



WOMEN SPECIFIC PROBLEMS IN SARAN

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Abstract

An analysis of National Sample Survey organization (NSSO) data collected from 462 districts of different states of India (One selected district from North Bihar is Champaran East) shows that poverty in rural India has reduced from 37.3% to 28.3% during the period of 1993-94 to 2004-05. But this figure does not reflect the ground situation of our state. In Bihar people living below poverty line is still more than 49% in general and this percentage is more than 49% in Saran, Sheohar, Madhubani, Jamui, Purnea, Supaul, Kishanganj and Champaran west districts. (A pilot study done of A.N. Sinha Institute, Patna, 2011). This shows that poverty is the chief reason for "under development" in Bihar. Poverty alone begets many other problems which are combinedly threatening our existence. The increasing injustice, inequalities and unemployment in the study area have serious ramifications on its socio economic and political balance. The marginalization of rural areas which have been sub-servient to the urban system is reflected by simmering rebellion, nepotism, caste, classes, racial tension, atrocities against women and many more evils threatening our co-existence.

Introduction

Problems faced by Saran district is not a solitary example. Almost entire North Indian region faces more or less problems of identical nature. Problems may broadly be classified into two categories - socio economic problems related to entire population and socio-economic problems faced by women. So, we, first of all, try to throw light on problems related to the district as a whole. During the sample study of selected villages the following general problems have come before us which are as such:-

- i. Zooming population and shrinking per capita availability of land.
- ii. Agriculture related problems.
- iii. Problems of infrastructure development.
- iv. Educational problems.
- v. Sanitation and health related problems.
- vi. Problems of property.
- vii. Problems of unemployment.
- viii. Administration based on universal franchise based voting system.
- ix. Corruption, nepotism and favoritism.

People in general confront with these problems. These problems can be solved through planning and administrative acumen. Before discussing these problems we should also underline those problems which are women specific. These problems may be summarized here:-

- i. Family related problem.
- ii. Education related problems.
- iii. Marital status.
- iv. Age problems of marriage.
- v. Problems of widow.
- vi. Women & health problems.
- vii. Discrimination against women in wage payment.
- viii. Mental torture at working place.
- ix. Problems of property ownership.
- x. Problems of share in politics.
- xi. Problems of dowry.
- xii. Many other problems like rape, assault, atrocities.
- xiii. Problems related to child bearing.

Thus, these numerous problems have been responsible for poverty and unemployment. Poverty and unemployment are the chief problems which beget numerous problems. Hence planning is needed on both front-economic front and social front. Many problems which are related to women are of socio-cultural nature for which social awareness is the most important factor. The laggards like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa are caught in the vicious circle of low economic growth and low human development. It is the foremost duty of the Govt. at the helms of affairs that this vicious circle of under-development must be broken by fostering investment first to step up growth and later to take up human development which would later put pressure to accelerate economic growth.

Above mentioned facts are related to all categories of the rural as well as urban people. Without improving socio-economic conditions in general prosperity can not prevail in the region. Women that constitute almost half of the total population face some other problems which are normally not associated with men. Female specific problems have been enlisted above. These problems must be addressed at the earliest so that real prosperity visits the study area in particular and the state in general.

There are various factors responsible for low literacy rate in the study area. These may be as such:-

- Study area houses more than 89% population belonging to rural areas. Despite on going improvement females are not allowed to take part in outside activities.
- In economic activities male dominates, hence there is no relevance of female education.
- There is acute shortage of schools in rural areas. Guardians fear to send girls to distantly located schools.
- Child marriage has adversely impacted the fortunes of girls. By reaching 11 to 12 years or even below girls become married and soon undergo pregnancy. This vicious circle has ruined them completely.
- Dowry is another important social evils. Guardians deposit money for daughters marriage and for them education is not important.
- Due to paucity of fund separate schools are not built meant for girls. In co-education institutions guardians do not want to en-roll their wards.

Besides these there are many other reasons because of that female literacy is low. However, many positive steps have been taken by the govt. and slowly but steadily improvement is going on.

MARITAL STATUS

By marital status we know the position of unmarried, married, widow and widowers-Marriage is one of the 16 sanskaras depicted in Hindu tradition. Formation of family is the gift of marriage. By marriage age structure and sex ratio come

into focus. Without marriage society will become stagnant and human civilization would remain no more. Marriage is necessity for society. Sex is an ordinary attribute of it.

As per 2011 census more than 46% females were unmarried, 49% married and 5% widow. Remaining population has not been decided. Perhaps, the remaining population is Victim to divorces. Females are better positioned than males in marriage.

AGE PROBLEMS OF MARRIAGE

Marriage is essential part of life. But untimely marriage below the age of 12 years, now below eighteen years for females is unlawful and adverse to the health. Absence of education is primary factor which encourages such types of marriage. It is the duty of govt. and also other members of the society to discourage this system. With the growth of education and interaction with outside world through telecommunication, televisions, social media etc. great improvement in marriage age has been seen. Educated girls refuse to obey the marriage related decisions of mother-father. But this low age marriage system is still in vogue in poor and illiterate families. To get freedom from this ill, vigorous mobilization of social awareness along with support from govt. will create favourable environment. Later or sooner this practice will go away from our society.

PROBLEMS RELATED TO WIDOW

Revolutionary progress has been witnessed in the field of health care once known as widespread devastator like plague, malaria, cholera, pox, T.B. etc. have almost been contained due to improvement in the field of medicines and surgery. Villages to villages were subject to large scale death. Early marriage was a blow to women and they had to face life of widow. However, previous situation has radically changed. In our society widow women face varieties of problems. In down trodden families the system of re-marriage have been in prevalence but, in the middle class and so-called upper caste family, re-marriage not been allowed. In these families widows have to face physical, mental, psychological and spiritual hardships. They are treated as maid servants and no care for their well-beings and health. Hence it is the duty of the society and the govt. to do needful time to time for their benefits. Following measures will improve the situation:-

- Every one knows that no one has command over death. It is a natural phenomena.
- Widow is not responsible for the death her husband. Hence blame can not be thrust upon her. This approach towards life must be propagated in the society.
- Widow shelter houses should be built and means of livelihood should be provided there so that they can earn and support themselves.
- Widow women have the same right in the property of the family. Govt. protection and social protection will help them in acquiring property. Economy is a major factor which acts as stimulus for any one.
- Education is the most important factor that can help widow in solving their problems. There are hundred of examples, that widow women have done commendable in many fields of life. This has happened because of education and economic base.
- Some changes are noticeable in favour of widows but much more is needed.

WOMEN AND HEALTH PROBLEMS

Nothing is as important as health is. It is common saying that 'health is wealth'. Diseased person becomes burden not for himself but for the whole family. A serious illness in common family ruins happiness and economy of the family. To keep health well needs required calorie to support physiological system of body. Society bereft of health improving facilities impacts adversely the whole system of the society. Prosperous nation is that whom population remains healthy and wealthy.

It is said that female members remain uncared in the family compared to male members. This is to some extent correct in low earning family. But perceptible changes are noticeable. Recently “health for all” scheme launched by the present central govt. will act as a milestone in the field of medical care on sample study done, it has been found that in the area, more than 71% women have health related facilities only 28.8% women do not have proper health care facilities. It is also important that this is also related to male members of the female. Here economy is the main factor to be considered.

Table No. 1.1

Health services rendered to Females

S.No.	Villages	Yes		No		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.	Saraiya	22	13.3	8	23.3	30	100
2.	Dumra	25	83.3	5	16.7	30	100
3.	Sugaan	20	66.7	10	33.3	30	100
4.	Dubha	18	60.0	12	40.0	30	100
5.	Majhauriya	34	85	6	15	40	100
6.	Janar	21	70	9	30	30	100
7.	Kushhar	17	56.7	13	43.3	30	100
8.	Dhanour	19	63.3	11	36.3	30	100
9.	Lakhanpur	21	70	9	30	30	100
10.	Banu Chapra	20	66.7	10	33.7	30	100
11.	Dhamoura	18	60	12	40	30	100
12.	Purushotampur	24	80	6	20	40	100
13.	Piprahi	32	80	8	20	30	100
14.	Basbitta	19	63.3	11	36.7	30	100
15.	Madhoul	22	73.3	8	26.7	30	100
16.	Muradpur	25	83.3	5	16.7	30	100
	Total	357	71.4	143	28.6	500	100

Source: Sample survey by self.

From analysis of facts put in Table No.1.1 many interesting revelations regarding female health related problems have come out firstly it is common thing that when wealth is lost, some thing is lost, but when health is lost, life is lost. Hence healthy person can withstand any difficulties which come in the way of person concerned unhealthy persons remain mute spectator of events. If life expectancy goes beyond 80-85 years of life, it means that people of such society are leading descent life and their society, state or nation would prosper without any doubt. Prosperity, happiness, able ness, enjoyment etc. are the endowments of health. Unhealthy persons become burden for the family as well as for the society as a whole. Gita, one of gems of human knowledge, dictates - “be the bravest of the braves”. Healthy body can only contain sharp brain.

It is common belief that females are victim to bad health due to their own weakness and apathy of the family towards them. In poor family more attention is oriented towards male members of the family with a view that males are bread earner. Hence male’s health is above the health of all. But the findings of the sample study suggest that 71.4% females do not face health problems. Family members remain conscious to their health only 28.6% females do not have sufficient facilities to maintain health. It means that female health related problem is more news than reedit. But improvement is needed. This improvement should be both for females and make without discrimination. Awareness increase in income govt. supports - all these together will brings cheers for the whole society. Early marriage, illiteracy, less earnings, efficiency of nutritious foods and nearby non availability of medical facilities are some of problems which should be redressed at the earliest. Health for chime which has been

recently announced is a very good step of the central govt. in this direction. Each member of the family below poverty line will get health insurance of Rs. 5 lakhs. If this scheme is successfully implemented health related problems of females will remain non-existent.

FEMALES AND MENTAL TORTURES AT WORKING PLACE

This is as a new problem which has come out at working place where females work. This problem is mainly associated with females belonging to low and middle income groups. Without any doubt it can be said that the education pattern is completely based on western styles where gossiping, body touch, vulgar talks are common thing and both sexes equally enjoy it. But in our society effect of carry on tradition still exists. In this context one should study the problems at working place. Working place is a place of discharging given duties. This place should not be supposed to be place of romance and love affairs. Ninety nine percentage cases of abuses are related to youngsters and opposite sex attraction is not a new thing. This is the main reason of taunting, abuses, and sometimes bodily assault. So until and unless work culture going on is adjusted as in the occidental society, this sort of problems may arise time to time. Independence does not permit one to break all social fabrics in prevalence since immemorial past.

But these unlawful doing must be discouraged so that problems may not come up in future 100% security and safety can't be provided by any system because one can not foresee what are in the minds of the person concerned. But discrimination in payment between males and female workers is an open injustice. It is felt that females are more responsive towards their works. Management quality in female is inborn quality. How does a female manage her family, is well known. Hence payment discrimination must be stopped. In Table No. 1.2 light has been thrown on this problem.

Table No. 1.2

Discrimination Against Females

S. No	Villages	Yes		No		Total	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
1.	Saraiya	20	66.7	10	33.3	30	100
2.	Dumra	23	76.7	7	23.3	30	100
3.	Sugaan	19	63.3	11	36.7	30	100
4.	Dubha	17	56.7	13	43.3	30	100
5.	Mjhaulia	25	62.5	15	37.5	40	100
6.	Janar	20	66.7	10	33.3	30	100
7.	Kushhar	06	20.0	24	80.0	30	100
8.	Dhanour	18	60.0	12	40.0	30	100
9.	Lakhanpur	22	73.3	08	26.7	30	100
10.	Banu Chhapra	15	50.0	15	50.0	30	100
11.	Dhamoura	18	60.0	12	40.0	30	100
12.	Purusotampur	16	53.3	14	46.7	30	100
13.	Piprahi	32	80.0	08	20.0	40	100
14.	Basbitta	19	63.3	11	36.7	30	100
15.	Madhoul	20	66.7	10	33.3	30	100
16.	Muradpur	17	56.7	13	43.3	30	100
	Total	307	61.4	193	38.6	500	100

Source: Sample survey by self. 2016-17

Table No. 1.2 reveals that 61.4% females become victim to mental exploitation at work place. About 39.6% females feel that they are not victim to exploitation. Secondly, at all work places ratio of exploitation is not uniform. Exploitation in

corporate houses more manifested because corporate desire to take more benefits at the cost of employees. Male workers are by nature more aggressive and assertive their families than male partners. But in govt. department and public to sectors there is no place of discrimination. In this context, findings of Ahmedabad women's Action group (AWAG), a NGO organization may be quoted- "Females are victims to circumstances prevailing at working places. Almost 50% females face oral, physical and mental exploitation, and these exploitations are thrust upon these by their colleagues. In small towns and municipal area females do not complain of sexual harassment due to social complications and fear of job snatching." sometimes in govt. departments and public sectors this sort of happenings happen. But proportion is of miniature level. Females must be protected from these atrocities.

Besides these problems discussed above problems of common nature faced by females are not less. Rape, murder, physical assault by counter parts, inhuman behaviour towards widows, early marriage, marriage against will, sale of girls, no social support for widow marriage, child marriage, unmatched marriage due to poverty of guardians, direct or indirect opposition to interacts marriage, malnutrition, illness, dowry, overwork and very limited choice to take self decisions are other social avails against women.

However, the world of women is not full of darkness. Changes in favour of females are rapidly going on. Importance of women has been recognized by the govt. It is reflected in the some doings by the authorities. 50% reservation for females in Panchayat Raj system, 33% reservation for women in certain categories of jobs provision of scholarships for study from matriculation level to higher studies, provision of loans for technical studies provision of loans to start business and setting up industries and many more welfare measures are in pipe line for empowerment of women. One should always keep in mind that there is vast difference between western culture and Indian culture secondly, Saran district, as a whole, has become sea of population. Less job and more aspirants have caused social chasm. Division of work is only noticeable panaceas that can balance between males and females.

Right to property, reservation of 50% in the Three-tier Panchayati Raj system and 35% reservation in employment opportunities for all categories of women have been planned from the point of view of women's empowerment and women emancipation from tortures at social level on the basis of conclusive suggestions in can be said that several measures including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedom on the basis of equality with men have been needed and are being implemented slowly but continuously. For women to become active and valued participants in the lives of their communities, every women's right to land and property must be respected protected and fulfilled at par with men. The effect of this gain can go beyond women to their families, under, communities and broader society. The round socio-economic progress and development of women: -

- i. To participate in development planning and implementing at every level;
- ii. To benefit directly from social security programmes;
- iii. To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self-employment;
- iv. To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;
- v. To obtain all types of training and education formal and non formal, including that relating to functional literacy as well as, inter-alia the benefit of all community and extension services in order to enhance their technical capacity;
- vi. To avail profuse living conditions particularly in relation to sanitation, water-supply, housing, electricity, transport and tele-communication facilities and
- vii. To have access to all sorts of credits and banking facilities for the development and growth of agriculture;
- viii. To have equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes.

In addition to the women-specific and women related policies initiated in various plan documents, it is also the duty of the govt. to create an environment in which women's concerns can be reflected. In nutshell, it can be said that in rural sector women are in the process of being empowered in tune with the UN Convention on “Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women”.

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