

Rural Women Empowerment after Green Revolution of Maharashtra

Mr. Sudarshan Narayan Sawant¹ Dr. Sambhaji A. More²

¹Research student, Department of History, Shivaji University Kolhapur.

Email: sudarshansawant1986@gmail.com

²Assistant Professor and Head, Department of History, M.H.Shinde Mahavidyalaya Tisangi

Email: samoresir7@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The rural women empowerment is the core objectives of the several state government women and child development policies in Maharashtra. Through the various schemes and programme state consistently promoting the socio-economic empowerment of the women in rural area. The green revolution of the Maharashtra has proven the agriculture potential of the state and it has highlighted the role of agriculture in the development of the state economy. The green revolution has not only brought technological changes in agriculture and food grain self reliance but it has boosted the income of the rural mass in general and rural women who works in agriculture sector in particular. Illiterate, less educated and women's of the downturned strata are playing a very significant role in the major agriculture activities. The agriculture wages and allied activities are increased significantly after green revolution in the state, but relative growth of farm income and agriculture wages is less than the other sectors. Therefore, economic condition of the small and marginal farmers as well as agricultural women is very alarming in the state. The present investigation has reviewed the women empowerment in the Maharashtra state after green revolution.

Key Words : Green Revolution, Women Empowerment, Agriculture Development

1. Introduction

Women are at the core of all the economic and crop-growing activities in the Maharashtra state. Women farmers are the backbone of the subsistence agriculture in rural area of Maharashtra. However, due to gender bias, they are not given the recognition they deserve. The needs and rights of women farmers have been largely disregarded. In many cases, their situation is worse than farm labour. Hence, the state saw the need to involve women farmers in development activities and harness their potential with proper compensation. More than fifty percent of the total agriculture workforce of the Maharashtra is the women which is highlighting their contribution in agriculture sector. The economic empowerment of the agricultural women is matter of discussion for the policy makers since last two-three decades. The NABARD started promoting Self Help Groups (SHGs) since 1991-92 and provided microfinance access to the rural women in Maharashtra. The reserve bank also promoted microfinance to the agriculture women, as a result of which to some extent there is economic empowerment of the women in the state. Despite 50 percent women contribution in agriculture as per census 2011, the proportion of women landholders in Maharashtra is just 14 percent. The green revolution not only revolutionized agriculture and made food grain self-sufficient but also increased income of the rural population in general and of rural women working in the agricultural sector in particular. The wages, agro-based industries and allied activities of the agriculture sector in the state increased significantly after the green revolution. However, the relative increase of the farm income and the wages of the agriculture sector are not as high as the other sectors.

2. Rational of the Study:

After green revolution of the Maharashtra, almost all agricultural main components and sub components are recorded positive changes. For example state had the average food grain deficit of 25 lakh tonne during 1959 to 1962. However, during the period 1965 to 1975 state has recorded surplus food grain production. The irrigation potential, gross irrigated area, agriculture production, farm income, and fertilizer consumption of the state has also gone up during this period. Green revolution has also positively influenced on the rural women empowerment, therefore present study has attempted to recognize this influence based on secondary data sources.

3.Objectives:

The main aim of the present study is to review the rural women empowerment after the green revolution period of Maharashtra. The study has also examined the average monthly income of the farmer's households, female beneficiaries of PM-KISAN, SHGs groups and growth in female literacy of the Maharashtra state.

4.Hypothesis:

The green revolution of the Maharashtra state has brought positive changes in the economic empowerment of the women's.

5. Methodology:

The present study is mainly depended on the secondary data published in government reports and official websites. The study is historical as well as analytical in nature because gathered historical facts and figures are analyzed.

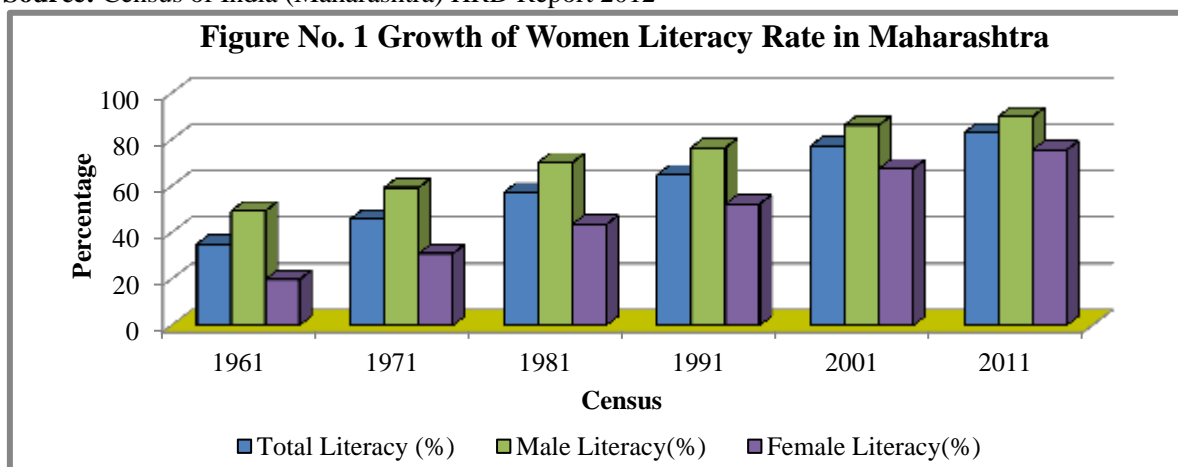
6. Data Analysis

As per the information collected in Agriculture Census 2015-16⁽²⁾, about 11.72% of the total operated area in the country was operated by female operational holders. As per this agriculture census, there were total 2364000 female and 12894000 male operational land holders in the Maharashtra state. It means that the female operational land holders are just 15.49 percent of the total farmers in the Maharashtra. It indicates that the economic asset holding of the women's is critical in the state. Table No.1 and figure 1 indicates the growth of literacy rate in Maharashtra since 1961. In 1961 the female literacy rate was just 19.80 percent whereas it was almost 49.26 percent in case of male. However, literacy rate of male and female were increased continuously and reached to 89.82 percent and 75.48 percent respectively in 2011.

Table No. 1 Growth of Women Literacy Rate in Maharashtra

Years	Total Literacy (%)	Decadal Growth in Total Literacy (%)	Male Literacy(%)	Female Literacy(%)	Decadal Growth in Female Literacy (%)
1961	35.08	-	49.26	19.80	-
1971	45.77	10.69	59.40	31.00	11.20
1981	57.24	11.47	70.06	43.50	12.50
1991	64.87	7.63	76.56	52.32	8.82
2001	77.27	12.40	86.27	67.51	15.19
2011	82.91	5.64	89.82	75.48	7.97

Source: Census of India (Maharashtra) HRD Report 2012⁽¹⁾



The percentage of female beneficiaries under PM-KISAN in Maharashtra is only 20.6 percent which is five percent less than the national average of 25.1 percent. The overall PM-KISAN beneficiary's percentage is dismal which also indicates the weak economic empowerment of the women. The average monthly income per agricultural household during agricultural year July 2018 - June 2019 of the Maharashtra state was just Rs.11492. The maximum it is found to Rs. 29348 in Meghalaya and it has followed by the Punjab with Rs. 26701. It means that still the rural agricultural based households of the Maharashtra are earning very less per month. It also indicates the weak economic empowerment of the women's in the Maharashtra state⁽³⁾.

7. Conclusions

After the green revolution, the state has achieved several milestones in the path of rural women empowerment, but still the journey of women empowerment is still long. The ministry of agriculture state government, ministry women and child development and planners are taking keen efforts to achieve women empowerment, but desired results are not visible. It is mainly because of low market prices for the agriculture produced in one hand and rapid increasing prices of the agricultural inputs in other hand. The low farm income has adversely affecting on the standard of living and become obstacle in the path of women empowerment. The comprehensive special policy for agriculture women's is highly recommended

through the present investigation. The control over the agricultural produced should be minimized and attempts will be made to provide market gains to the farmers. The credit access to agriculture women should be provided through the public sector banks to large scale instead of microfinance institution.

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