

CHAPTER - XI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- Key findings
- Conclusion
- Recommendation

This chapter is based on the findings, objectives and analysis of the research work. The present research entitled **“Socio-Economic Status of SC women in rural area : A case study on Tihuri village”**. A total of 300 respondents were contacted for the study. The required data were collected from the respondents by administering interview schedule.

India is the largest functioning democracy of the world and she is the first country to give women franchise right. Women in India have a highly creditable position in the society with regard to enactment of laws to protect and promote her interest in the society. The constitution of India gives women equal rights with their male counterparts. Women constitute 49% of India's population and 50% of world population. The struggle of Indian women can, thus, be characterized as a fight for humanism. Indian women have been prone to discrimination even before they are born. Women become an easy target for exploitation and violence.

Women are custodians of the family. They not only bear the children but also rear and nourish them alongwith other family members. They not only perform the domestic Chores but also work outside their homes.

KEY FINDINGS :

Socio- Economic background

- The literacy level among the respondents is very low. Majority respondents studied upto secondary level.
- Majority respondents belongs to joint families which are male headed.
- All the SC families earn their income by working as wage labour in others agricultural land.
- Majority SC families are landless.

Social , economic and cultural status of SC women.

- To be economically independent the SC women are working as agricultural labourers and maid servants.
- The SC women are working for more time but not getting equal wages par with men.
- For fulfilling the needs of the family their income is not sufficient . So the respondents are living in debt. They borrow money from their authority with a high rate of interest .
- The SC women are not getting freedom in mate selection.
- The SC families are male dominated and women are taking active part in decision making process.
- There are some changes in their culture like food habit, dress pattern due to changes in society. There is no such restriction as it was earlier.

- The SC women are also observing common festivals like upper castes.

Violence and Gender discrimination

- The SC women are facing domestic violence by their family members but they never report about the violence because they are not aware about constitutional and legal provisions available for women.
- The working SC women are also facing violence at work places by their authority and male counterparts but due to ignorance they are not reporting about violence.
- In the study region the SC women are facing gender discrimination in their families. They are discriminating in food , education, health and decision making.

Empowerment of SC Women

- The poor SC women are economically productive by earning but do not possess economic parity with men. They do not have any control over their income .
- The SC women are far away from taking active part in developmental programmes due to lack of awareness.
- Although they are members of SHG but not participating in productive activities . They only taken a loans from bank through SHG and use it for different purpose like marriage and death of family members.

- The SC women are politically awared and participating in PRI Election. Some SC women elected as wardmember but they do not play any role in the decision making process.

SUMMARY

In the present research work as all the respondents were women, they were homogeneous from sex point of view. But so far as marital status was concerned the respondents were also homogenous in nature because majority of them were married, only few of them were widows and divorce. All the respondents are Hindus. The literacy level and among the respondents is very low. Majority respondents dropped out at primary level. So far as caste is concerned the respondents are also homogenous in nature. All the respondents belong to Bauri and Kandara sub-caste.

Majority of respondents belong to joint family. Only a small percentage of them lived in nuclear families. The respondents families were patriarchal in nature, where father was the head of the family. The main occupation of their family was agriculture. They had not any agricultural land of their own. But they worked as agricultural labourers in other's land. Respondents annual family income was very low. Majority of respondents annual family income is upto 15000, who come under BPL (Below Poverty Line) group. Few respondents annual family income was more than 15000, who come under APL group (Above Poverty Line). The respondents families had no landed property under possession. Majority of the respondents had no landed property. Few of them have homestead land property under their possession.

Majority of respondents lived in Kachha house. Some of them also lived in Pucca houses which was provided to them under IAY (Indira Awas Yojana). So far as drinking water facility, toilet and electricity were concerned majority of respondents collect their drinking water from tube well. For bathing and washing they depend on pond water.

So far as sources of income of the respondents are concerned agricultural labour work is their occupation. The respondents secondary occupation was agriculture. They worked as agricultural labourer in others land. The nature of wage was daily wage. Some of the respondents performed domestic chores in higher caste houses like cleaning, washing courtyards, making cakes from cow-dung etc. So far as hours of work was concerned majority of respondents had to work 2-4 hours. But they were not given any extra wages for extra hours of work. The respondents were not getting right wage according to their delivery of work. They worked more time than their male counterpart. But they did not get any extra wage for that extra work. The respondents worked according to their own will to improve the economic condition of their family. Poverty always availed in their family because the income was less. To help the family the female members engaged themselves in agricultural sector. No family member pressurized them to work. The respondents thought of improving their economic condition because there was always poverty inside the family. To remove poverty they did some extra income.

The respondents were not able to fulfill the needs of the family with their income because the income was very less. Their income was not sufficient to fulfill the basic needs of their family members. The respondents always lived in debt. There was always poverty in the family. Income was not sufficient for the family. So they could not make any saving. For social performance like marriage or death they borrowed money from their authority but not from banks. Their authority took high rate of interest. They could never save for future necessity because income was less and income was not sufficient.

The food habit , dress pattern and use of ornaments have been changed with the changes took place in the society. There is no such restriction in food habit, dress pattern or use of ornaments as it was earlier.

Like the upper caste hindus , the scs community observe Ganesh Puja, Saraswati, Durga Puja in the village. The rituals officiated by their own priest (Gosain). They also observe the common festival of Odisha like Raja Sankranti and also participate in Ratha Yatra (Car festival).

Violence and atrocity they face

The respondents also faced exploitation. The housewives as well as the working women both faced exploitation in their houses as well as at the work places. The respondents also faced domestic violence. Among domestic violence most common types were mental torture,

abuse and beating. The reasons for such domestic violence were hostile attitude of dowry demand. Family member were mainly responsible for such exploitation. Parents in law and husbands were mainly responsible for such exploitation. Few respondents faced sex related violence like forced abortion. No one faced other types of violence like adultery, abnormal sex etc.

Majority of respondents were not aware of various protective measures for violence against women. Few of them who were literate were aware about protective measures. No respondents knew about the laws like women and laws relating to work. Some respondents knew about the laws like crime against women. Majority of respondents were not aware about institutions for helping women in distress like National Commission for Women, State Commission for women and Family Courts. Only a few of them who were literates knew about these laws. Few respondents reported about domestic violence to the village headman/ sarapancha/ wardmember. No respondents reported to the police. There were some reasons behind not reporting about domestic violence to the police. Majority of respondents opined that due to shyness and social stigma , fear of loss of self they never report about domestic violence. Few respondents opined that police being non cooperative and not take necessary steps against violence. So the respondents never report to police.

Not only the SC women who are house wives face exploitation inside the family by their family members but also the working women

face exploitation at work place by their authority as well as by their male counterparts. More than 70% of respondents work agricultural sector as labourer. The respondents willingly accepted job. No family members forced them to accept the job. Majority of respondents opine that to help family they are taking up employment. It was observed that the SC female start work at a very lower age. Majority of respondents start work between the age group 15 to 18 year and also some respondents start work below 15 years. Majority of respondents start work before marriage to help their parents family, few respondents start work after marriage to help in-laws family. Majority of respondents work for 6 to 8 hours outside the home during a day. Few respondents who are engaged in domestic chores in others house like cleaning courtyards, cleaning paddy, making cakes from cowdung they only work less than 6 hours. The SC Working women also felt that there has been discrimination between wage rate for males and females workers. Majority of the SC working women also felt that there has been discrimination between wage rate of males and female workers. Majority of respondents feel that male workers get higher wages than female workers. Few respondents feel that male and female workers get equal wages. The working women also face certain type of problems at their working places. The problems which they face are heavy workload and low wages than male co-workers. The respondents also face exploitation at their work place like abuse in filthy language, Harassment by giving low wages than male co workers

etc. Majority of respondents opine that employer himself is responsible for causing such violence if there are any small mistake in their work. Few respondents also feel in certain cases male co-workers are also responsible for causing such violence. The working women never report about such incidents to different authorities. There are different reasons given by respondents. Due to ignorance and illiteracy they are not able to know whom did they report. Some respondents also opine for fear of ostracism like losing status in family and in society, they never report about such incidence. Some other respondents also opine for fear of losing the job they did not report to any constitutional authority.

Gender discrimination

Not only the housewives and working respondents faced exploitation in the family and at working place but also they faced gender discrimination inside the family. All families were patriarchal in nature where male members become the head of the family. Majority of respondents opined that male members take major decisions in the family. The respondents were never consulted while different decisions were taken in their family. Only the father-in-law has the right to take decisions on important matters in the family.

Majority of respondents felt discrimination in preference given to sons than daughters in different fields in their family. Discrimination noticed in different fields mainly in food and education. The family

members gave more importance to the male child than to the female child. The sons were given nutritious food than the daughters . Majority of the respondents felt that educational opportunities were better for male children. In future the male children are the provider of the family. if better education provided to them they would get better employment opportunities and maintain the family properly. Few respondents feel that educational opportunities were equal for both.

Majority of respondents had not started education. Those who had start education they had dropped out at an earlier stage due to different reasons. The literacy level among the respondents was very low. Majority of respondents dropped out at an earlier stage due to conservative attitude of parents towards girls and some respondents had to take domestic responsibility from childhood like helping their mother in domestic chores, taking care of young siblings, so the respondents dropped out at an earlier stage. There were also different reasons for discontinuance of education at later stage. Majority of respondents opined that when they were grown up their parents did not take interest to send them to school and others opined that they shared domestic responsibilities. The respondents faced some health problems during pregnancy. Majority of the respondents faced health problems like Anemia and physical weakness.

Due to lack of nutritious food and lack of rest the respondents faced these problems at the time of pregnancy . Due to lack of proper

medical check up there were also cases of infant mortality. The respondents also faced discrimination in family in different fields. The matters in which they were discriminated were in food, health measures and in decision making.

Empowerment of SC women in Rural Areas

It has been increasingly realized that unless women are empowered socially, economically, politically and educationally, their status cannot be improved. Hence the movement for empowerment of women has steadily increased in recent years. Several initiatives have been taken since independence and a number of new initiatives have been introduced which would bring some improvements in the status of SC women. Various policies and programmes have been taken but these are not up to the expectation.

The respondents had attained economic independence in their life but they had no control on their income . They had not enjoyed freedom in spending their personal income . They were never consulted during family spending and investments.

The respondents did not agree with the view that SC women in rural areas were enjoying equal status with men. They were exploited in the family due to gender. They also faced violence at their working places due to cast. They faced gender discrimination both in family and in community. Some respondents were not aware about the developmental programmes due to illiteracy . So they were not taking

active part in the developmental programmes taken by government. Few respondents who were literate they were aware about developmental programmes. The respondents considered that the government had not formulated developmental programmes keeping in view the needs of rural SC . Some respondents were not politically aware due to illiteracy. They were not able to cast their vote independently during election . they were being influenced either by their husbands or by the political parties.. The respondents agreed with the view that today's women are more politically empowered than before. They also opined that in traditional times they were denied of their political rights. Today's women are educated and politically conscious and more politically empowered than before. In the study region , it was seen that majority respondents were politically aware. Some respondents contest in election for wardmember. Now also in the year 2012 one SC women of Tihuri village elected as wardmember.

Majority of the respondents agreed with the opinion that educated women were more empowered. In traditional time the SC women were denied of their educational rights. Due to lack of education they were less empowered . Now the government has taken major steps to educate the SC women. Due to education they were conscious about different constitutional and legal provisions and institutions which helps SC women. So educated women are more empowered. In the study region it was seen that the literacy rate

among the SC increased . Those respondents who were literate they gave importance to girls educations. Some respondents sent their female children for higher education because educational facilities like scholarships, hostel facilities, study materials provided to them by the Government. Few respondents who were illiterate they did not gave importance to female education due to illiteracy and lack of awarenenss .

Now the governmet has taken different steps to make the SC women economically independent. SHG (Self help group) providing loans to establish small scale and cottage industries. In the study region there are 4 SHG for the whole village . Some SC women and some upper caste women remained members of those SHG. The respondents only taken loans from the UCO bank through SHG and used it for different purposes like marriage, agricultural work etc. if the SHG members will make some product and sell it then they will economically more independent. Majority of the respondents opined that in the study region the progress of SC women is not satisfactory. Some literate respondents were aware about NGOs working for SC women but majority respondents were not aware about NGOs due to illiteracy.

Suggestions for improvement of the situation .

Based on the above findings of the study, following suggestion are made for improving the socio-economic status of SC women and empowering them.

Micro level Recommendation

1. Family should be effectively used as the basic unit for women empowerment. Attitudinal change should be brought in the traditional patriarchal minds to set them in favour of women in the family.
2. Discrimination against female child should be removed. Mothers should be properly educated and motivated because mothers can play effective role in removing discrimination between male and female child.
3. Early marriage of women (below 18 years) should be fully prohibited in rural areas to reduce harassment of women due to early pregnancies leading to poor health, maternity and infant mortality. Though legal provision is available against child marriage but due to ignorance they still continue. Regular motivation camps should be organized to educate the females against child marriage.
4. The women should be given scope to decide their own wellbeing and future. They should also be given equal scope and control

over resources in the family like their male counter parts. Patriarchal system should be directly challenged by bringing required social changes among the males to make them realize that women are equal partners in the house.

5. Increasing awareness among women regarding their rights, responsibilities and providing opportunities to them from the grass root level.
6. Efforts should be made to eradicate the evil practice like dowry and other system from the family .
7. Motivation in rural areas should ensure that women either as housewives or working women should be equally respected and duly honoured as they give free services to the house as a caretaker of their children and home taker of the family.
8. The women should be supported to protest against severe atrocity against them either in the family or at the work place and report such occurrences to the police.

Macro level Recommendation

1. For economic empowerment of women government should develop systematic strategy directed towards employment generation process. Training programme should be quickened ,for providing them emerging opportunities for self employment.

2. Legal education and motivation through NGOs should be made mandatory for all women.
3. Laws relating to violence against women should be made more punishable both at domestic and work place legal protective measures should be made more functional.
4. The institutional response mechanism should be further strengthened and made more accountable to take follow up measures in regards to women related cases for maintaining speedy justice delivery system.
5. Speedy trials should be introduced for disposal for cases relating to atrocities against women .
6. There is necessity of creation of funds (Statutory or otherwise) by the state government for rehabilitation of women victims who are deserted by their husband. The state should accord high priority to set up vocational training centers in order to make the destitute women financially independent.
7. Government should give special attention to frequent occurrences of atrocity against women at work places. Mostly in the ungrounded section regular monitoring should be done to asses whether laws should be made more stringent and properly implemented at the grass root levels.

8. Special courts for women should be established for speedy disposal of cases without long trial . All government police officers should openly protest the incidents of violence.
9. Media should play dynamic and impartial role to act as a powerful instrument for gender sensitization at all levels. There should be regular publicity in electronic media to exert greater impact of bringing changes in the mind of the people towards gender bias.
10. Punitive powers should be entrusted with the state commission for women and Human Rights cell to play an effective role in settlement of family disputes.

They should be provided with sufficient resources to act in a decentralized manner at district level. In addition to dowry cell, atrocity cell for women should be created at district and block levels to deal with cases of atrocities against women . They should function under the direct supervision of the state women commission.

Measures to be taken at the Village level

1. The rural women should be made literate and financially independent. Suitable employment agencies should be provided to them on the basis of skills and experiences acquired by them.

2. The rural women should be provided with training to increase their employability .
3. The women at grass root level need to be organized under Self Help Group and become members of Mahila Samiti. Such organizations will help in developing their self confidence and encourage them in social empowerment.
4. Registration of marriages should be done at the Panchayat level in order to reduce the cases relating to cheating of innocent women by men who lure them by false promises and desert them after sometimes .
5. Family counseling centres should be established at the panchayat level so that the rural women would have easy access for settlement of their family disputes.
6. Women health care centres and maternity home should be established at panchayat level by appointing lady doctors , so that, the rural women have easy access to get health care and delivery facility.
7. Women should be given property rights like male members of the family . They should not be deprived of their rights over property of their husbands. The women commission should come forward to help them in such matters.

8. Proper monitoring should be done at Panchayat level, whether equivalent wages are being paid to both men and women workers or not .

Suggestions for empowerment of SC women

1. Elimination of exploitation in all forms and protection of women's rights and interests with formulation of gender sensitization programmes.
2. Specific training programmes should be conducted and their recruitment of SC women as extension worker, in agriculture, animal husbandry, technology transfer, environment, forestry, waste land development, horticulture, sericulture, herbiculture should be ensured.
3. Credit should be made available to SC women in all credit schemes and a certain percentage of SC quotas should be earmarked for the women.
4. Women's corporations should be strengthened through extending to them monetary incentives.
5. Skill up-gradation programmes especially entrepreneurship development programmes for women should be further extended to the SC women.
6. Social security schemes of crèches, health care, maternity benefits for SC women engaged in unorganized sector should be extended.

7. A group insurance scheme should be considered for the health insurance of women, particularly those employed in hazardous and difficult occupation.
8. The economic role of SC women should be highlighted. They should be mobilized for taking initiatives for formation of SHG (Self help group).
9. Women's organizations working among weaker sections should be encouraged more.
10. A well-knit programme needs to be formulated for the rehabilitation of SC women.

To conclude, the study has unfolded the objective felt that despite of plethora of laws and institutional measures by government to improve the condition of SC women but their condition is still deplorable and continue to be cause of concern . Thus to bring any substantial change in their condition of life, there is urgent need of a composite endeavour by government, civil society and mass media.