

Research Paper :

## Awareness in rural and urban adolescent girls of Uttar Pradesh about the rights of women at work place

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### ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to explore awareness in rural and urban adolescent girls of Uttar Pradesh about the rights of women at work place. A structured interview scheduled with close ended questions was used for data collection through survey method in the study. The sample comprised of 200 adolescents girls of the age group 12-18 years. 100 from rural and 100 from urban areas, which were selected randomly. The results showed that the difference of knowledge regarding directive principles that concern women workers, equal remuneration act, maternity benefit act, sexual harassment include unwelcome behaviour, were found to be non significant in urban and rural girls. Amount of sexual harassment and wage discrimination against women were found to be significant in urban and rural girls. It can be concluded from the study that there is a great need to develop the appropriate educational packages and programmes for the girls who can provide them right knowledge and will protect them from the exploitation.

**Key words :** Adolescents girls, Women right, Workplace.

Adolescents form about 22% population of the country (22%). Development of a country depends upon them. But they face many problems related to sexual issues and rights. Teachers and parents do not provide adequate information about these issues. Literacy rate in females are lower than in males. Girl's education level has still not improved. In addition, adolescent girls particularly between age group of 14-19 years are more prone to gender discrimination, early marriage, early pregnancy, sexual harassment, unpaid workers, etc. and unawareness of their rights (UNICEF, 1998). Women represent a disadvantaged section of society. Glaring inequalities in the social, political and economic spheres are manifested in the adverse sex ratio, poor educational and nutritional status inequality in wages and prevalence of violence against women, including trafficking.

The present study was taken to explore the awareness in rural and urban adolescent girls of Uttar Pradesh about the rights of women at work place.

### METHODOLOGY

To access the differences in knowledge related to women worker's rights of urban and rural adolescent girls, a structured interview scheduled with close ended questions was used for data collection through survey method in the study. The sample comprised of 200 adolescents girls of the age group of 12-18 years with 100 each from rural and urban areas. The urban colonies and villages were selected randomly from selected cities.

Further, the sample of 100 from both urban and rural area each was selected through random sampling.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

On asking about the 'Equal Remuneration Act', the girls of both urban and rural area had knowledge about equal remuneration act. In urban area, the percentage of girls knowing this (69%) was little more than the girls in rural area (68%). The difference was found to be non-significant as shown by the  $X^2$  value of 0.023 in Table 1.

The girls were enquired about 'Maternity benefit Act', (Table 2). Firstly, asking about the 'Maternity benefits to be provided on completion of', both the girls of urban and rural areas, 10% and 7%, respectively had less knowledge about this. The difference was found to be non-significant as shown by  $X^2$  value of 0.579 in the Table. For further details, asking about 'the maximum period for which any women be entitled to maternity benefit shall be', in this also both urban and rural adolescent girls had less knowledge. The percentage of girls having knowledge in urban and rural areas was 15% and 10%, respectively. The difference was found to be non-significant as shown by  $X^2$  value of 1.143. But both the girls of urban and rural areas had the knowledge of 78% and 63%, respectively, about claims for maternity benefit becomes due on. The difference was found to be significant as shown by  $X^2$  value of 5.409.

On going into further detail *i.e.* on asking about 'sexual harassment at workplace' (Table 3), majority of

**Table 1 : Comparison of adolescent girls of urban and rural areas to their knowledge about Equal Remuneration Act.**

Sr. No.	Equal Remuneration Act	Urban (n=100)		Rural (n=100)		Total (n=200)		X <sup>2</sup>	S*/NS**
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Knowledge about Equal Remuneration Act								
a	Know	69	69	68	68	137	68.5	0.023	NS
b	Don't know	31	31	32	32	63	31.5		

\* S = Significant, NS\*\*= Non-significant

**Table 2 : Knowledge of adolescent girls of urban and rural areas to their knowledge about maternity benefits act**

Sr. No.	Maternity benefits act	Urban (N=100)		Rural (n=100)		Total (n=200)		X <sup>2</sup>	S*/NS**
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	Knowledge of maternity benefits								
	Know	10	10	7	7	17	8.5	0.579	NS
	Don't Know	90	90	93	93	183	91.5		
2.	The maximum period for which any woman shall be entitled to maternity benefit								
	Know	15	15	10	10	25	12.5	1.143	NS
	Don't know	85	85	90	90	175	87.5		
3.	Claims for maternity benefits becomes due on the :								
	Know	78	78	63	63	141	70.5	5.409*	S
	Don't know	22	22	37	37	59	29.5		

\* S = significant, N.S\*\* = Non-significant

**Table 3 : Comparison of adolescent girls of urban and rural areas to their knowledge about sexual harassment at workplace**

Sr. No.	Sexual harassment	Urban (n=100)		Rural (n=100)		Total (N=200)		X <sup>2</sup>	S*/NS**
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	Sexual harassment of working women amounts to :								
	Know	74	74	59	59	133	66.5	5.050*	S
	Don't know	26	26	41	41	67	33.5		
2.	Sexual harassment of the workplace includes unwelcome sexually determined behaviour such as:								
	Know	82	82	71	71	153	76.5	3.365	NS
	Don't know	18	18	29	29	47	23.5		

\* S = Significant NS\*\* = non-significant

the urban adolescent girls were known about 'Sexual harassment of working women', whereas in rural areas the percentage of girls knowing (59%) was much less than the girls in urban areas (74%). The difference was found to be significant as shown by the X<sup>2</sup> value of 5.050 in Table 3.

On asking about 'sexual harassment at the workplace includes unwelcome sexually determined behaviour', both the girls of rural and urban areas had knowledge about this. The percentage of girls having knowledge in urban area was 82%, little more than the girls having knowledge in rural areas (71%). The

difference was found to be non-significant as shown by value of X<sup>2</sup> to be 3.365 in Table 3.

The girls were asked about the 'wage discrimination against women can be seen at'. In urban areas majority (84%) of the adolescent girls had knowledge about wage discrimination, whereas in rural area the percentage of girls knowing this was 64% was much less than the girls of urban areas (84%). The difference was found to be significant. The X<sup>2</sup> value of 10.395 was found to be significant at 5% level of significance (Table 4).

The girls were asked about the 'Directive principles that concern women workers directly' Majority of the

**Table 4 : Comparison of adolescent girls of urban and rural areas to their knowledge about 'wage discrimination against women**

Sr. No.	Wage discrimination against women	Urban (n=100)		Rural (n=100)		Total (n=200)		X <sup>2</sup>	S*/NS**
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
1.	Wage discrimination against women								
a	Know	84	84	64	64	148	74	10.395*	S
b	Don't know	16	16	36	36	52	26		

\* S = Significant NS\*\* = Non-significant

**Table 5 : Comparison of adolescent girls of urban and rural areas to their knowledge about directive principles that concern women workers**

Sr. No.	Directive principles that concern women workers	Urban (n=100)		Rural (n=100)		Total (n=200)		X <sup>2</sup>	S*/NS**
		N	%	N	%	N	%		
1	Directive principles that concern women workers directly								
a	Know	71	71	58	58	129	64.5	3.690	NS
b	Don't know	29	29	42	42	71	35.5		

\* S = Significant N.S. \*\* = Non-significant

girls both in urban and rural areas (71% and 58%), respectively had knowledge about this. The difference of knowledge was found to be non-significant as shown by the value of X<sup>2</sup> as 3.690 in the Table 5.

The results showed that the urban girls were having more knowledge in all areas as compared to rural girls and the result has been supported by Khanna and Goyal (2003) but difference of knowledge regarding equal remuneration act, maternity benefit to be provided of maximum period of maternity benefit, unwelcome sexually determined behaviour and directive principles that concern women workers directly were found to be non-significant among rural and urban adolescent girls, whereas the difference of knowledge regarding claims for maternity benefits, the wage discrimination and sexual harassment of working women amounts to was found to be significant among rural and urban adolescent girls.

**Conclusion:**

The study emphasizes the need to develop women rights education package for school going girls and intervention programmes for non-school going girls which can be implemented at Mahila Mandal or Anganwadi

centres of various villages. Some of this knowledge is spreading in the adolescent population, but the dissemination is slow and uncertain. Mass media generally do not include such sensitive and controversial issues; therefore, more informal means of dissemination may play an important role.

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