

Research Paper :

A study on socio-economic status, health and hygiene of rural women of Godda Distt., Jharkhand

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Accepted : July, 2009

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ABSTRACT

An analysis of the problems faced by rural women about general health would help us to reorient our health programmes in a meaningful way. Most of the beneficiaries faced problems regarding inaccessible health education, low income, high cost of nutritive foods in maintaining health practices. It demands the, concerns to provide proper education, low cost technology and strengthening the existing health facilities.

Key words : Economic status, Health and Hygiene, Rural women

Rural women are considered as back bone of Indian economy (Nand and Kumar, 1980), as such they play an important role not only in maintaining their home but also managing their farms and animals, depending upon the situational, personal and socio-economic characteristics of the family to which they belong and they have no role in decision making (Patki and Nikhade 1999). In addition the health of women is the concern of the family and community and is very essential for the healthy life of a community. One of the major concerns of health is mental soundness of an individual. When the mental condition of women is good, she may take up various responsibilities of a family and herself. She may understand the complications, try to solve them, plan for future and may become mentally strong (Bhalerao *et al.*, 2008).

Health has been defined by WHO as a state of complete physical, mental and social well being, and not mere complete absence of disease. Health cannot be given or distributed, but has to be actively acquired and won. Health is the natural state of a living organism. It means if a person is not in the least affected by any disease, he is called healthy. In other words, a man is said to be healthy when he has got no bodily pain or disease. Health is one of the fundamental human rights. The international/organisation like the United Nations and the WHO have endorsed this principle (Deodhar, 1983).

Health is primarily personal responsibility and demands personal care to enjoy it. Knowing this importance various efforts were initiated to tackle this wide concern issue through different programmes by different agencies. Similarly the advances in Medical

Sciences have the treatment for many diseases possible and simple and evolved scientific health practices to overcome many health problems. Even then the benefits of Modern Medicines have not reached the vast majority of people in poverty groups and rural area. Since 80.3% of Indian population is living in rural area as against 26.7% in urban area (Anonymous, 1999)

Health problems all over the world in countries with different levels of technical development are closely connected to the vulnerability of the mother child dyad to inadequate or inappropriate nutrition, infection, unregulated fertility and other factors. Grover (2002) carried out a study on dietary intake and socio-economic factors in birth-weight of infants in rural Haryana and concluded that birth weight is directly influenced by income and educational level. Caste, occupation and family type did not bear a close relationship with birth weight 73.8% of the mothers had low haemoglobin level and were anemic.

The infant is completely dependent on the mother for his or her nutrition. The diet consumed by the women and her health practices has a definite effect on her health. Malnutrition of rural mother is very common in India. UNICEF (1977) has pointed out that malnutrition of mother is the biggest single cause of infant and maternal mortality, therefore, an improvement in the nutritional status of such mothers is of paramount importance. Because specially a rural woman plays a multiplicity of roles in addition to baby rearing and milk production. She is an essential component of the country's agricultural economy, one needs to ensure that her capacity for work