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Income generating activities of rural women in Mirzapur district

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ABSTRACT

Women in rural areas have always been marginalized and relegated to the status of subjugated class in their society. Very few women in the rural areas are involved in a variety of economic activities. Keeping this in view a study was conducted in the two villages namely Achitpur and Chota Mirzapur Khurd of Jamalpur Block of Mirzapur District to know the various characteristics of the respondents, and, the domestic fuel consumption pattern of the respondents. Total one hundred and twenty five (125) female respondents from the two villages were selected randomly. An interview schedule was used as a data collection instrument. Statistical analyses were done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS programme). Descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, and percentage frequency were used for describing background characteristics of the study group. The main sources of income for the rural women were bidi making, mat weaving, tailoring and making dona and pattal. It is suggested that government should link rural women with skill development and enterepenureship development programme to enhance their strength and skill to become self employed/ entrepenure.

Key Words : Income, Activities, Rural women

INTRODUCTION

Women in rural areas have always been marginalized and relegated to the status of subjugated class in their society. Women have not actively participated in income generating activities due to their lack of economic independence and illiteracy. Very few women in the rural areas are involved in a variety of economic activities and income diversification continues to be a key strategy for poor rural households, including those that are progressively developing and those operating under increasing distress (Johny *et al.*, 2017). There is a need of women empowerment through economic self-sufficiency and higher awareness levels on social, political and legal issues. The World Bank has suggested that empowerment of women should be a key aspect of all social development programs (World Bank, 2001). Keeping this in view a study was conducted with following objectives:

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Objectives:

1. To assess the various demographic characteristics of the respondents.
2. To study the involvement of rural women in income generating activities.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in two villages Achitpur and Chota Mirzapur Khurd of Jamalpur Block of Mirzapur District of Uttar Pradesh. A multi stage sampling design was followed. The target groups who were interviewed were women above 18 years of age. A total of 125 rural women (16 per cent of the total household) were selected randomly for data collection purpose.

Desk review and analysis of secondary literature/data was also carried out to supplement the research. Survey method was adopted for quantitative data collection in the selected villages. The quantitative data collection tool was developed keeping in view the objectives, scope and focus of the study. The interview schedules had also close ended questions. Quantitative data was collected by using a semi-structured interview schedule. The draft interview schedule was pre-tested in study villages of Mirzapur District in which around 50 respondents were interviewed. Pre-test exercise was helped in finding respondents' difficulty in understanding language, inconsistency in placing and framing questions, providing right options, proper skipping of questions, use of local vocabulary for better understanding of questions and duplication of questions etc. The data collection instruments were modified and finalized based on feedback of the pre-test exercise.

Before the data analysis, a tabulation plan was developed. The quantitative data analysis was carried out by using latest version of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS programme). The bi-variate analysis was carried out for data analysis. Descriptive statistics including mean, standard deviation, and percentage frequency were used for describing background characteristics of the respondents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is evident from Table 1 that 45.6 per cent of the respondents were of younger age group where as 28.8 per cent and 25.6 per cent were of middle age and above middle age group, respectively. It has been observed that economic activities were being taken by majority of young age (31.2 %) rural women. The average age and standard deviation of the respondents was 38.90 years and 11.97 year, respectively.

Maximum respondents were belonged to Hindu religion (89.6 %) and rest only 10.4 per cent respondents were belonged to Muslim religion. Maximum respondents (55.0 %) were belonged to OBC (other backward caste) category followed by 37.0 per cent respondents were of SC/ST (schedule caste and schedule tribe) and remaining 8.0 per cent respondents were of the caste of other category. It can be interred from the above findings that in our social system OBC have been dominating.

The majorities of respondents (66.4 %) were illiterate. The respondents who educated upto primary, middle, high school and intermediate were 16.0 per cent, 11.2 per cent, 2.4 per cent and 1.6 per cent, respectively. Higher educated respondents as graduate and post

graduate were 1.6 per cent and 0.8 per cent, respectively.

The majority of the respondents (66.4 %) were illiterate only 33.6 per cent respondents were literate which is combined together for comparison purposes. It may be concluded that the female literacy rate in the study area is very low. Similar comments also reported by Prasad *et al.* (2009).

More than half (57.6 %) of respondents head of the family were depend on daily wages as labour work followed by the respondents head of the family (18.4 %) who were engaged in tiny business. 9.6 per cent respondent's head of the family were depending on caste occupation and independent profession each separately. In the study area, cultivation

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to their socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

Socio-economic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age group (Years)		
≤ 35	57	45.6
36-45	36	28.8
> 45	32	25.6
Average age ± SD =38.90 ±11.97		
Religion		
Hindu	112	89.6
Muslim	13	10.4
Caste		
SC/ST	46	37.0
OBC	69	55.0
Others	10	8.0
Literacy		
Illiterate	83	66.4
Literate	42	33.6
Main occupation of head of family		
Daily wage labours	72	57.6
Caste occupation	12	9.6
Tiny business	23	18.4
Independent profession	12	9.6
Cultivation	5	4.0
Service	1	0.8
Total family annual income (Rs.)		
≤ 20,000	66	52.8
20,000-40,000	39	31.2
> 40,000	20	16.0
Average family annual income ± SD = 28,604.00 ± 24,414.10 (Rs. 9,600 to 1,10,000)		
Social participation		
No membership	112	89.0
Member of one organization	9	7.2
Member of more than one organization	4	3.2

was not a major source of their livelihood and only 0.8 per cent respondent's family head was busy in service.

More than half (52.8 %) of respondents had family annual income below Rs. 20,000 followed by 31.2 per cent in family annual income of Rs. 20,000-40,000 and rest 16.0 per cent respondents had more than Rs. 40,000 as family annual income. The average family annual income and standard deviation of the respondent's household was Rs. 28,604.00 and Rs. 24,414.10, respectively. The trend shows that in study area, economic status of the people was very poor. Parikh and Laxmi (2000) have also stated poor economic condition of rural people in their study done at Tamil Naidu. Basic reason of poverty in the present study area was found large population growth.

Table reveals that 7.2 per cent of respondents joined as the member of one organization where as only 3.2 per cent of respondents were of the member of more than one organization. There were majority of respondents (89.0 %) who had no membership of any type of organization.

The present Table 2 reveals that the majority of respondents (63.2 %) were engage in income generating activities. The respondents who engage daily at post-noon time in other activities like cleaning house, cloth cleaning, bathing children, feeding animals and dung cleaning were 16.0 per cent, 8.0 per cent, 8.0 per cent, 3.2 per cent and 1.6 per cent, respectively.

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their engagement in post-noon activities

Sr. No.	Post-noon activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Cleaning house	20	16.0
2.	Cloth cleaning	10	8.0
3.	Bathing children	10	8.0
4.	Dung cleaning	2	1.6
5.	Feeding animals	4	3.2
6.	Income generating activities	79	63.2
	Total	125	100

The above Table 3 reveals that the majority of respondents (63.2 %) were engage in bidi making followed by 21.5 per cent respondents in mat weaving and 12.7 per cent respondents in tailoring for generating their income. The respondents, who were busy in other extra-activities like as making dona and pattal, incense stick making and embroidery and tokari weaving were accounted in 11.4 per cent, 10.1 per cent and 6.3 per cent, respectively. It was also observed that rest 3.8 per cent respondents in poultry, 2.5 per cent respondents in knitting where as 1.3 per cent respondents were engage in potato chips and papad making for generating their income.

The above Table 4 indicates that about two-third (63.3 %) of respondents were adding with their monthly family income of Rs. 51-100 followed by 16.5 per cent of respondents earned Rs. 101-150 where as 12.7 per cent and 7.6 per cent of respondents were generating their income due to after-noon work in the range of Rs. = 50 and more than Rs. 150, respectively. The average income generated by the respondents through various activities at noon time was found to be Rs. 96.14 ± 48.88.

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to their involvement in income generating activities

Sr. No.	Income generating activities	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Potato chips making	1	1.3
2.	Papad making	1	1.3
3.	Tailoring	10	12.7
4.	Embroidery work	5	6.3
5.	Knitting	2	2.5
6.	Making dona and pattal	9	11.4
7.	Mat weaving	17	21.5
8.	Tokari weaving	5	6.3
9.	Bidi making	18	22.8
10.	Incense stick making	8	10.1
11.	Poultry	3	3.8
	Total	79	100

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents according to their per month earnings through their involvement in various income generating activities

Sr. No.	Income (Rs.)/Month	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	$\leq$ 50	10	12.7
2.	51-100	50	63.3
3.	101-150	13	16.5
4.	>150	6	7.6
	Total	79	100
	Average income ± SD = Rs. (96.14 ± 48.88), Rs. (30- 300)		

Conclusion:

It was found from the study that the majority of the women (66.4 %) in the study area were illiterate. More than half (57.6 %) of respondents head of the family were depend on daily wages as labour work and the average income generated by the respondents through various activities at noon time was found to be Rs. 96.14 ± 48.88. It shows that the rural women busy in small technical activities and also they were interested for participating in other activities for raising their socio-economic status and better standard of living. They having basic indigenous knowledge, skill, potential and resources to establish and manage tiny business or cottage industry. But they need knowledge regarding loan procedure, various funding agencies procedure regarding certification, awareness on government welfare programmes, motivation, technical skill and support from family, government and other organization. It is suggested that government should link rural women with skill development and enterepenureship development programme to enhance their strength and skill to become self employed/ entrepenure.

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