STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE UNORGANIZED SECTOR- A STUDY ON AGRICULTURAL LABOUR OF PRAKASAM DISTRICT IN ANDHRA PRADESH

ABSTRACT

Gender inequalities in participation social life utilizing opportunities are applicable not only to India but also to all developed countries. Women, no matter where they live, have to lead a struggling life, but the struggle is so tough when it comes to agriculture women workers. Policies to realise gender equality and remove discrimination in society or not sufficiently integrated to the main plans, programs and practices of the country. This is partly due to the insufficient information regarding the state and determinants of socio economic status of women. This study attempts to analyze new approaches to improve the socio-economic status of agriculture women workers. Also the present study aims at understanding the factors determine the socio-economic status of a total of 440 selected agriculture women worker households from the two selected mandals of the Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh. The main focus of the study is laid on analyzing the different issues relating to the socio-economic status of the agriculture women workers and to examine the inter mandal variations in the socio-economic status of the selected agriculture women worker households women workers in the relatively advanced Inkollu mandal and relatively interior Pamuru mandals in the Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh.

Towards this end, the specific objectives outlined are: To study the role of women in the development of Agriculture sector in India under the context of unorganized sector. To analyze the resource base and other features of rural areas of Prakasam district in general and selected rural mandals in specific. To examine the socio-demographic, economic status and living standerers of the selected agriculture women worker households. To examine the determinants of the relative socio-economic status of the selected agriculture women workers households in the study area and to suggest various measures in order to improve the status of women in Indian agricultural sector.

The major findings of the study indicate that the socio-economic status of the selected agriculture women worker households in the selected mandals of the Prakasam district is improving. However the improvement in the socio-economic status of agriculture women workers is characterized as peripheral. The rural areas of Prakasam district are under the process of transformation to achieve higher levels socio-economic status of the agriculture women workers. But the improvement in the...
indicators relating to socio-economic status is significantly found among the sample women workers selected from the semi urban natured villages of Inkollu mandal. The change is very limited among the sample women workers living in the relatively interior villages of the Pamuru mandal. The inferences of the study indicate that the inter-area/mandal variations relating to the socio-economic status of agriculture women workers are quite prevalent in the study area. Hence the study advocates the need for the governmental and non-governmental financial agencies to make concentrated efforts and to implement a comprehensive strategy with an optimum mix of both area and target group approaches to accelerate the pace of structural change among the agriculture women workers living in the relatively interior rural areas.

Based on the major findings of this study, towards further promoting socio-economic status of the selected agriculture women workers in the interior rural areas of the Pamuru mandal, the important suggestions made are: In view of various problems faced by agriculture women workers, improvement in their socio-economic status is essential not only to improve their quality of life styles but also improving their families and villages. In this regard the exploitative traditional hierarchical relations have to be replaced by empowered local institutions. To promote the socio-economic status of the agriculture women workers, creation of support institutions are needed to cater the needs of skill improvement and capacity building among them. Promoting the Socio-economic status of women needs social, cultural, financial, skill and knowledge empowerment. Unless all these vital aspects are integrated and greater vision is developed among the agriculture women workers, the sustainable progress in their socio-economic status cannot ensure. To promote awareness and to motivate the agriculture women workers about their socio-economic status, functional literacy has to be carefully formulated to suit changing scenario in rural areas to empower local rural communities and traditional institutions.