



SOCIO- ECONOMIC STATUS OF WORKING WOMEN IN SHAMSHABAD AREA

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ABSTRACT:

Women suffer from a multiple burden on their time due to their home making, child rearing and income earning responsibilities. When they work the whole day in fields and forests, they need appropriate support services like crèches and child care centres. A Gram panchayat mahila fund should be established to enable SHGs and other women's groups to undertake community activities that help to meet essential gender specific needs. The feminization of agriculture, due to male out migration, needs specific attention with reference to gender sensitive farm and credit policies. All research, development and extension programmes in agriculture and all services must be engendered. Any assessment for the status of women has to start from the social framework, social structures, cultural norms and value systems that influence social expectations regarding the behaviour of both men and women and determine women's roles and their position in society. A society is composed of many institutions and most important of them are the system of decent family and kinship, marriage and religious traditions. They provide the ideology and moral basis for men and women about their rights and duties and their status and role. Living condition of women living in plain region is totally different from women living in mountainous region. Relief is the main factor which influences a person's stability.

Keywords: *social structures, kinship, religious traditions, ideology, moral basis.*



INTRODUCTION

Many attempts have been made in India to increase women's socio-economic status (United Nations, 1997). Critics argue that income generation alone does not increase the economic equality of women in India (Devi, 1999; Dixon, 1982; Drèze & Sen, 2002; Medhi, 2000; A. K. Sen, 1999). Amartya Sen (1999) argued that economic discrimination is a much "broader concept" (p. 108) than economic status and a complex relationship exists between culture and economic status of poor women in India. Although income generation is just one factor, the India Development Report (Parikh & Radhakrishna, 2002) stressed that economic growth is necessary to alleviate poverty. Socio-economic forces combine to greatly influence the development of poor women in India. Given that culture permeates all aspects of life in India, a critical cultural and feminist perspective may enhance understanding of the complex nature of economic development.

OBJECTIVE

- To know the socio economic status of women in study area (shamshabad)
- To know the literacy rate of study area
- To know the Standard of living of the study area
- To know the Health conditions of the study area

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In this chapter an attempt is made to present a review of select and recent studies relating to on women employment and labour utilization that are relevant to studies, the present topic. . It covers the review of different aspects such as women participation, concept, technology, cropping pattern, irrigation facilities, farm size, economic contribution, migration, land holding size, education, burden of work, family income, work force, seasonal variations, caste, and sex discrimination etc.

Women in India are major producers of food in term of value, volume and number of hours worked. Nearly 63% of all economically active men are engaged in agriculture as compared to 78% of women. Almost of rural female workers are classified as agricultural labourers and 37% as cultivators. About 70% of form work was performed by women. It is observed that the women play a



significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields including, in the main crop production, live-stock production, horticulture, post - harvesting operations, agro/social forestry, fishing etc., is a fact long taken for granted but also long ignored (Rao 2006).

Purohit (1995) analyzed a unique feature of female participation throughout India is that they are workers, laborers, cultivators, producers, traders besides performing all household duties which are considered as 'unproductive'. The various activities of women can be divided into two broad heading viz. 'Market Activities' which consist of activities of women on farm and non-farm and 'Non-market' which include personal care of children cooking, washing clothes, fetching water, animal care etc. In all these activities women play an effective role. The dual role of woman as paid workers in the outside market and unpaid workers in the household leads to a significant contribution in real terms to the productive system. But throughout the world, the rural women have been underrepresented in the development process. The male dominated society has not recognized their proper contribution.

Varma (1992) revealed that during the harvesting season, utilization of women labour is maximal, carrying bundle of harvested crop to the stop where threshing would be done is a heavy task which is performed mostly by women. Each bundle is carried as a head load by women, mostly bare footed, walking over the sharp shrubs of the harvested fields. Men rarely participated in this task. Falling participation of women in employment was first pointed out by Gadgil (1938) in 1924 but effective concern on this issue was shown only after the independence of the country.

In India, the decennial census which constitutes one of the main official sources of macro data on female work participation is severely impaired by biases and inadequacies on a number of counts which lead to an undercounting of females both as workers and as those available for work. Therefore, it is important to take into account of such biases which are affecting female work participation rate (**Bina** 1985).

Devender Dommati and **Krishna Reddy Chittedi** paper on socio-economic conditions of agricultural women labour in andhra pradesh: a case study of karimnagar district (2011 March) The main objective of the paper is to study the socio-economic conditions of agricultural women labour in Karimnagar District of Andhra Pradesh. The study was based on both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data have been collected through questionnaire schedule method. The secondary data

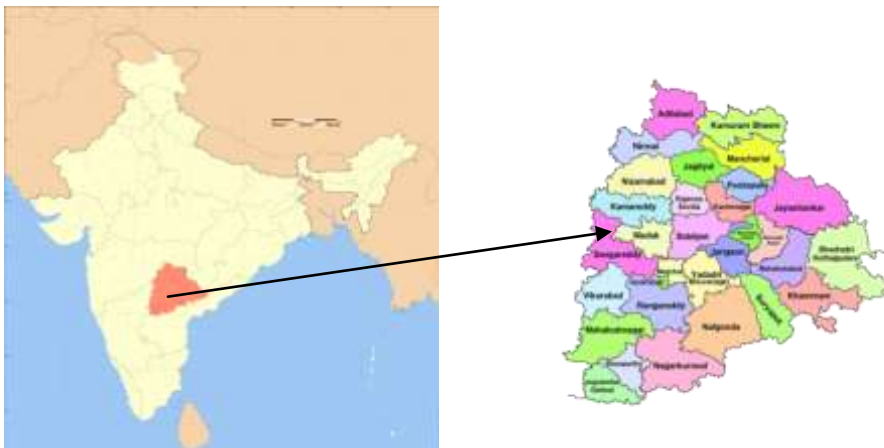


are from census of India 2001. Three different seasons have been taken as a reference period for the study i.e., Kharrif, Rabi and Lean season in the year 2007-08. the result was Agriculture is increasingly becoming the preserve of women has important implications for policy. Agriculture policy has been largely blind

LOCATION OF STUDY AREA

Shamshabad is a village in Ranga Reddy district of the Indian state of Telangana. It is located in Shamshabad mandal of Rajendranagar revenue division. Shamshabad is located at 17.2603°N 78.3969°E it has an average elevation of 574 metres (1,886 ft).

Location Map



WOMEN: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The historical background of Indian society reveals that in Vedic times a woman was given a high status. It is an old saying, “Where women are honoured, gods reside there.” She was known as ‘Ardhangini’ – one half of husband’s body. At the time of marriage, she as a bride was entitled to procure certain solemn vows from the bridegroom before the ritual fire. No religious ceremony by the husband could bear fruit without her participation. As a mother, wife and sister she occupied an honoured place. She is the epitome of courage and boldness, love and affection, sacrifice and suffering. However during the course of time women lost their honoured place due to social, economic and political factors. Evil customs like sati, Purdah, child marriage, enforced widowhood,



dowry system, crept in the society and this led to decline in women's status inside and outside the home. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_India)

During the last few years, sexual harassment at work place, eve teasing, abduction and female foeticide has given an inclination of the horrible behaviour patterns prevailing in the society. Majority of women live a life of dependency that does not possess any self-identity. Struggle for equality, justice and parity between women and men continues with more and more literature appearing on the subject on empowerment of women. 'Matru Devo Bhavo' (Mother of Goddess) is an old sentiment shared by the Indians. From time immemorial, women have been considered as goddesses like Durga, Parvati, Kali, Shakti, Vaishnomata, Bhairavi so on and so forth. Indians put them on the pedestal and offer prayers and sacrifices. In contrast, more 'goddesses' are being killed in womb, burnt alive for dowry, harassed in workplaces and streets, raped, abducted, exploited and discriminated. Indian citizens venerate and salute this country as 'Janani' or mother. On one hand, they worship this mother and on the other hand, they disregard their sisters, mothers and wives.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED ACTIVITIES

Most of the work that women do, such as collecting fuel, fodder and water, growing vegetables and keeping poultry for domestic consumption go unrecorded in the census country. Many women and girls who work on family land are not recorded as workers. Women constitute 90 per cent of the total marginal workers of the country. Rural women engaged in agriculture form 78 per cent of all women in regular work. They are a third of all workers on the land. The traditional gender division of labour ensures that these women get on average 30 per cent lower wages than men. The total employment of women in organised sector is only 4 per cent. A recent study conducted by Women and Population Division of FAO revealed that in developing countries women provide 70 percent of agricultural labour, 60-80 percent labour for household food production, 100 percent labour for processing the basic food stuffs, 80 per cent for food storage and transport from farm to village 90 per cent for water and fuel wood collection for households. Women produce between 60 to 80 percent of the food in most developing countries and are responsible for half of the world's food production; therefore, women's role in food production ensures the survival of millions of people in all regions. Women's livelihood strategies, and their support and means of ensuring food security are



diversed and complex, from cultivating field crops to livestock rearing, home gardening, gathering etc. They make above contributions despite unequal access to land, inputs and information. A growing body of evidence indicates that if male – female access to input were less unequal, substantial gains in agricultural output would occur, benefiting, both women and men. Estimations from FAO of United Nations show that women account for more than half of labour required to produce the food consumed in the developing world. In addition to working in the fields, women not only ensure fuel, fodder, water and food, but also have to look after the emotional needs of their families the children, elders and husbands. The nurturing, caring and reproductive responsibilities are the dimension that have never been computed economically but are essential and significant aspects of women's work load. Women's role as food producers is related also to their role as mothers and nurtures and in sustaining their families and communities. Their work is integral to the quality of life of people.

Women have major constraints for participation in agriculture is as follows (Raveendaran, 2006):

- 1) Unequal Land Rights
- 2) Limited Access to Use of Resources
- 3) Lack of Equipment and Appropriate Technology
- 4) Limited Contact with Agricultural Extension
- 5) Lack of Access to Credit
- 6) Lower Level of Education

EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

A woman in Indian society has been victim of humiliation, torture and exploitation. There are many episodes like rape, murder, dowry, burning, wife beating and discrimination in the socio-economic and educational fields. Indian society is predominated by men, hence women are a victim of male domination in the respective sphere of life; especially in economic life, for instance, over decision making on resources, on utilization of her earnings and on her body. Hence a woman's life lies between pleasures at one end and danger at other end. In daily life women are routinely defined by sex and they are potential victims of kidnapping and rape. The human species has made significant



progress in several spheres of life. But man has not grown enough to overcome the self-made mental slavery to the laws of the jungle. Since time immemorial the laws of physical strength thrives at the expense of the weak and has made women the primary under-dogs of an exploitative society. In the lower socio-economic level of society, women do more hazardous manual labour than men. Women do more than half the agricultural works in India. Still men are considered to be the “bread winners”. This sense of women being inferior is passed on from one generation through psychological conditionings. The most widespread and de-humanizing discriminations and assault against women are on the psychological level. The female psyche is being crushed at the very childhood. The female psyche is brutalized long before bodily violence is inflicted on her. They are conditioned to accept inferior positions in society. Women from childhood undergo a slow unconscious process of destructive or denial of their self-worth. Society, through a process of conditioning, creates in girls at home and in school certain thinking patterns, which ascribed to the female sex an inferior status. Besides, society gradually trains them to make this value system their own. Usually baby girls are given bangles, anklets etc. thus communicating a sense of fragility. Another result of the social conditioning is that man either as father; brother or husband considers women as socio- economic gift of his household. A woman’s value judged, not so much in terms of her worth as a person with rights and dignity as in terms of her utility to man. Expression of this mentality is found in different language and society. For example, in Hindi, girl is called “paraya-dhan” and boy “apana-dhan”.

SITUATION OF RURAL WOMEN

The condition of women is more miserable in the rural India with respect to various socio-economic aspects.

a) Poverty

Rural poverty is one of the important characteristics of India and nearly 45 percent of rural people are below poverty line. Most of them are just surviving with day-to-day earnings. If we take International poverty line (1994) into consideration in India there were 47 percent of the population at below \$ 1 a day category and 87.5 percent at below \$ 2 at a day category. Under such circumstances, within the family, the worst sufferers are needless to say women and girl children. For this category of women, neither credit nor skill training is accessible. Better health care and higher educational



opportunities are far reaching dreams for their children and there is no need to say about the status of girl child in such families. She (girl child) is treated as a “silent lamb” born to suffer all evils in the male dominated society. So far much has not been done for this vulnerable sub-culture of the society.

b) Violence

Indian society has been bound by culture and tradition since ancient times. The patriarchal system and the gender stereotypes in the family and society have always showed a preference for the male child. Sons were regarded as a means of social security and women remained under male domination. Due to her subordinated position, she has suffered years of discrimination, exploitation and subjugation. She became the victim of several evils like child marriage, sati, polygamy, Purdah system, female infanticide, forced pregnancy, rape etc. In such incidents/recorded cases surprisingly mother-in-law are also taking active part (forgetting the fact that they are also women and some time back they also played daughter-in-law role). This discrimination and violence against women had an effect on the sex ratio in India also (Table 2.1). The main causes of violence are unequal power-relations, gender discrimination, patriarchy, and economic dependence of women, dowry, and low moral values, negative portrayal of women’s image in media, no participation in decision-making, gender stereotypes and a negative mind-set. **The Hindustan Times, New Delhi (May 10, 2005)** reported, “Delhi is not only the rape capital of India; it has now taken lead in all types of crimes against women. As against 135 cases (number of atrocities against women at the hands of their husbands and relatives) reported in 2003, the figure jumped to 1211 in 2004. Crime records compiled for 35 mega cities in December 2003 by National Crime Records Bureau, shows that Delhi accounts for 30.5 percent of the total crime against women”. If such is the magnitude of domestic violence against women in Delhi, the capital city of India, it would not be surprising if the situation is worse in other areas. Uttar Pradesh reported the highest cases of cruelty by husband and his relatives against women (15%) in the year 2001 (see **Status of violence against women in India: Decadal trends 1991-2001, NIPCCD**). The information Brochure published by **SWAYAN**, an NGO, has shown that in 1994 there was a rape every 42 minutes, a molestation every 22 minutes, a dowry death every 106 minutes and a criminal offence every five minutes — all that does not include the innumerable cases that go unreported. Data of 2001 also reveals that every hour there is a case of one sexual harassment,



one dowry death, two rapes, four molestation and six cases of cruelty by husband and his relatives. Dr. Brenda Gael Mcsweeney, UN Resident coordinator has rightly remarked – “we must ask ourselves when the female half of the world is living with the daily threat of physical violence or mental violence, are we truly free?”

c) Economic Exploitation

On the world level, women and girls together carry two-third of the burden of the world's work yet receive only a tenth of the world's income. They form 40 percent of the paid labour force. Though women constitute half of the world's population yet they own less than one percentage of the world's property (UNDP Human Development Report 1995). According to UN Report (2005): women constitute half the world's population, perform nearly two-third of its work hours, receive one-tenths of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth of the world's property. The condition of women in India is more miserable in every field of social life. They are paid half of three-quarters of the money while their male counterparts earn for the same job. In India a predominantly agricultural country, women do more than half of the total agricultural work. But their work is not valued. On an average, a woman works 15 to 16 hours a day unpaid at home and underpaid outside. According to National Committee of Women, the growth in the percentage of women labour force in the organized sector is minimal in the last sixty years i.e. 3.44 percent in 1911 to 17.35 percent in 1971; besides, the work load either in the field or in the factories or offices, the women have to do the household such as cooking, washing, cleaning up the house etc. The younger women, besides all these, have to carry the burden of early pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding. In terms of help offered to people for their various functions women seem to receive the least attention from the status of women is intimately connected with their economic status, which in turn, depends upon rights, roles and opportunity for the participation in economic activities. The economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of a society's stage of development. However, all development does not result in improving women's economic activities. Pattern of women's activities are affected by prevailing social ideology and are also linked with the stage of economic development.



d) Educational Deprivation

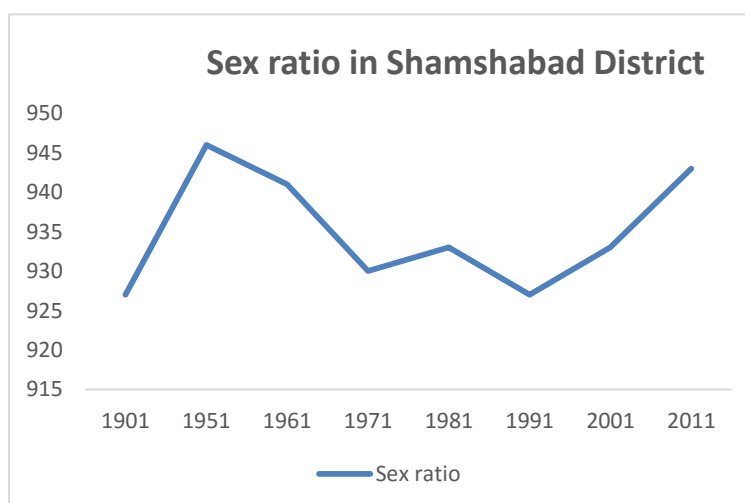
In India the literacy rate of women is much lower than men because boys receive more schooling than girls. The UNICEF Executive Director Mr. Carol Bellamy says; “No country has ever emerged from poverty without giving priority to education.”(Indian Currents, 13 June 2004). However, modest improvement is gradually coming up in educational level of women. After independence many steps have been taken to improve the lot of women. Many laws have also been passed. A National Commission on Women was setup to act as a watchdog on the matters concerning women in 1992. Many programmes in the areas of education, health and employment have been initiated for development of women, rural as well as urban. As a result, literacy rates are going up and fertility rates coming down. Universalisation of education, elimination of drop- out from schools, promotion of Balwadi’s and Creches, Girls Hostels, Technical Institutions for women and distinct emphasis on health, nutrition and family welfare programmes etc. are some such initiatives.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS OF WOMEN IN SHAMSHABAD

The ratio of female to male population in India has been low.

per

YEAR	SEX RATIO
1901	927
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	933
1991	927
2001	933
2011	943



As

Census data, sex ratio of women to per thousand men is as given below:-

TABLE 2.1: SEX RATIO OF WOMENTO PER THOUSAND MEN

Source census 2011



In the above table it is clear that the ratio of female to male population in India has been low for a long time and this has been declining since 1901. According to 1991 census it declined sharply again and touched the lowest ever recorded 927. The growing female infanticide in the rural India might be a cause for this. But the 2001 census shows the modest increase (933) which is a good sign but nothing in comparison to 946 of 1951 census. The census 2001 comes up with an alarm of the sharp decline in sex ratio among the children in the zero-six age group. In this category the country's sex ratio decline from 945 (1901) to 927 (2001).

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN SHAMSHABAD RURAL

Almost 15 per cent of children aged less than three years are underweight for their height, putting them at risk illness due to low immunity. More than two thirds of married women in the age group of 15-49 years suffer from anaemia. Eight in 10 children under three years of age are anaemic. On three in 10 women in the state initiate breast feeding immediately after birth. Less than one third children are exclusively breastfed in the first six months of their life. In Nalgonda district 59.9 per cent of women between aged between 20-24 years were married before the legal age; in Mahabubnagar 58.9 percent, Adilabad 55.5 per cent and Khammam 55 per cent. Only 43 per cent of the households have access to a drinking water facility nearby. Only 27 per cent of the rural households in Telangana district have access to a toilet facility (Census 2011). Schools in Telangana face the same situation, which influences the dropout rate, especially of adolescent girls in rural areas. Hygiene is a major area of concern among children. Nearly half of the children don't wash their hands with soap before taking food and after defecation, posing a serious health risk. In affected villages fluorosis, a crippling disease mainly caused by excessive intake of fluoride. There is foeticide, infanticide and discrimination in feeding and nutrition, which marriage and lesser decision-making capacity in marriage matter, early motherhood, repeated pregnancies, and lack of accessibility to family planning services, affect a woman's health and even life expectancy. Access to property, both public and private, is systematically denied to women. In Telangana, a woman has to spend an average of 5 to 6 hours a day fetching firewood or fodder or drinking water, which also stand on the way of schooling



of a girl child or even on her share of the cooked food. Men universally own the family assets and women have no say, in buying, selling and owning of land, which is evident from our field survey.

Re-marriage of widows to the brother of her husband is solely aimed at retaining property entitlement. Male relatives in the rare cases use coercive force where women own property. Though women contribute substantially towards the running of the house and subsistence of the families, her mobility is controlled. There is a gender division of labour and women are expected to perform the reproductive role. The burden of household chores and subsistence responsibility leaves hardly any opportunity for productive role. Lack of skill and knowledge limits their access to labour market.

The following factors accentuate the negative self-image that the women have inherited along the way: -

- Late marriage begets shame to her family.
- It is woman's fault if she gives birth to a girl child.
- In addition, early signs of illness are neglected.

Women are generally deprived of Intangible resources such as information knowledge; skills, self-confidence and articulation are integral elements in getting access to entitlements to material resources and in asserting their rights. There are certain innate qualities like self-confidence, self-worth, communication skills, etc. are culturally suppressed and not fostered in women by patriarchal society. Women come into the political system with many gender related handicaps like illiteracy, responsibility of house work, child care, social and familial oppositions to their involvement in public life, poor self-image, lack of self-confidence and ignorance about the political system. Thus in spite of the 73rd amendment participation of women in local government of parliament always remained less than 10 percent. There are certain key areas where women are perpetually marginalized, hence need to be empowered:

- Lack of access and control over the public resources and institutions.
- Lack of access and control over community affairs.
- Lack of control over political process and decision making in households.
- Lack of access and control over income.
- Lack of access to intangible resources such as information and influence.



The state of TELANGANA, though rich in both human and natural resources, however economic growth faltered in the recent years as the State failed to seize the opportunities created by liberalization of the economy. It is the 12th most populous state in the country with a population of 3.5 crores. It is the 12th largest state in geographical area of the country, encompassing 114,840 square kilometre and comprising of 10 district. Its religious makeup is 86 per cent Hindu, 12.4 per cent Muslim, 1.2 per cent Christian and 0.4 per cent other religions. Telangana is characterized by huge disparities and unequal distribution of wealth and resources. One of the major reasons of this disparity is the caste system, which perpetrates injustice; abuses and exploitation of the vast majorities of deprived who have become totally marginalized. Telangana characterized by huge disparities in terms of gender, caste and distribution of wealth and resources. Heterogeneous population consists of various caste and social groups, inhabit the villages in Uttar Pradesh. They are a conglomeration of hamlets is representing a particular caste with distinct social and economic character. Dalit in particular are the most deprived group, suppressed by caste system, untouchability, Zamindari system etc. a large number of Dalits or untouchable souls, irrespective of whether they are men or women, remained as subordinate citizens since several centuries. The status of Dalit women is grim and they are subjected not merely to gender bias but also to indignities arising out of the age-old tradition of untouchability. They are treated worse than stray animals without any fault of theirs. With the rich and poor alike, the status of the women is much lower than the men. Telangana has a high neonatal mortality rate. With 27 deaths per 1000 live births, neonatal mortality constitutes 65 percent in this state.



Ghmc women workers



THE RELATIVE BACKWARDNESS OF TELANGANA WOMEN IN RELATION TO ALL INDIA AS PER CENSUS DATA

On several aspects, the census data shows that the plight Telangana women is much worse compared to all India situations.

- i) **Population:** The female population in the country increased from 330.78 million in 1981 to 407.09 million in 1991 registering an increase of 77 million over the decade. In Telangana it decreased about 22 % during that period. The population of schedule caste in India in 1991 is 138.22 million while in Telangana it stand 54.33 lakh. As regards the share of females in this category in Telangana, it is 27.28 lakh. The female literacy rate in the country jumped from 24.8 percent in 1981 to 39.29 in 1991 percent registering an increase of about 15 percent. This achievement by any standard is not very small. In case of Telangana the female literacy stands at 90.35 lakh.
- ii) **Literacy:** The literacy rates among Schedule castes 37.14 percent in 1991 showing an increase of over 16 percent to 1981 percentage is encouraging. The female literacy in the country stands at 23.76 percent registering an increase of more than 13 percent from the 1981 percentage. This percentage of female literacy is very near to total female literacy rates in Telangana but much below the national female literacy rate signifying the poor educational status of Schedule caste females.
- iii) **Health:** The health of the nation is of crucial importance and is reflected by birth, death and infant mortality rates. In India, the 1991 census shows the birth rates as 28.5 percent while it is 36 percent in Telangana signifying higher fertility rates among women on the state. The death rate in the country stands at 9.2 percent in this period while in Telangana it is 27 deaths per 1000 live births, neonatal mortality constitutes 65 per cent of all infant deaths. Almost 15 per cent of children aged less than three years are underweight for their height, putting them at risk illness due to low immunity. More than two thirds of married women in the age group of 15-49 years suffer from anaemia. Eight in 10 children under three years of age are anaemic. On three in 10 women in the state initiate breast feeding



- immediately after birth. Less than one third children are exclusively breastfed in the first six months of their life.
- iv) **Poverty:** The number of persons below poverty line in the country stands at 2376.7 million showing a percentage of 29.9 of the total population. This is of vast magnitude, almost every 3rd person in the country being below the poverty line. In case of Telangana the population in the category is 3.5 crore giving a percentage of 35.1 of the total 15% population of the state. This shows the economic condition of the people of the state where more than 1/3 population stands below poverty line.
- v) **Employment:** The economic development of females depends upon the type of employment, which they are able to procure. The total female workers in the state stood at 4.85 million in 1991 which shows a clear increase of more than 2 million over 1981. This simply shows the awareness of the females to their economic independence. This may be a result of increase literacy rates but the national figure in this respect is much higher to show that Telangana is still lagging far behind. The main female workers are mostly engaged as cultivators and agricultural labours. Their number is 2.33 million and 1.73 million, respectively. Another sizeable number, i.e., 0.17 million are engaged in house hold industry. This clearly depicts that female workers in the state are still not well placed in matters of employment in comparison to states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, etc. A closer look at the present trends suggests that in spite of these positive signs there is no reason to rejoice: the new millennium is unlikely to bring about a qualitative improvement in the position of women in the labour market rather Indian women appear doomed to continue being crowded in the limited number of low paid, low productivity, uncertain jobs which hold out little prospects for advancement and career building. It appears that government policies regarding women empowerment could enhance the role and status of women through ensuring their equal participation in administration, management, decision making process and overall in development process. However, for their educational and occupational empowerment special focus is needed.



FINDINGS

- Women labour is very common in the area
- Women health conditions are very poor
- Female literacy rate is very low in the area
- Lack of medical facilities

PROBLEMS OF THE STUDY AREA

- Lack of medical facilities
- Lack of jobs for unskilled persons
- poverty
- literacy rate very low especially female

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The review of the status of women in India tells the story of a fall in the status of women to an abysmally low position from a relatively high status and nobility of the Vedic times. The fall in status has led to a socio-economic and religio-cultural deprivation of women. From the womb to tomb women are victims of violence and deprivations. The vulnerability of women in rural India and that too in Telangana is worse compared to the all India levels. Of course, there are certain initiatives in the country, especially after the Independence towards raising the status of women. However, there are miles to go in order to reach the goal of gender equality. Apart from this general condition of gender inequalities, the situation seems more miserable in case of Dalit women. They are victims of a double deprivation. One, on the gender front, and the other on the caste front.

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