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ECONOMIC LIFE OF WOMEN IN SARAN

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Abstract

Scio-economic life of women in Saran district is almost identical with other parts of North India in particular and India in general. It is a very confusing and irrational fact that India is a tradition-bound country. Every country of the world is tradition bound in its own context Goel Priti Prabha, an ardent advocate of women emancipation movement has rightly said "India's traditionality in context of females has wrongly been quoted. In no part of the world prestige received by Indian women is not received by females anywhere else. Those who are against upsurge of India in every sphere of socio-economic field, they people criticize Indian traditionality."

Introduction

Change is law of nature. No one is capable of stopping the process of change over the long period of time. Economic-social life of women has been influenced by several factors our society whether rural or urban is feeling changes which are taking place universally. In our society there are several classes and each classes response to change is not identical. This is why socio-economic life of women belonging to different classes differs from each other. Poverty and prosperity has played great role in socio-economic life of women of different sections of the society. But one thing is that socio-economic life of females of all section has shown slowly but steadily positive changes, though majority of females are still deprived of equal importance in family.

FACTORS AFFECTING ECONOMIC LIFE OF FEMALE:

- i. Constitutional provision;
- ii. Impact of education;
- iii. Role of Newspapers and media in spreading happenings all over the world;
- iv. Feeling to lead modern life that compels the family members to earn more less dependent on each other;
- v. Loosening social pressure.

All above-mentioned factors singularly or combined act in favour of females. Among all these factors constitutional protection and spread of education have proved more effective and assertive. Law of equal right in parental property, 50% reservation of women in the Panchayati Raj system and 33% reservation in all categories of jobs offered by the state govt. are bringing about changes in the socio-economic status and life-style of women. Because of these going on changes women have started to go out of the boundary wall to seek out jobs wherever available. In a tradition bound society female's setting and doing outside jobs is certainly a new social phenomenon and this phenomenon has now become accepted reality in our social and economic life. Seeking outside job has happened due to spread of education. Hence education's role is very important in bringing changes in socio-economic attitudes of females in particular and all persons in general.

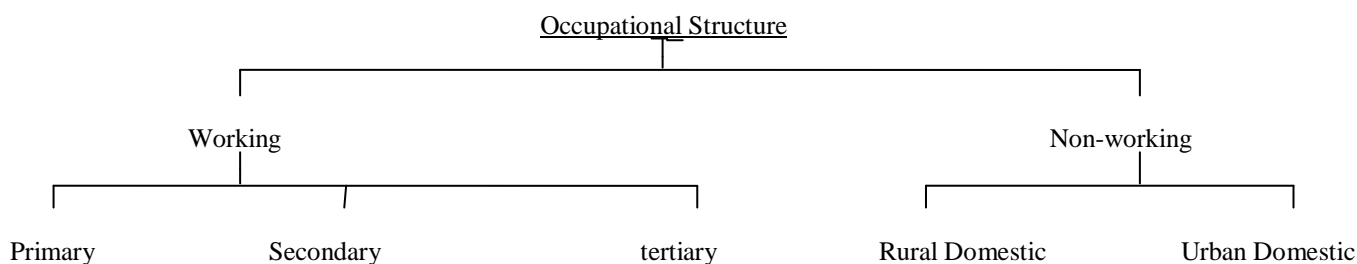
Another important point in this connection is that this new event is the combined result of change and necessity. It is also true that in the total work force of Saran district the proportion of females in working group is very low, but it is a healthy sign from the print of view of development.

Economic life of women can be studied on the basis of occupational structure of Saran district. More than 91% population of this district live in the rural areas and dependent upon agriculture and allied activities. Not only females but majority of males are also engaged in agricultural activities as cultivators and agricultural labourers. Thus, more than 96% working females are engaged in primary occupation which includes agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing, wood-cutting, mat-making, grain crushing basket marketing, thread weaving etc. Among all these primary activities females' participation in agricultural & allied activities are more important.

No resource is as important as human resource is other have become resources by virtue of being appreciated, modified and reconstructed by persons for the fulfilments of their necessities. Hence an appraisal of occupational structure of population is must for assessing developmental activities. It is related with several physico-economic-social determinants. As these factors are not uniformly distributed over the whole study area, hence occupational structure is also not symmetrical everywhere.

In India population is firstly divided into two groups or classes-working population and non-working population. It can be put in tabular form

Table No. 1.1



Among these macro classification occupation is also divided into many sub-groups. Actually any work done by male or female for their livelihood or sustenance is called occupation. Internal organization of occupation is called structure of population. Occupation structure is dynamic by nature with reference to sex, age, and dwelling places. The most important factor that influences occupational structure is societal response and behaviour. Not only in India but in the whole world males have upper hand in eking out breads for their family. It does not mean that female are inferior to man. Here our focus is oriented to females working class. These factors are as such:-

- (i) Females social status;
- (ii) Degree of freedom to movement;
- (iii) Economic necessity;
- (iv) Availability of female oriented favourable job opportunity;
- (v) Desire to use available facilities and amenities.

Besides these factors, the study of occupational structure is also done to acknowledge the trend of types of economy and the state or level of economic development. But in sociology and other social sciences the study of occupational structure is done to measure level of socio-economic development. Occupation structure is supposed to be an indicator of finding out the socio-economic conditions of the concerned area and also the level of civilization in prevalence. It means that persons engaged in primary, secondary and tertiary activities display the state of civilization.

Demographers, geographers and sociologists have almost uniformly accepted that if less than 15% people engaged in tertiary activity, then it represents society having primary civilization. In other words people are in the lower income bracket. Where 15% to 40% people are engaged in tertiary activities, they belong to 2nd order of civilization. It means that they are above primary civilization and lower than the higher civilized group and where more than 40% people are engaged in tertiary activities, they belong to the civilization of higher order. Today level of social development of modern society is judged from the point of view of the level of technological and economic growth on this basis a region or state or country is supposed to be back ward or under developing if 60% or more than 60% people eke out livelihood from agriculture. Contrary to it, where less than 35% people are engaged in agriculture, they are called developed. In India only urban localities belong to developed category because people are not dependent upon agriculture. But the study area's 89% people are agrarian hence our people are under developing where people between 35% and 60% depend on agriculture, they are called developing economy. Now there are many parts in India which may fall in that category having 35% to 60% people depending upon agriculture. But Saran district, is under developing economy. These points indicate that our planners and policy makers must take this point into consideration at the time of taking developmental programmes for different regions. Major parts of the study area needs immediate assistances if regional imbalance is to be removed.

In different countries of the world different types of occupations are in prevalence and its classification is not an easy task. Hence, we adopt the principle regarding it based on classification done by U.N.O. These are as such:-

- a. Work related to business and technology;
- b. Managerial, executive and administrative works
- c. Clerical jobs.
- d. Marketing work.
- e. Cultivators, fishermen, hunter, wood cutler etc.
- f. Mining work.
- g. Transport & Tele-communications,

- h. Remaining workers who have remained left out of any other specified work groups.
- i. People engaged in services and recreational activities,
- j. Unclassified persons from commercial point of view,
- k. Members of defence forces.

From economic point of view U.N.O. has classified active population into the following categories:

- i. Primordial works such as agriculture, wood cutting, hunting and fishing,
- ii. Quarrying,
- iii. Manufacturing,
- iv. Constructions;
- v. Electrical, gas, water services and health services,
- vi. Transportation, storages and communications,
- vii. Commerce,
- viii. Services,
- ix. Other unclassified.

DISTRIBUTION OF TERTIARY WORK FORCE IN STUDY AREA:

As per 2011 census the total population of Saran district was 39 lakhs of the total population more than 48% population belongs to females. Work participation rate (%) in the light new definition of occupation (15 Five year plan draft report) for Bihar was 33.7% in 2001 which went up to 35.8% in 2011. Male's participation rate went down from 47.6% in 1991 to 47.4 % in 2004 and again went up slightly to 47.8% in 2011. However for female trend of participation rate went up to 18.8% from 11.8% in 1991 and further went up to 18.95% in 2011. But in context of India participation rate both male and female was lower. Another important thing is that percentage of female workers to total female population was about 25%. It means that still 75% female population in the study area is non-work participating females folk so much of water is still to flow if female participation ratio is to be increased. Real picture of female participation in working class can be judged by Table No. 1.2

Table No. 1.2
Female work force in different occupation categories In Selected C.D.B.'s

S.No.	District	Cultivators(%)	Agricultural in labour (%)	House hold dustiest (%)	Other services (%)	Total (%)
1.	Chapra	16.20	43.25	18.05	22.54	100.00
2.	Maker	13.40	48.85	18.86	18.89	100.00
3.	Ekma	20.50	50.26	16.32	12.92	100.00
4.	Revelganj	15.00	55.68	15.00	14.22	100.00
5.	Dighwara	16.92	35.89	18.85	28.34	100.00
6.	Sonepur	18.81	55.81	20.56	94.82	100.00

Source: Computed from District Primary census, 2011.

From analysis of Table No. 1.2 we come to know that the average female participation in differently occupations in the study area clearly shows that share of agricultural Labourers was the highest in each C.D.B.. Sonepur and Revelganj have more than 55% of the total female work force engaged in category of agricultural labourers. In three other categories share of female is between 13% and 22% on an average. However, Ekma is an exclusion because only about 12.92% of the total female work force come to other services group. It means that Ekma C.D.B. is the most backward district of the study area. This district is severely influenced by floods and situation. Industrial growth is almost zero. Agriculture is not being supported by new technology. All these combined influence adversely.

Participation of Females in Economic activities based on sample field study:

All discussions in preceding paragraphs are based on census as well as other Govt. & non Govt. Sources. To ascertain the ground reality 3 villages from each C.D.B. and altogether 18 villages. Selection has been randomly done, hence its result may be a rough estimation for the study area. From the perusal of data it has become clear that 54.4% Females are engaged in economic activities but this percentage does not tally with secondary data source. Females are doing work in every economic activity. In the light of 11th planning commission Draft Report only 45.6 % females are not engaged in economic activities. If this trend continues females can compete males in the sphere of economic activities. But this is the one side of female's work participation. Following suggestions in this regard may be perused.

Table No. 1.3**Female Participation in Economic Activities, 2018**

S.No.	Name of villages	Response of questions asked				Total	
		Yes		No		Frequency	%
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%		
1.	Majhaulia	15	50	15	50	30	100
2.	Dhamoura	12	40	18	60	30	100
3.	Rani	17	56.7	13	43.6	30	100
4.	Sugoau	14	46.7	16	53.1	30	100
5.	Saraina	23	57.6	17	42.6	40	100
6.	Motipur	16	53.6	14	46.7	30	100
7.	Dubha	13	43.3	17	56.7	30	100
8.	Narouli	15	50	15	50	30	100
9.	Pandit Pakri	19	63.3	11	36.6	30	100
10.	Bel	20	66.2	10	33.2	30	100
11.	Basbitta	18	60	12	40	30	100
12.	Piprahi	14	46.7	16	53.3	30	100
13.	Kushhar	21	52.2	19	47.5	30	100
14.	Mashoul	17	56.7	13	43.3	40	100
15.	Siloti	18	60	12	40.0	30	100
16.	Sariaman	20	66.7	10	33.3	30	100
17.	Belkatwa	27	54.4	30	42.8	30	100
G. Total		273	54.4	228	45.6	500	100

Source: Self sample survey.

- i) The study area is a part of Bihar. It is the most uprising population best of Bihar. It is passing through the explosive phase of population growth.
- ii) One of the highest per km density of population and one.
- iii) Still there is a great gap between male and female participation rate in economic activities.
- iv) Female work participation rate is slowly but steadily inching up.
- v) Only 75% of the working population remain 183 days engaged in economic activities in a year.
- vi) In sectoral composition of economic activities agriculture is the main field of economic activities.
- vii) Percentage of working force is going up in other primary services. It is a good sign.
- viii) It reflects that as occupational sectors are changing with time so small cultivators are either becoming agricultural labourers or moving for earning wages in non-agricultural sectors.

No doubt, women have enormous capability to perform all sorts of work. They have more patience and feeling of sacrifices than males. Co-education and impact of telecommunications have brought every thing at door-step. From here role of women has come to fore to be matter of discourse. A noted sociologist namely S.C. Dube's views may be quoted here... "In contemporary India prevalent assumptions regarding the role of women are slowly and steadily undergoing changes. Modern technique, increasing Geo-commercial mobility and dawn of new economic structures are combined together responsible for changing role of women in our society".

ATTITUDINAL CHANGES IN WOMEN:

Whatever be the compulsions, perceptible changes in the attitudes of females towards getting equitable existence in the society are crystal clear. They are ready to crush the peoples of obstacles, disdain the frowns of winds and meteors and render all the superstitions to ashes without any second thought. To go ahead is life, this has become their slogans to lead life. Pramilla Kapoor, a sociologist's statement is worth quoting here leaving some distressed females who endeavour to go on job searching and job doing, majority of females have whatever be the reasons, been not interesting in job-seeking. For some time environment has drastically changed and doing jobs they intend to lead a useful social life. In reality since immemorial times females have been assisting to raise the income of family by internal mechanism within the presence of male dominance. Now females have broken the shackles of restrictions and carved out an independent place where they are able to decide their courses of life. However,

changes have taken place with such a swiftness, it may be frightened with fear and over-step. Because male and female are not throat cut competitor rather there must be a logical balance between them.

FEMALES IN ORGANISED SECTOR:

In organized sector employment becomes very much protective and beneficial work conditions are conducive there social protective structure is very strong. In the age of liberalization and globalization quantity of women employment in organized sectors has increased but pace of growth is not swift.

Table No. 1.4

Female Employment in organized Sector

Year	Employment Number	Growth rate (%)
1991	37.91	2.96
1996	45.27	5.20
2001	49.53	2.20
2006	49.80	0.30
2011	50.32	0.32
2017	50.94	0.38
Average	47.26	1.89

Source: Sample Field study of C.D.B.'s 2018

In 2014 of total female work force only 3% was in organized sector and the remaining in unorganized sector. Agriculture, the most important work providing sector, provides more than 3/4th of the total female work force. In rural area its percentage share goes up to 85%. Here majority of them are labourers or bonded. Non agricultural unorganized sector provides only 23% of the total female workforce. In construction labourers get jobs in unorganized sector of which more than 50% workers are female workers.

FEMALE WORKERS IN SERVICES SECTOR:

After liberalization service sectors are providing more jobs to female. As per national sample study, more than 14.68% female workers were engaged in service sectors NSS, report 2012. However number of female workers is low on high level and on high pay structure. In urban areas 14.6% female workers do jobs as domestic servants. Increase in unemployment in domestic services is going up with higher speed.

FEMALES IN PUBLIC/GOVT. SECTOR:

In Govt. sector representation of females have improved considerably. In Panchayat Raj institutions in Saran district representation of females went up to 12% currently from 0.3% in 1995 (planning commission, Bihar 2016). All these figures reveal that considerable improvement has taken place in female work participation rate as well as in employment. But females share in economy is still not in proportion to the population of women. Hence it is the duty of progressive govt. to render more job opportunities to them so that their shares in economy may rise up. If it happens, economic as well as social conditions of females will be better.

FEMALE AS PHYSICAL WORKER:

The study area in particular and Bihar in general is over whelming agrarian. More than 88% of the total population live in village and eke out their livelihood from agriculture. Share of agriculture in India as well as in Bihar still remains at 25% and 86% respectively in the total GDP of India and Bihar, Siwan district follows trend of Bihar. Rural females, especially belonging to impoverished of the society do physical work round the day not only in home but in fields and animal rearing also. Unfortunately, Planning Commission does not consider them working class. It is irony that no one ever thought about their workship. Rural females are more active than urban females. Data provided by the Govt. of India laid more emphasis on rural female workers than the urban female workers. In rural area 90% female workers are basically related to agriculture, animal husbandry and domestic servants. But female workers have been kept in the class of unskilled labourers.

In the study area female workers belonging to downtrodden class have been working class from the very beginning of our civilization sample study on rural female workers done by Agriculture Dept. of Govt. of Bihar has reported that uneducated poor rural females do works at least 10 hours a day and her total work's days goes beyond 310 days. In this sense huge chunk of population belonging to this category must be included in the working group category and for their welfare social schemes should be initiated. Recently many social schemes for this class have been initiated by Modi. Govt. at centre and its effect is up.

INTELLECTUAL WORKERS:

This is a new women working class previously male population had supremacy. With the growth of co-education and spread of higher education -general and technical, females are also joining this group. Engineers, teachers, technocrat, professors, lab workers etc. belong to this category. Every field related to intellectual worker has female access. However in proportion to male intellectual worker number of females are relatively very less, but gap; between them is slowly decreasing. Sex wise data related to this group is still not available readily, hence difficulty is experienced in its evaluation.

STANDARD OF LIVING & OVER ALL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS:

Standard of living manifests the over all socio-economic conditions of any body. It can be summarized with the help of Table No. 1.2 in which engagement of females in economic activities has been shown. Sixteen sample villages were selected and respondent female's acceptability have been put in Table 1.2. In Saran district male members & use to do work outside the native places to earn more money. Majority of females especially of lower middle class and downtrodden families do work both in houses and fields. It is very astonishing fact that more than 54% respondents are actively engaged in economic activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing and mat making. Dairy farming has played great role in engaging females. Only 45% females are nonworking this percentage shows that females are trying to uplift standard living with the spread of electricity and easy loan facilities have helped in widening horizon of female. decent clothing, mobiles, T.V.s, two wheelers etc. Are evidences of going up of standard of living. It is clear that attitude of the society towards working female is very encouraging. It is certainly a witness to going up standard living.

Table No. 1.5**Female engagement in Economic Activities (2018)**

S.No	Name of sample villages	Response					
		Yes		No		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.	Abupur	15	50	15	50	30	100
2.	Didouli	12	40	18	60	30	100
3.	Nurpur	17	54.5	13	43.3	30	100
4.	Masuri	14	46.2	16	60.4	30	100
5.	Bhojpur	23	57.1	17	42.5	40	100
6.	Atrouli	16	53.3	14	46.7	30	100
7.	Lalpur	13	43.3	17	56.7	30	100
8.	Badarpur	15	50	16	50	30	100
9.	Dehra	19	61.1	11	36.8	30	100
10.	Himatnagar	20	66.3	10	33.3	30	100
11.	Asod	18	60	12	40	30	80
12.	Harsinghpur	14	46.7	16	53.3	30	100
13.	Bksa	21	52.5	19	47.5	40	100
14.	Mradpur	17	56.6	13	43.3	30	100
15.	Athsini	18	60	12	40.0	30	100
16.	Saraiya	20	66.7	10	33.3	30	100
17.	Lahladpur	23	56.2	12	34.8	30	100
18.	Mangalgarh	13	43.3	17	55.2	30	100
19.	Deodh	17	56.5	19	53.6	30	100
20.	Kale	19	58.3	12	46.4	30	100
21.	Lagma	13	51.3	14	45.8	30	100
	Total	334	52.10	302	45.6	680	100

Source: Based on correspondents reply in sample survey by Researcher.

Considering all aspects of economic activities of women in Saran district it can be said that majority of working women of rural areas are engaged in agricultural cum animal husbandry activities. There is wide spread corruption in the implementation of MNREGA and social forestry scheme. There is extreme reportism, fraudism, bribery and favouration in the disbursement of funds among allottees. Right from Panchayat Level to District Level there is tie-relationship in taking share in bribery amount. Due to poverty on the side of female as well as male and bad elements on the other side shut the mouths of beneficiaries and loot system is going unabated.

Agriculture, the main employment generating occupation, is still not remunerative. Farmers become poorer year after year due to more expenditure than benefits from cultivation. On massive scale agriculture reforms are need if economic conditions of females in particular and males in general are to be improved.

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