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SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN IN SATARA DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA: A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT:

women constitute about half of the total population of the world or any nation, but their share in fruits of development is abysmally low not only in developing countries but also countries of developed world. The status of women is unequal and varies from caste to caste, religion to religion and region to region. In this paper it is attempted to analyse spatial patterns of socio-economic status of women at tahsil level in Satara district of Maharashtra in 2011. The present study is based on the secondary sources of data, which is mainly derived from District Census Handbook 2011, Primary Census Abstract of Satara district 2011. For measuring the comparative status of women in respective years, Prof. Kundu's (1980) method of normalization has been used and further more composite indexes are computed. It is revealed that Patantahsil was consistently identified with highest level position of women in 2011, whereas Karadtahsil was left behind and identified with lowest level position of women in 2011. It is also explicit that, though there is remarkable spatial variation in women's status at tahsil level, but those tahsil having progress in urbanisation and industrialisation also having better off with respect to women's status in 2011. It is inferred here that women's socio-economic status has improved during the last two decade and suggested that priority for raising their status should be given to the most lagging tahsils to slash the gap between their statuses and regional disparities.

KEYWORDS: Socio-economic, Sex ratio, Child sex ratio, Literacy rate, population, Women status.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Though women constitute about half of the total population of the world or any nation, their share in fruits of development is abysmally low not only in developing countries but also countries of developed world. Gender discrimination remains pervasive in many dimensions of life in world-wide.

Though there is considerable increase in gender equality in recent decades, the nature and extent of the discrimination vary considerably across countries and regions. Gender gaps are widespread in access to and control of resources, in economic opportunities, in power, and political voice. Women and girls bear the largest and most direct costs of these inequalities, but the costs cut more broadly across society, ultimately harming everyone (World Bank, 2001).

The status of women is a recently emerged complex, dynamic and multi-dimensional concept. The 'status of women' has been defined by scholars putting different emphasis to its various dimensions. It is used as an access to resources such as education, employment and health services. Sometimes, it is also used to indicate the position (power, prestige and authority) that a women has in various situations in the society (Mahadevan et al., 1989). The status of women is unequal and varies from caste to caste, religion to religion and region to region. Since this age of reform, world-wide the position and status of women in society is undergoing a vast change. So there is a need today for a dispassionate and impartial study of the position of women at micro level and from different space and time.

2. OBJECTIVES

The major objectives of this paper are as under:

1. To study the spatial pattern of socio-economic status of women in the study area.
2. To examine the spatial pattern of Work Participation Rate and Non-Agri. Workers in the study area.
3. To analyse the spatial pattern of female literacy and sex ratio in the study area.

3. STUDY AREA

Satara district lies in the southern Maharashtra, particularly at the western limit of Deccan table land. From the view point of physiographic Sahyadri and Mahadeo these are the two important ranges within the Satara district. The district is situated in the river basin of two rivers that are the Bhima and the Krishna River. But most probably, from the view point of peninsular drainage the entire land of Satara district belongs to the larger drainage system of the Krishna River. The latitudinal and longitudinal extent of Satara district is 17°05' to 18°11' north latitudes and 73°33' to 74°54' east longitudes. The district is bordered by Pune district and Sangli district in the north and the south respectively and by Solapur district and Ratnagiri district in the east and the west respectively. It also shares small boundary of about 24k.m. in the north-west with Raigarh district (Census 2001). The district administers 10480.00sq.k.m of area. The total population of district is 3003922 including 1512524

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male population and 1491398 female population. The total population of district constitutes 2.67 percent of the total Maharashtra's population. The population density of district is 287 people per. Sq. km. whereas the sex ratio of district is 988. (Census2011).



Fig-1

4. DATABASE AND METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on secondary sources of data, which is mainly derived from District Census Handbook 2011, Primary Census Abstract of Satara district 2011. For the present study, six socio-economic indicators like general sex ratio, child sex ratio, female literacy rate, female work participation rate, female workers in non-agricultural sector and proportion of urban female etc. are taken in to consideration separately to assess the socio-economic status of women concerning to the respective decades. For measuring the comparative status of women in respective years, Prof. Kundu's (1980) method of normalization has been used. Accordingly each observation of each indicator has been divided with their respective mean of the mean so as comparative analysis of women's status have been done at tahsil level, for the year 2011. As far as weightage is concerned, equal weightage has been assigned to all selected indicators to compute the status of women during 2011. Thereafter, the transformed values of each indicator are added up linearly and lastly the scored values of composite index put into descending

order and lastly, on the basis of composite index value, women’s status has been classified into following four categories.

- I. Very High Level Status of Women (Above 5.5)
- II. High Level Status of Women (5.3 to 5.4)
- III. Moderate Level Status of Women (5.1to 5.2)
- IV. Low Level Status of Women (Below 5.00)

5. SPATIAL PATEERNS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN (1991 -2011)

Satara District: Socio-Economic Status of Women (From 1991 to 2011)

| Sr. No. | Name of the Tahsil | Sex Ratio | Child Sex Ratio | Literacy Rate | Work Participation Rate | Non-Agri. Workers | Urban Population | Composite index |
|---------|--------------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| 1 | Mahabaleshr | 937 | 921 | 75.48 | 14.34 | 14.99 | 17.81 | 5.1 |
| 2 | Wai | 1005 | 909 | 76.25 | 17.46 | 32.64 | 9.11 | 5.3 |
| 3 | Khandala | 947 | 883 | 76.04 | 17.56 | 31.08 | 6.66 | 5.1 |
| 4 | Phaltan | 944 | 864 | 72.32 | 17.44 | 23.91 | 8.68 | 5.06 |
| 5 | Man | 976 | 886 | 64.02 | 22.32 | 3.38 | 5.28 | 5.1 |
| 6 | Khatav | 1012 | 892 | 72.11 | 19.85 | 30.44 | - | 5.2 |
| 7 | Koregaon | 999 | 911 | 76.50 | 16.49 | 6.48 | 8.10 | 5.2 |
| 8 | Satara | 976 | 889 | 79.69 | 13.07 | 17.19 | 20.64 | 5.2 |
| 9 | Jawali | 1068 | 935 | 73.34 | 20.91 | 1.82 | 2.21 | 5.4 |
| 10 | Patan | 1065 | 947 | 68.88 | 20.67 | 30.88 | 2.27 | 5.5 |
| 11 | Karad | 972 | 880 | 75.54 | 14.29 | 35.00 | 10.86 | 5.0 |
| | Total | 988 | 895 | 89.42 | 16.98 | 20.71 | 8.32 | 5.2 |

Source: 1) District Census Handbook of Satara District 2011.

2) Primary Census Abstract of Satara District 2011.

Note: *WCI - Composite index, Women

5.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN, 2011

The spatial pattern of socio-economic status of women show (Table 1) that the composite index value of women’s status was found highest in Patantahsil (5.5), whereas lowest was found in Karadtahsil (5.0) in 2011. Patantahsil is one of the highly sex ratio, literacy and modernized in nature, on the other hand Karadtahsil is one of the backward tahsils in nature.

I. Very High Level Status (Above 5.5)

Women's very high class position was observed in Patantahsil (5.5), tahsil. This tahsil are prosperous concerning to the innovation in agriculture, sex ratio, literacy compared to the rest of the tahsils. There is also much of the progress in social and infrastructural facilities, like health, education, road transportation, communication, banking, etc.

II. High Level Status (5.3 to 5.4)

Women's high level status was identified in Waitahsil (5.3) and Jawalintahsil (5.4). All these tahsils are urbanized as well as industrialized, except Mahabaleshwartahsil. On The other hand there are found higher level of female literacy, higher proportion of female workers in non-agricultural activities and higher proportion of females residing in urban area, these are the major causes behind the higher level status of women.

III. Moderate Level Status (5.1 to 5.2)

There are as many as seven tahsils identified with moderate level status of women. These tahsils are Khandalatahsil (5.1), Phaltantahsil (5.06), Man (5.1), Khatavtahsil (5.2), Koregaontahsil (5.2) and Sataratahsil (5.2). All these tahsils indicate the improvement in modern facilities like, education, health, transportation and communication, etc.

IV. Low Level Status (Below 5.00)

Low level of socio-economic status of women was recorded only in Karadtahsil (5.0) tahsil. Infact, there is progress in women's status in 2011 over the year 2001, but this progress is very slower rate as compared to the other tahsils of district. Therefore, it remains at the bottom in terms of women's status. The low sex ratio is taken as a stark indicator of the inferior position of women in India (Miller, 1981; Basu, 1992; Mayer, 1999). There is no doubt that sex ratio is certainly one of the important indicators of equity between sexes in society, but it is not to be taken as the sole indicator of the status of women in society. Phaltantahsil and Mantahsil is one of the drought-prone and socio-economically backward tahsils, further, not only lower female literacy, paucity of females in the non-agricultural sectors as it is entirely rural. It is very interesting to know that increasing trend of overall sex ratio at state and national level whereas it remains declined in the study region in the last decade (Pawar, 2013). At the same time declining child sex ratio is negatively influencing their status. Therefore, status of women is much lagging behind as compared to other tahsils.

6. CONCLUSION:

Foregoing analysis revealed that Patantahsil was consistently identified with highest level position of women in 2011, whereas Karadtahsil was left behind and identified with lowest level position of women in 2011 respectively. It is also explicit that, though there is remarkable spatial variation in women's status at tahsil level, but those tahsils have made the progress in urbanisation and industrialisation are also better off in respect of women's status in 2011. It is found that entire district has experienced a positive change and improvement regarding women's status. Patantahsil consistently occupies very high level status of women whereas Karad tahsil remained with the low level status of women in 2011. It is mainly because of improvement in female literacy rate and simultaneously increase in the proportion of female workers in non-agricultural sector, but on the other side discrimination against women viz. declining sex ratio and child sex ratio are major obstructs in the progress of women's status. The child sex ratio of these tahsils significantly low as compared to the district average (895 girls per thousand boys). It is found that the progress in literacy and work participation rate, their status are relatively low in drought affected and backward tahsils as compared to the irrigated and relatively advanced tahsils.

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