area in Nanded and Hingoli district. The survey finding also collaborate the general poverty of the majority of the farming community, the sample population falls under the droughts area with a high percentage of khariff crop pattern which is more depends on the rain water. There are several indicators that indicate the socioeconomic backwardness of the sample households.

Participation of women in agriculture has increased significantly as more men migrate in search of wage labour, also the Agricultural labourers is the main occupation for the majority of respondents in study area. Some of them also work as cultivators in their small farms and agricultural labourers in others farm. Majority of women worker in agriculture are marginal workers and mostly lower class and lower caste women performed agricultural activities like agricultural labourers. The women workers in agriculture suffer from a double burden of work as both domestic and agricultural. The respondents of the study indicate that more illiteracy, more dependent member in the family, bad condition of households. Almost many of the households cannot even afford electricity connection, gas connection ,pure drinking water. Many of the women do not enjoy the facilities of a separate kitchen, toilet facilities in their households. Overall asset base is very low. The majority of households do not even own agriculture land. Most of the respondents indicate economic backwardness through low yearly income and minimum wage. In short there is nothing to cheer about living condition of the respondents.

Survey finding also establish the secondary position of women in their household. Many of the women don't have ownership of land and other asset in their household, are rarely involved in decision making or have control over production or money. The gender inequality in agriculture has social implication. It affects adversely on agriculture and women status. There are

several schemes and programmes of government that if implemented properly can have far – reaching impact on the status of women. But the maximum respondents not aware about the different scheme of the government and also the implementation of programmes are highly inadequate. In this way the study indicate the socio-economic backwardness among the women worker in agriculture in study.

12. RECOMMENDATION:

The socio-economic empowerment of women worker in agriculture is very necessary for increase self confidence among them. So the development scheme, awareness program, self motivation, empowerment program, education, competitiveness, confidence, encourage to the women worker in agriculture. Achieving this type of success is obviously help to bring women worker in agriculture into the mainstream of inclusive growth process in India. Reducing the economic problems due to getting employment among the women worker in agriculture go towards their socio-economic empowerment.

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