

EMPOWERMENT OF SCHEDULED CASTE WOMEN LABOUR IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR

**(A Comparative Study of Srikakulam and East Godavari Districts
of Andhra Pradesh, India)**

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

The present chapter embodies the summary and findings of the study. The data presented and analysed in earlier chapters helps to draw the following conclusions the researcher suggested certain measures at the end of this chapter to improve the conditions of SC women agricultural labours.

In India the main occupation of the ruralites is agriculture, because 70 percent of the population is involved in this occupation. Many women in developing countries are depending on agriculture. Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields including in the main crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post harvest operations, agro/ social forestry, fisheries, etc. Rural women occupies the most important productive work force in the economy of majority of the developing nations including India. According to the recent census reports agriculture sector employs 4/5th of all economically active women out of which 48% of self-employed farmers in the country are women. Women's dependence on agricultural wage labour as a source of income has also increased in the regions with the destruction of many household based industries employing mainly women.

7.2 Scheduled Caste Women in Agriculture

Most of the women in SC community, especially in rural areas, are living in a depressive condition because of their occupational status i.e

agriculture workers or labourers, it is because people in rural areas mostly depends on agriculture and most of the agriculture activities are done by females in general and SC women in particular. According to ministry of labour, government of India, 85% of SC women have the most formidable occupation and work as agricultural labourers. Many of these women work for minimum wages under the upper caste land lords, since 85% of the SCs are landless and large number of rural SC women are working in the farms. Among the total women labour in agriculture sector 66.0 per cent belongs to Scheduled Castes with marginal earnings. It is extremely important to recognize the role that rural SC women play and the contribution that they make in networks and cooperatives, giving them greater political and financial support and involving them in the training and conducting development programmes those enhance women's role in agricultural production.

The status of Scheduled Caste women needs special attention. They are one of the largest socially segregated groups constitute 200 million population and 16.3 percent of total population. According to 2011 census SC workers including main and marginal workers are 6.73 crores in India. These SC workers constitute 40.41 percent of the total SC population of the country. Among these total workers, 4.36 crores are males and 2.37 crores are females with the percentage of SC workers to total workforce in India is 16.74 percent recorded in the census 2011.

7.3 Statement of the Problem

Women play a significant role in the society. Apart from the matriarchal society, women play a crucial role in most of the patriarchal societies also.

The future of children depends, by and large, upon the mother who generally stays at home and takes care of her children's health and education. This is particularly in countries like India where society and life of people are still moulded by traditional and spiritual foundations, particularly in the rural settings.

Even though the improvement of status of women has now been a millennium question recognized all over the world as an important aspect of national progress and development. It is also felt that the problem of poverty cannot be tackled without providing opportunities of productive employment to women. Productive employment to women would provide necessary economic base and improve their social status and economic empowerment.

In this context an attempt has been made in this study, to examine the ignored aspect of rural SC women's life their status within family and during the seasonal work their contribution to home and society in cultivation system. This has been examined with reference to Srikakulam and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh which is one of the agriculture dependent state in India.

7.4 Significance of the Study

Agricultural work is the major occupation for the Scheduled Caste women, irrespective of their educational levels and age. In this regard, SCs are the greater sufferers than other communities. Women agriculture workers encounter many difficulties because of their distressing and pitiable working conditions such as long working hours, low wages, inhuman behaviour, gender discrimination. Review of the existing literature pertaining to SC

women reveals that the research so far done regarding this problem has failed to get to the core of this study. Earlier, the research work done only in certain areas and not on the SC women labour in agriculture. A few studies are available on women agricultural labours, but studies portraying the problems of women agricultural workers at the grass root level are few and far between. Thus, this study attempts to examine the empowerment of SC women in agriculture sector from all its dimensions. In this context the present study will reflect the current position of SC women agriculture labours in the East Godavari and Srikakulam districts of Andhra Pradesh. The present study is expected to play a vital and useful role in making a diagnostic analysis of the problems faced by SC women labour in agriculture and offer appropriate suggestions to develop an effective system for the prosperity of these groups. Thus, this study is based on empirical investigation of Srikakulam and East Godavari districts in Andhra Pradesh which have been selected for the study.

7.5 Need for the study

Women are the backbone of the village economy of rural India. Women take up different works to eke out their livelihood and the majority of the rural women depend on agriculture, which is the major unorganized sector in India. Many of these labour are landless belongs to lower social communities and economical status. The role and status of women are altered in the process of agrarian social transformation due to the technology of cultivation. The disaggregated pattern of development has varied impact on women members of every region and caste. In this backdrop, it is pertinent to examine the status of SC women labour across the levels of rural transformation consequent upon the technological and agricultural growth. The entire study

will provide a benchmark which can be used for comparing the status in selected two districts of Andhra Pradesh. The study also assist the rural SC women to improve their incomes and living standards and thus their contribution to the welfare of their families in the wider society. In spite of backdrop the present study thrived to reflect the problems and prospects of scheduled caste women working as agricultural laboures in East godavari and Srikakulam districts.

7.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To analyze the socio-economic conditions of SC women Agriculture labour in Srikakulam and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.
2. To apprise the employment details and wage payments of SC women agriculture labour in Srikakulam and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh.
3. To examine the Asset holdings, Incomes, Expenditure, Savings and indebtedness of SC women Agriculture labour in both the districts.
4. To study the benefits and schemes of government for the SC women in both the districts.
5. To assess the empowerment levels of SC Women agricultural labour in both the districts.

7.7 Hypothesis

The hypothesis relating to SC women agricultural labour are matched because

1. **There is no significant difference between SC women labour of East Godavari and Srikakulam in their Social, Economic and Empowerment status:** According to the data analysis there is no much difference between these women agricultural labour in these two districts regarding socio economics status comparatively both districts are same.
2. **Scheduled caste women agricultural labourers are caused to exploitation because of their low wages and miserable working conditions:** women agriculture labours are getting low wages than men. If there sufficient wages per day they have nutritional food. A part from low wage the SC women agriculture labour report many problems at their work place, work begins at sunrise and continue till sunset. The long working hours, coupled with household duties are the sources of stress for women. The agriculture women workers are required to work in dirty mud and water during the rainy season and in the scorching heat of the summer and in the early and late hours of winter, thus working and living conditions of agricultural women workers were bad illarious.
3. **Improved social status and social security lead to empowerment of scheduled caste women agricultural labour:** SC women agriculture labour in selected districts are very poor in social status if their family getting more incomes, there will be increase in their social status.

Out of existing studies relating to this topic majority of the studies have touched the fringe of the problem that too in one angle like studies on

empowerment, studies on dalit women, studies on Self Help Group and Entrepreneurship. It is further noted that few studies have concentrated SC women empowerment, certain studies reviewed on women agriculture labour, some studies are made with a view to examine the women empowerment with reference to SHGs. These are all enquiry in nature. No depth study is found relating to this present study. So the present study is unique in the form of filling this research gap.

7.8 Methodology

To achieve the above objectives, the study is limited to two districts in the state of Andhra Pradesh because these two districts are agriculture basing districts. The data were collected from the sample of 360 SC women respondents working as agricultural labourers in the study areas. A pre-designed schedule on the aspects under the study was prepared. Based on the observations on testing the schedule, the final schedule was revised and canvassed among the 360 selected women respondents. The techniques used for data collection was multi-staged random sampling method. The data was collected from two villages from each selected mandal of Srikakulam District and two villages from each selected mandal of East Godavari district. Six mandals have been selected from each district.

7.9 Sources of Data:

The data were collected from a sample of 360 women respondents working as agricultural labourers in Srikakulam and East Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh. The work is based on both primary as well as secondary data. The primary data were collected from the women respondents,

Regarding Households data ,it was collected through a designed schedule containing sixty questions. Secondary data was collected from the published documents of the various government agencies. Data regarding the Srikakulam and East Godavari districts was also compiled from the census of India 2011. A profile of both the districts mandals and villages were collected from districts hand book of Srikakulam and East Godavari.

7.10 Research Tool

The questionnaire is the mail tool of this search study which is framed with important test areas. The first one is identification profile of the respondent when the demographic data is included. The second one is socio-economic conditions of the households. The third and fourth parts of the tool deals with educational and health status of the sample households. The fifth part of the questionnaire is Employment details and wage payments of the respondents. The sixth part of the questionnaire focused on decision making power in the house. In the seventh part of the tool economical status of the respondents where income, expenditure, indebtness and savings particulars are presented. The eight and ninth parts are benefits from the government, and participation in SHGs are included. In the last section of the questionnaire respondent's perceptual levels on Empowerment status has been analysed.

7.11 Data Processing and Analysis

The research data was processed, tabulated and the results for analysis were done with the help of the SPSS package. Hence, the results presented in this report were based on computer programming. The statistical

analysis included descriptive and analytic procedures. For descriptive purposes, the frequencies of responses to the items on the survey schedule examined first. For analytical purposes, univariate, bivariate tables were drawn and multiple regression model was estimated. Other statistical measurements such as simple percentages, mean, standard deviation etc., are used in this study. Further, chi-square test was employed to test the significance difference between two propositions and t-tests and ANOVA tests are also employed for testing the independence of the attributes. With the above said statistical techniques the data was analysed in order to determine inherent facts or meanings. Hence, the findings from the data analysis are presented in the following.

7.12 Major findings

Identification profile

- As per the data analysis of demographic parameters it is found that the majority of the respondents are working as casual labour in both the sample districts i.e. more than 80 percent. A small proportion of respondents are employed as supervisors i.e. below 16 percent evident in the sample villages. Further it is found that the respondents ageing in between 31-40 years are majority involved in agricultural operations. Larger chunk respondents are married group in both the districts.
- Above 50% of the sample workforce are illiterates found in both the districts, the reason for which is the low financial status. It is also asserted that nuclear type of family is commonly prevalent in the study areas. More than 45 percentage of respondent families are small

families consisting of 3 to 4 members. Majority of respondent families are living in their own houses. Slabed houses are evident in the sample villages of sample respondents. It is noticed from the data, electrification is made sufficiently and facility of separate toilets are also observed. And also found that 67.8 percent of the respondents were continuing as agricultural coolies since seven years.

Educational status

The level of education of the respondents is a prerequisite for the empowerment of women respondents that is why the researcher has made an extensive survey in this regard and noticed certain facts.

It is found that majority of respondents have studied in the government schools i.e. above 60 percent in the selected villages of sample districts. The prevalence of government schools in study areas are measured as 95% in East Godavari district and 63.4 percent in Srikakulam district. Center For Adult Education and private schools have played a nominal role.

- The data also revealed that the respondent children also had their schooling education in government schools to the tune of 87.8 percent in East Godavari and 46.6 percent in Srikakulam districts not studying children also found a sizable portion of 27.2 percent children in Srikakulam and 7.2 percent in East Godavari district.
- When it comes to government hostel facility the data denotes that more than 90 percent of the respondents children have availed this hostel facilities in Srikakulam and 76.6 percent in East Godavari districts.

- It is further disclosed most of the respondents have recognized must importance of education i.e. above 90 percent.

Health Status

Condition of good health of labour is a deciding factor for higher agriculture productivity and stay in agricultural fields for hours together. A point of discussion made in this study and observed 85 percent of villages are covered with primary health centres in the study villages and above 85 percent of the respondents expressed their satisfaction relating to medical services reaped from government agencies.

- There witnesses high awareness about the family planning operations among the sample respondents is measured to the extent of above 90 percent.
- With regard to emergency medical services to pregnant women to be provided is calculated 86.2 percent and 99.4 percent in sample district of East Godavari and Srikakulam districts respectively, also examined the perception levels of respondents about health workers are reported to be quite satisfactory.
- It is analyzed that the awareness of respondents about the nutritional food schemes in the sample villages have acquired a phenomenal growth and satisfaction. Awareness is very high but preparation of nutritional food for their family members is a precarious that ascertained in the sample villages.
- Disease free body is quite dynamic in engaging the various works and securing desired output with this concept the researcher has

canvassed and found about the awareness of HIV-AIDS among the respondents and elicited the truth as having full awareness about HIV-AIDS.

- The government health schemes and benefit derived by NTR Aarogya Rakhsa is a lingering health benefit scheme among the sample respondents in the study area. The availability of 108 services in the sample villages are in regular and timely.

Employment Details and Wage Payments

- After examining the working details. It is understood that the number of women participated in sowing, harvesting, and weeding works in Srikakulam is more than the east Godavari district. There is no much difference in agricultural operations in the selected districts. But per day – existing wage rate of women for sowing, harvesting and weeding works in East Godavari is higher than the counter part of Srikakulam district.

Conditions of employment

- While in Rainy season a dominated group of 47.2 percent of women in East Godavari and 43.3 percent of women in Srikakulam districts get employment for 30-60 days. In spring season 43.9 percent respondents in East Godavari district and 41.7 percent respondents in Srikakulam district get 30-60 days employment in agriculture works. Whereas in Summer season it is noticed that a predominant group of 47.8 percent respondents in East Godavari district and 41.7 percent respondents in Srikakulam district get employment between 30-60 days. The data

analysis infers that in all the three seasons the women labour in East Godavari district get more days employment than the women in Srikakulam district. Hence, it is observed that during un-season 56.6 percent respondents in Srikakulam district and 70.6 percent respondents in east Godavari district avail supplementary work. While 56.8 percent of the respondents in Srikakulam district avail construction works as supplementary, 42.0 percent of respondents in east Godavari district avail the same works.

- The respondents who are engaged with small business in unseason also noted as 0.8 percent in East Goadavari and 11% in Srikakulam.
- Discrimination at works place was not observed by the respondents 99.94 from Srikakulam 73.8 percent from East Godavari district.
- It is observed that 34 percentage of respondents gets employment through maistries.
- It is observed that 74.4 percent respondents in east Godavari district and 96.6 percent respondents in Srikakulam district said that they take their own instruments to work at the agriculture fields.
- While more than fifty percent of the respondents in east Godavari district (51.2 percent) work for 10 hours in a day, 72.2 percent of respondents in Srikakulam district work for same hours in a day.
- Most of the women labours in east Godavari district (77.2 percent) and Srikakulam district (68.4 percent) face hazardous conditions at the work place.

- Satisfaction of the respondents on working conditions at workplace indicates that while 85.6 percent satisfied by the respondents in east Godavari district, 62.2 percent respondents in Srikakulam district are not satisfied.
- Majority of the respondents in east Godavari district (86.6 percent) and Srikakulam district (68.4 percent) are not aware of agriculture labour unions.

Decision Making Capacity of Women

- ❖ As the data reveals that most of the respondents in east Godavari and Srikakulam districts said that both wife and husband in the family take the decision in preparation of family budget, education of children, expenditure on health and medicine, purchase of assets, purchase of home appliances, giving gifts to others, purchasing jewelry and purchase of cloths for the family members. Since, a significant number of women in East Godavari are playing a key role in all the above said activities. Whereas in Srikakulam district 41.7 percent of the women take the decision in preparation of family budget.
- ❖ It is found that below fifty percentage of respondents in Srikakulam district, and 50 percentage of respondents in East Godavari district answered that their husbands handover their salary/wage to them.
- ❖ As per the data 85.0 percent of respondents in East Godavari district and 74.4 percent respondents in Srikakulam district are having separate bank accounts and a small proportion also noted that regarding the need of women employment, it is observed that 99.4 percent of

respondents in Srikakulam and 95.0 percent of respondents in east Godavari district expressed their positive response. This trend may occur due to changing environment and longing for self financial sufficiency by the rural women.

Economical Status

- As per the data analysis that the asset holdings are larger in value and in number found in East Godavari district as compared to another sample district Srikakulam. The main reason for this is wage earnings, financial avenues and naturally blessed resources and awareness among the sample households about agricultural financial schemes, labour incentive schemes etc. are witnessed in East Godavari district.
- While more respondents in East Godavari district are possessing cattle, land and poultry than the respondents of Srikakulam district, the average monthly income from these sources found higher in Srikakulam district than East Godavari district. Whereas the rents collected by more women in Srikakulam district than the women in East Godavari district.
- In average food and non-food expenditure it is observed that the expenditure of East Godavari district respondents found comparatively higher than the Srikakulam district respondents. This may be due to the income of East Godavari district respondents is comparatively higher than the respondents of Srikakulam district. Regarding savings also the average monthly savings of East Godavari district respondents found higher in chit funds, post offices and banks, whereas in LIC the savings

of Srikakulam district respondents are higher than their counterpart East Godavari district respondents.

- Regarding the indebtedness of the respondents it is observed that more number of respondents in Srikakulam district borrow debts from money lenders, friends and relatives, whereas in East Godavari district a dominated group are respondents borrowed debts from traders and through bank loans. Hence, the average amount of loans borrowed from money lenders, traders and banks are found higher in the case of East Godavari district respondents than their counterpart respondents of Srikakulam district, whereas the amount borrowed from friends and relatives the Srikakulam district respondents are higher than East Godavari district respondents.
- The purpose-wise borrowings of the respondents indicates that for agriculture and allied activities, domestic expenditure and purchase of seeds and fertilizers more number of respondents in east Godavari district borrowed debts from various sources, whereas for Business Investment, Medical Expenditure, Education expenditure and repayment of old loan majority of respondents in Srikakulam district borrowed money from various sources. This can be infers that majority of respondents in East Godavari district borrow for productive purpose and majority of respondents in Srikakulam district borrow for unproductive purpose.

Repayment of loans

- ❖ The prime source of repayment of loan is Income derived from agriculture and employment of family members. It is calculated 80 percent in the study area. The source of income from sale of property can't be ignored since 44.9 percent respondents are using this source for repayment in East Godavari District.
- ❖ It is also found that the failure of crops expenses and children education are the reasons for irregular repayment of loans.

Benefits from the government

- ❖ Since, the Central and State governments introduced many programmes like medical benefits, insurance schemes, compensation (NFBS), loans from co-operative bank, consumer co – operative store, Deepam, DWACRA, Schemes, Land / House scheme, National old age pension scheme, widow pension scheme, food for work scheme and girl child protection scheme for the benefit of women, children, old-age and poor people to survive themselves. But only some of the people are aware about these schemes and programmes and among them few are availing those benefits. In this context the data also reveals that above fifty percent of the respondents in East Godavari District aware about National old age pension scheme (56.6%), widow pension scheme (51.8%) and food for work scheme (57.3%), whereas in Srikakulam district less than one-fourth of the respondents aware of these schemes. While between 40-50 percent of the respondents in East Godavari district aware of Medical Benefit (48.9%), Deepam,

DWACRA Scheme (45.2%), land and house (43.0%) and Girl child Protection Scheme (47.6%). Whereas in Srikakulam district the awareness of respondents shows in Medical Benefit (50.6%), Deepam, DWACRA Scheme (50.1%), land and house (46.7%) and Girl child Protection Scheme (39.4%).

- ❖ It is observed from the data that the benefits received by the respondents in Srikakulam district found higher the awareness group where it shows Medical Benefit (53.0%), Deepam, DWACRA Scheme (54.6%) and land and house scheme (48.6%). Whereas in East Godavari district the benefits received by the respondents are comparatively lesser than their awareness on which it is noticed medical benefit (41.9%), insurance schemes (31.4%), Deepam, DWACRA Schemes (38.4%), Land / House scheme (34.1%), National old age pension scheme (43.5%), widow pension scheme (39.9%), food for work scheme (55.5%) and girl child protection scheme (30.4%).
- ❖ The satisfaction levels of the East Godavari district respondents in the above said schemes and programmes are comparatively higher than the respondents of Srikakulam district.

Participation in Self Help Groups

- Self-Help Group (SHG) is a small voluntary association of poor people, preferably from the same socio-economic background. They all come together to solve their problems by the principle of self-help through mutual help. The SHG promotes small savings among its members.

The savings are kept with a bank on the name of SHG. SHG is a group formed by the community, which has specific number of members between 15 or 20. In such a group the poorest would come together for emergency, disaster, social reasons, economic support to each other have ease of conversation, social interaction and economic interactions.

- Mostly found Self Help Groups are DWACRA and DEEPAM, and ABHAYAHASTAM groups. Almost all the members have taken the membership which is calculated at approximately cent percent in both the sample districts.
- More particularly 93.3% of respondents in Srikakulam and 68.8% respondents in East Godavari district joined in DWACRA groups. While the members joined in ABHAYAHASTAM groups are measured at 22.4% recorded in East Godavari district.
- While comparing the benefits availed under the SHG schemes and loan taken from SHGs, Srikakulam District has (relatively) stood first than that of East Godavari District. The amount of loan taken is in between Rs. 10000 to 20000 is the most frequent figure, where 96.1% respondents have availed in Srikakulam District in East Godavari District it is noted as 59.8%. the percentage of respondents who have borrowed more than Rs. 30,000/- is analysed at 36.7 utilizing the amount for productive purpose is very high in Srikakulam District, while comparing with that of East Godavari District.

- The proportion of respondents and the extent of savings in SHG's are also examined. It reveals that 98% and 95% of respondents are having the habit of savings with the amount ranging in between Rs. 100/- to Rs. 200/- in SHG'S.
- There expressed difficulties in getting loan amount from SHG's. In Srikakulam district it is measured at 61.2% while that of 37.2 percent in East Godavari district.

Empowerment of SC women agriculture labour

- According to the perceptions of the respondents of East Godavari and Srikakulam District. It is observed that majority group from both the districts felt little improvement in their self confidence, self employment potential, productive skills, marketing skills, girl child education, freedom from money lenders, personal hygiene, nutritional status and decision making power in the family. In addition the above the respondents also experience little improvement and their awareness about property rights and dowry system, elimination of child marriages, participation in development programmes, access to information on government programmes, reduction of domestic violence and awareness about agriculture labour unions. Still it is noticed that Srikakulam district respondents are more aware and active in the empowerment activities than their counterpart east Godavari district respondents.
- The perceptive analysis of SC women agriculture labour on their status of empowerment. It is observed that even though Srikakulam district

respondents are more empowered than east godavari district respondents. It is not significant, whereas more educated women are highly empowered than less educated and illiterates. It is interesting to note that below 40 years age group women are more empowered than above 40 years age group respondents. Like that SHG women are more empowered than non-SHG women. Hence, here the age, education are playing important role in empowering SC women agriculture labour where less age group and more educated women are highly empowered than other groups.

- It is observed from the data that in asset holdings, household income, food and non-food expenditure, household savings and household indebtedness, the East Godavari District SC women are significantly higher than Srikakulam District SC women labour.
- According to the regression analysis, out of the total 15 explanatory variables 10 variables are found to be significant, where family size, socio economic status, educational status, number of working days in a year, decision making capacity of women in the family, household income, household expenditure, benefits from government and SHG membership are found significant. This can be inferred that family size, socio economic status, educational status, number of working days, decision making, household expenditure and benefits from government are influencing more on the empowerment of SC women agriculture labour.
- In the case of Srikakulam District the regression analysis indicates that out of the total 15 explanatory variables 10 variables are found to be

significant, where family size, socio economic status, educational status, number of working days in a year, decision making capacity of women in the family, household income, household expenditure, benefits from government and SHG membership are found significant. This shows that family size, socio economic status, educational status, number of working days, decision making, household expenditure, benefits from government, household income and SHG membership are influencing empowerment of SC women agriculture labour.

- Whereas in the case of East Godavari District the regression analysis shows that out of the total 15 explanatory variables 10 variables are found to be significant, where family size, socio economic status, educational status, number of working days in a year, decision making capacity of women in the family, household income, household expenditure, benefits from government and SHG membership are found significant. This can be inferred that family size, socio economic status, educational status, number of working days, decision making, household expenditure, benefits from government, household income and SHG membership are influencing more on empowerment of SC women agriculture labour.

7.13 Conclusion

The present study evidences the socio – economic conditions of the SC women agriculture labour/ households are very low in status. So the situations of Scheduled Caste women in India needs special attention. Since only a small percentage of the total population of SC women is educated, the fate of

the majority is very grim. Due to lack of education majority SC women are converting into labour force and form as the backbone of Indian agriculture. Thus, a large number of them are employed as unorganised labour in the urban areas. According to Ministry of Labour, Government of India, 85 percent of the SC women have the most tremendous occupations and work as agricultural labourers, scavengers, sweepers and disposers of human waste. Many of these women work for minimal wages under the upper caste landlords. They are one of the largest socially segregated groups in the society. SC women are differentiated against not only by people of higher castes, but also within their own communities.

The only way these SC women can elude the vicious cycle of poverty, and oppression is through education. Through education more SC women can know their basic human rights and they can raise their voice against abuse and exploitation from the upper castes. The Government of India has an obligation to take all measures, including policy and budgetary measures, to make sure that women can fulfill their rights. It also has an obligation to penalize those who engage in caste based violence and discrimination. The Government of India has an obligation to make sure that SC women can enjoy a whole range of human rights, such as the right to live, freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, freedom from slavery, the right to be equal before the court, the right to recognition as a person before the law, the right to privacy, the right to marry with free and full consent, and the right to take part in public affairs.

Systematic planning of the government to increase the solution levels across the country with the co-operation of the civil society will result in the

empowerment of women. The government of India providing of different type of scholarships for SC students elementary to higher education level. A major area where action is required is in the promoting people entered for sustainable development sustained economic growth through the provision of basic education.

7.14 Policy Recommendations

In view of the above findings, the following suggestions are provided to enhance the status of women agricultural labour.

- Women specific employment guarantee programmes should be launched to provide sufficient employment to the rural women. Government should ensure transparency while selecting women beneficiaries for various developmental programmes.
- Non-farm employment opportunities should also be provided in the rural areas by establishing agro-industries. Development of small scale and cottage industries and handicraft sector would enhance employment opportunities for women.
- Women agricultural labour must be encouraged to form into labour unions in order to bring greater awareness on various issues and to resolve various problems like wage gaps between genders.
- Initiatives should be taken by the government to pay uniform wage rates for both the sexes.
- Loans should be provided at free of interest to the rural women to start self employment programmes like poultry, livestock, etc.

- The government should establish information centers exclusively for women workers in the agriculture sector, where they can get information on their legal rights existing government policies and programmers and implementation agencies
- The highly potential age group is 20 – 30. Their participation in agri-works are considerably low to undertake the agricultural activities on modern lines they should be encouraged by arranging institutional training in the rural areas.
- Awareness programmes about health should be conducted in order to— make women fully aware about healthcare as it is found from the study that majority of the sample women are not going for any treatment for diseases and are depending upon home treatment.
- Government has to increase the 150 days of working days, instead of 100 days work.

Agriculture board for supply of labour (ABSL)

State government should initiate the Boards like Agriculture Board for supply of labour (ABSL) district levels and village panchayat levels. The board will register the potential women labours of that village under its jurisdiction.

The board may undertake the following functions.

- Registration of agricultural women labour.
- Fixation of number of days minimum guaranteed wage in a season.
- Fixation of daily wage rate.
- Collection of wage from the agriculture for the employed days.
- There by the labourers collect their wages from the board.

- And also the board will provide benefits to the women labours, including maternity scheme, widow pension scheme, and oldage pension scheme.
- The primary data of the study tells the feelings of the women agriculture labour regarding discrimination in payments. According to the Equal Remuneration Act 1976. International labour organization and article 39 of Indian Constitution has suggested equal pay for both men and women. So the data strongly suggesting equal pay for equal work and prompt wage payments.
- The government initiatives are badly needed in respect of the provision of basic medical assistance to the work force during their work and stay in agricultural fields. It is also advised that co-operative farming societies can be vibrant in this direction.
- Medical camps are to be conducted from time to time at the vicinity of farmers densely populated areas.
- The government must create more employment opportunities to these workers either in food for work scheme, Self Help Groups and other different types of programmes, and Self employment for women in drought prone areas, and to eliminate drudgery from their lives and make women self dependent.
- Due to meager income and low wages majority of the agricultural labour remains always under debt. The agricultural labourers are lives in a most unhygienic situations. They are easily prone to several diseases. Due to malnutrition, lack of proper sanitation facilities. This can be eradicated by

educating the agricultural labourers and regular attendance of health officers to these areas.

- The government should take initiation in respect of construction the toilets at free of cost. Since it is seen the dearth of toilet facilities in the selected Villages.
 - In order to improve the status of agricultural women labour, education and trainings are essential. Education and training must be based on participatory techniques to development. Compulsory training and educational programmes should be launched for the benefit of the women agricultural labour to disseminate information on labour standards, employment rights and the content of codes of conduct. Education is an important variable of women development. Efforts— should be strengthened to educate women in general and SC women labour in particular. As it is found from the field survey that adult literacy programmes failed to educate the adults in the rural areas. A strict adult literacy programme should be launched in order to enhance the skills among women labour.
- The first draw back of the agricultural sector is, mainly it is an unorganized sector and seasonal in nature so it needs strong legislation.

7.15 Future scope for future research

- A comparative study of empowerment of scheduled caste women and scheduled tribe women can be formulated
- A comparative study of economical status of scheduled caste women in Andhra Pradesh with other state can be formulated.

- Longitudinal study of living conditions of scheduled caste women in India can also be designed.
- And the educational or health or political status of Scheduled caste women can be designed.