

A Profile :

STATUS OF WORKING RURAL WOMEN

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In childhood, a female is subjected to her father; in youth to her husband and when her lord is dead, to her sons. A female is never left independent. This view of the society laid her to a lower status in society, despite, previously she was recognized as Mata Saraswati, Laxmi, etc. Likewise, there appears to be a discrimination favouring the boys in the matter of provision of nutritional, educational and training facilities. Even in regular establishments, women are usually given lower wages.

A “working woman” refers to a woman who works outside her home for a wage or a salary. Statistics reveals that women’s work is rarely recognized, though they work roughly twice as many hours as men and their work is more arduous than men. Still, men many times report that ‘women like children, eat and do nothing’. In fact, not only women perform more tasks, their work in agriculture, requires to spend whole day in muddy soil with their hands. Moreover, they work the entire day under intensely hot sun. Unlike men women do not involve implements in agriculture sector and is based largely on human energy, hence it is considered to be unskilled and less productive. Therefore, women are invariably paid lower wages, despite the fact that they work harder and for longer hours than men do. Till now much has been talked about the pros and cons of the urban working women but the state of rural working women has remained almost ignored. Seventy per cent women from rural area come from families who constitute the labour force. It has been estimated that, 86 per cent of the total rural women are

working in agriculture. Among them, 36 per cent have their own land and work in fields, another 50 per cent work as agricultural labour and only 14 per cent are engaged in other jobs. Working women and house wives play many roles in their daily lives and they also tend to commit themselves to accomplish as many demands as possible. Role strain perspective, multiple role involvement entails obligations that may produce overload and strain which in turn lead to poor physical as well as mental health (Goode, 1960; Coser and Rokoff, 1971).

According to the 1991 census, rural female work participation rate registered to reach upto 26.79 per cent from 5.92 per cent in 1971, whereas it lessened to 52.58 per cent from 53.78 per cent for males. It indicates that the participation of women in work force is increasing very rapidly specially in rural area as compared to urban as well as their male counterparts. This difference is observed to be very concrete.

A sample of 600 working rural women were selected randomly between the age group 18-60 yrs from 10 villages of five blocks of Parbhani district. Structured cum open ended interview schedule was formulated to elicit information pertaining to the dietary pattern, nutritional status, working status, anthropometric measurement, role in decision making, time spending pattern, health problems, deficiency diseases, etc. of the study from the sample and her family members.

Focus On Working Status Of Rural Women :

Of the total women workforce of

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