

Financial Inclusion of Women Workers in Nagpur's Rural Areas

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Abstract

Since last three decades economic advancement has brought tremendous changes in the lives of rural women in developing country 'If rural area of India will develop then India become the developed country hence it is mandatory to focus on rural development especially rural women development as "she is the backbone of family". To make the India economically strong, rural women workers should be empowered. One of the paths is Financial Inclusion of rural women workers. Women who participate in any physical or psychological work on certain wages are called women workers. Rural women workers are constructively participating in the process of economic and social development of the society. In context to rural society, women workers are involved in agriculture, small scale supplementary occupations, own business, and other related occupations. Rural women workers are the key factors to eradicate poverty and improve the well-being of their families, yet they continue to face serious challenges as a result of gender-based stereotypes and discrimination that deny them equitable access to opportunity, resources, assets and service. This research focused on the real situation of financial inclusion of women workers in Nagpur's rural area. This study helps to find out the solution for financially excluded women workers and provide the recommendations regarding financial inclusion of rural women workers.

Introduction

In India women have been considered secondary due to the paternalistic family system. Men and women both are playing the equal role for survival of the society but it has been evidenced that no society in the world ever provided the equal status. Women workers play an increasing role for building the nation but they have remained backward due to the social evils, illiteracy, superstitions, male dominant culture and traditional values. Hence the profile of rural women workers has been tagged as a poor, superstitious, low skilled, illiterate and suppressed being. Rural women workers' access to information, assets and opportunities is very low because they are unorganized and underrepresented. In countries economic and social development women are playing very significant role especially rural women workers, as most of the population of India lives in rural areas. But they are always discriminated for the job opportunities, lower level of wages, poverty and lower status. This paper attempts to highlight the real factors which are required for the empowerment of rural women workers which starts from improvement of

their socio-economic profile.

Rural Women Workers

In rural areas, women workers are not in organised and unite form, “Women who participate in any physical or psychological work on certain wages called as women workers.” Rural women workers are constructively participating in the process of economic and social development of the society. With context to rural society, women workers are involved in agriculture, small scale supplementary occupations, own business, and other related occupations. Rural women workers are the key factors to eradicate poverty and improve the well-being of their families, yet continue to face serious challenges as a result of gender-based stereotypes and discrimination that deny them equitable access to opportunity, resources, assets and services.

The traditional values in rural areas have not changed, child marriages, second marriages continue to take place, hence today also girl child is unwelcomed in rural areas, girl child is considered a liability so the status of women in rural areas are unstable but the reality is that when women have empowered, they, in turn, contribute to their family’s income and become active change leaders in their communities. It is not exaggeration that if you build a woman, you build a community.

Methodology

This study is based on survey conducted in various talukas spread across the Nagpur district of Maharashtra. 31 Working women were selected randomly from each taluka, from the list of working women. The study is based on 400 rural working women in the Nagpur district. All sample has divided into two broad categories as main women worker and marginalized women worker who have involved in various economic activities like Agricultural Wage Labour, Cultivation/Dairying/Livestock, Manufacturing, Construction, Retail Trade, Education, Health/Social Work Activities, Other Services and Domestic Services. The major findings of the present study have summarized here as follows:

Status of Rural Women Workers

Social profile plays very significant role for development of rural women workers. There are various factors which are considered for identifying the social profile. Education, Age, Marital Status, Category and Type of Workers are the important parameters to measure the social profile of rural women workers in this study.

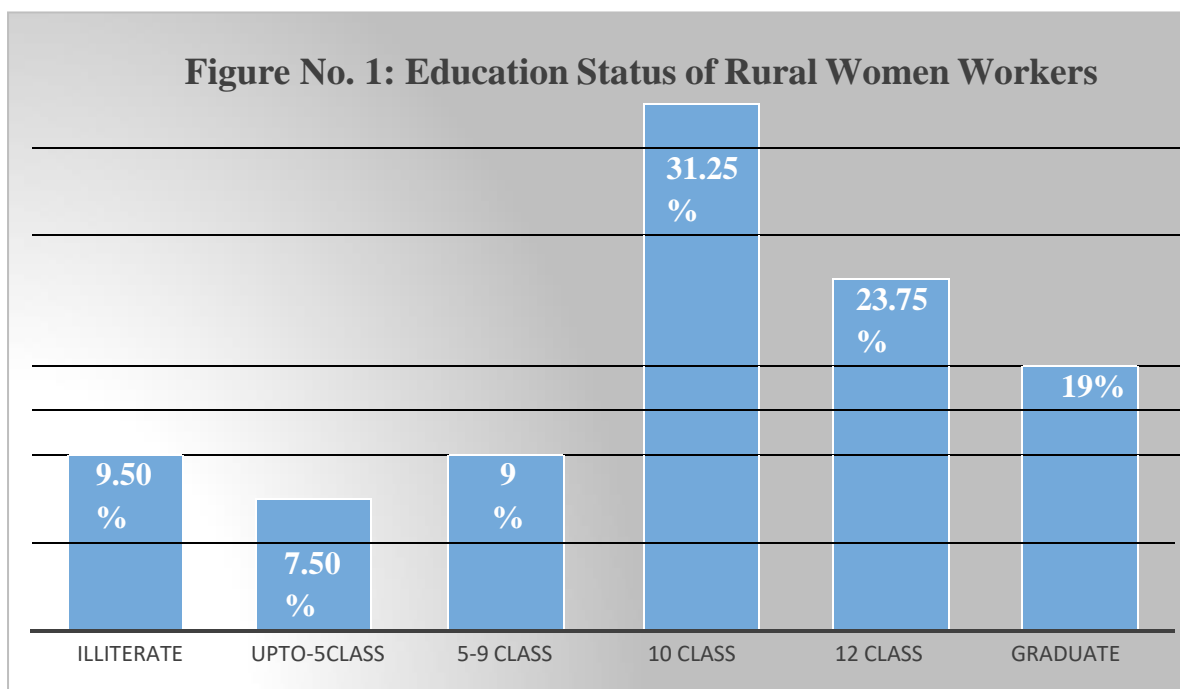
Education Status of Women Workers

Development of rural women workers is measured through their level of education. In rural areas the access of education is limited due to the distance, unawareness and orthodox mindset. Rural people prefer to earn bread and butter than education hence the majority of women prefer to do agricultural work rather than taking higher education. So, it is to be observed that most of the women workers' education is till SSC and HSC. The Table No.1 shows the education status of women workers.

Table 1: Education Status of Rural Women Workers

Sr. No.	Education Range	Percentage	No. of Respondent
1	Illiterate	9.50%	38
2	Upto-5Class	7.50%	30
3	5-9 Class	9%	36
4	10 Class	31.25%	125
5	12 Class	23.75%	95
6	Graduate	19%	76

Education is the key factor for measuring the overall development of rural women workers but it has to be observed that most of the women workers are disinterested for taking higher education due to the distance and financial crisis in rural areas, In Figure No.01 It has shown that 9.50% Rural Women Workers are illiterate and 7.50% Rural Women Workers are less educated, due to the distance and unawareness regarding education. 9% Rural Women Workers are educated between 5 to 9 standards only. 31.25% Rural Women Workers completed SSC and 23.75% Rural Women Workers completed HSC. The graduate Rural Women Workers percentage is only 19%, which indicated the education status of Rural Women Workers in figure No.01.



Source: Data Collection

In rural areas the rural women workers have been divided into two categories as agriculture worker and non-agriculture workers and further they are categorized as main worker and

marginalized worker. The workforce participation of rural women workers classified into two categories i.e. main workers and marginal workers. Those workers who had worked for a major part of the reference period (i.e.6 months and more) are termed as the main workers. Those workers who had not worked for major part of reference period (i.e. less than 6 months) are termed as marginal workers. The Table No.02 and Figure No.02 indicated that majority of rural workers are belong to main workers category as well as the marginal women workers are less in number.

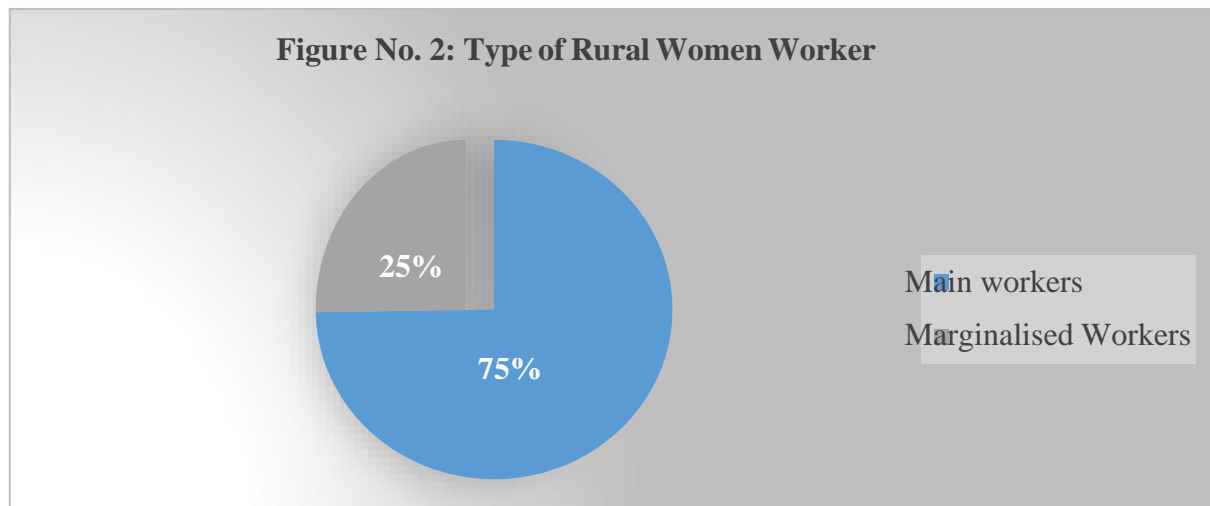
Table No. 2: Type of Rural Women Workers

Sr.No.	Type of Workers	Percentage	No.of Respondent
1	Main workers	74.75	299
2	Marginalised Workers	25.25	101

Source: Data Collection

Economic Profile of Women Workers

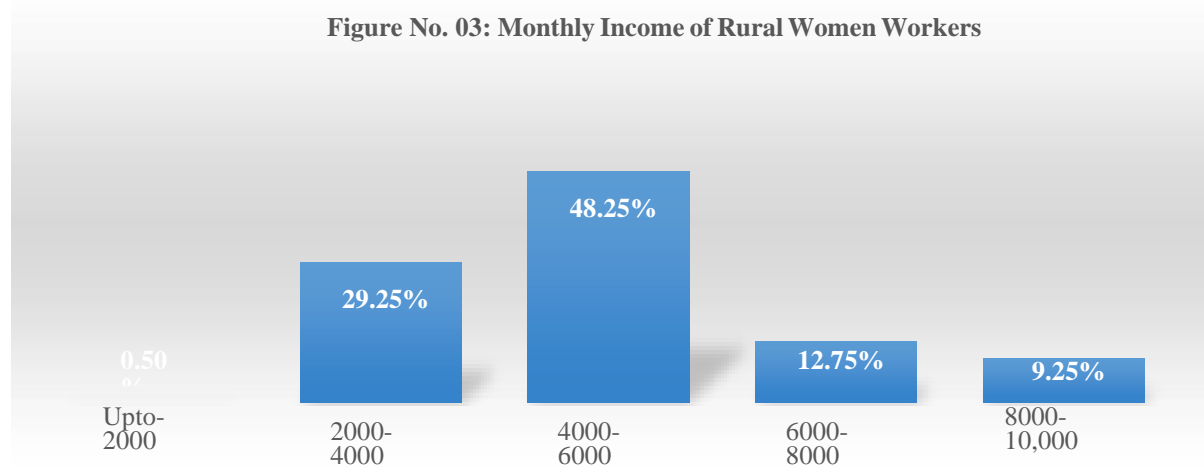
Economic profile is the main parameter to measure the development of rural women workers,



Monthly income, monthly saving, Bank Account, Banking Habits, Transaction Frequency are the parameters to measure the economic profile of rural women workers.

Monthly Income of Rural Women Workers

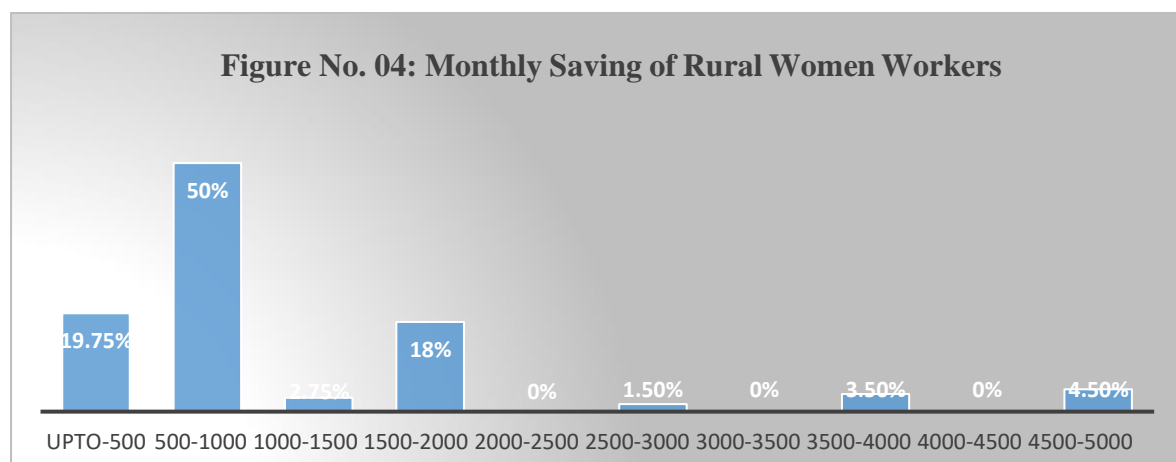
Most of the women workers are belong to the agriculture workers and their wages are less hence the figure No.03 indicated that on an average income range of women workers are between Rs.4000 to Rs.6000 as well as the minimum level of income has started from Rs. 2000, So it has to be observed that every women worker is above the poverty level in India. According to the latest estimates of the Commission, people with the daily consumption of more than Rs. 28.65 in cities and Rs. 22.42 in rural areas are not poor. Due to the running inflation the saving of rural women workers affected and their consumption expenditure increased hence they couldn't save more on the basis of observation it has shown in figure No. 3



Source: Data Collection

Monthly saving of rural women workers

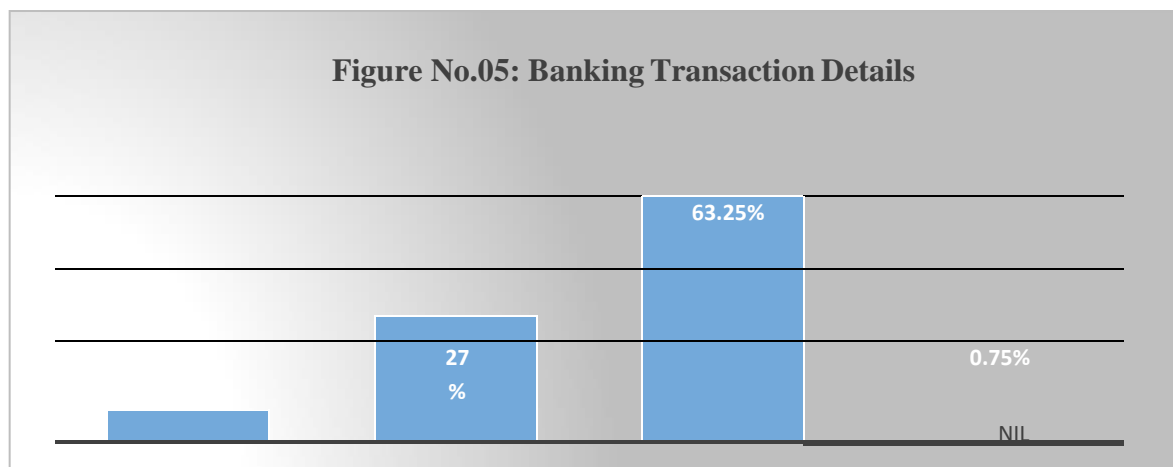
Women workers saving level shows that rural women workers do not save much due to their limited income hence their maximum saving is between Rs.500 to Rs. 1000 because their maximum income level is between Rs.4000 to Rs. 6000 and both the percentage are also near about similar. The highest percentage of monthly savings is 50% as well the highest percentage of monthly income is 48.25%. It has to be observed that the running inflation increased the expenditure of rural women workers hence they could not save more. The Figure No.04 has shown the saving pattern of rural women workers.



Source: Data Collection

In rural areas almost 99% women workers have bank accounts and only 1% women workers are not having bank accounts. Nearly 63 % of women workers visit banks quarterly as they are not having a large amount to save in the bank due to their limited income. 27% Women

workers visit banks on a monthly basis and only 9% women workers visit banks weekly. The above details have been clearly indicated in Figure No.05



Source: Data Collection

In rural areas women workers are not that much aware about the digital financial assets and financial schemes of government. On the basis of survey, it has to be observed that 89% of women workers are members of self-help groups and 11% of women workers are not members of self-help groups. 21% women workers have the fixed deposits in the bank but 79% women workers do not have the fixed deposits. Most of the women workers do not have the personal assets to mortgage hence they do not dare to avail the credits from bank instead they prefer to take loan from informal organization.

On the basis of survey, two case studies are evaluated in Nagpur's rural area. These case studies have based on the field study performed in rural village Gondkhairi. Where 50% of the population is engaged in agriculture and most of them are farmers. Hence four agriculture women workers from the village Gondkhairi have selected as case studies.

Case Study No. 01 Mrs. Rekha Mohan Kubde

Place: At Post Gondkhairi, Taluka- Kalmeshwar, District- Nagpur

Rekha is an agriculture worker. She is 10th pass and her age is 36 years, married and her monthly income is Rs.6000. Rekha has three and half acre own agriculture land and own house. She has APL Ration card. She belongs to OBC category -cast Teli. She is the main worker. Rekha uses Adhar card always and her adhar card also connected with her bank account. Rekha said that she uses LPG gas for cooking and she got LPG-DBTL subsidy in her account regularly. Rekha is the main earner in her family, she has four children. No other income source in her family. She saves some amount monthly from her earning in SHG. She always saves money for daily meal, educational expenses, health expenses and unforeseen events. She always keeps record of her expenses but can't control the expenses as the growing inflation limits her savings. She has bank account. Last year she opened bank account in

public sector bank and her husband also has bank account. She visits bank monthly for cash withdrawal, to deposit money and to pay the installment of SHG loan. She never saved money in post office. Rekha rarely spends more amount than her earning at that time she borrows money from money lender but she does not belong any property or any assets to mortgage. Agriculture land and house is by the name of her husband. Wherever she got an economic emergency, she never avails credits from bank as she is not aware of the bank credit schemes sometimes, she avails SHG loan to complete the need of education expenses. She repays the loan by paying monthly installments, always avail the SHG loan up to the period for sixth month. She doesn't avail FD facility as she has limited income and she didn't get dowry from her parents. Rekha is not having an insurance policy as she has not enough income to avail insurance policy. Rekha is not aware of ATM card, Mobile banking, Internet banking and online transactions as she doesn't have smart phone. She never avails the facility of direct cash transfer schemes of centre government. Even she doesn't know the interest rate and interest rate calculations. She always faces difficulty while operating bank account then she takes help of strangers in bank. It is very strange that anybody can misuse of it. Rekha said that if she got an economic emergency then she will sell the property but she doesn't belong to any assets to mortgage. She said Corona affects their financial status; she didn't get corona relief fund from government. She got only grains from government grocery shop.

Rekha said that Government schemes like beti bachao beti padhao, and swadhar gruh schemes are useless for common people as they didn't get the benefits. Rekha said government has not given enough facilities to rural women workers. She aspect many things from government that Government should provide higher education loan to their children and insurance coverage to rural women workers because there is no security of their lives while working in agriculture as it is very tough work for women workers.

Case Study No. 02 Mrs. Jijabai Tukaram Tupte

Place: At Post Gondkhairi, Taluka- Kalmeshwar, District- Nagpur

Jijabai is an agriculture worker. She is 5th class pass and her age is 60 years, married and her monthly income is Rs.6000. Jijabai has two acre own agriculture land and own house. She has APL Ration card. She belongs to OBC category -cast Kunbi. She is the main worker. In her family husband is the main earner, son also supports her. Jijabai use Adhar card always and her adhar card also connected with her bank account. Jijabai said that she uses LPG gas for cooking and she got LPG-DBTL subsidy in her account regularly. She saves some amount monthly from her earning in SHG. She always saves money for daily meal, educational expenses, health expenses and unforeseen events. She always keeps record of her expenses but can't control the expenses as the growing inflation limits her savings. She has bank account. 20 years ago, she opened bank account in public sector bank and her husband also has bank account. She visits bank monthly for cash withdrawal, to deposit money and to pay the installments of SHG loan. She never saved money in post office. Jijabai rarely spends more amount than her earning she has home on her name she can use it as an asset. Wherever she got an economic emergency, She avails credits from banks she is avails the facility of bank credit schemes. Sometimes she avails SHG loan to complete the need of education expenses. She repays the loan by paying

monthly installments, always avail the SHG loan up to the period for one year. She doesn't avail FD facility as she has limited income and she didn't get dowry from her parents. Jijabai is not having an insurance policy as she doesn't have enough income to avail insurance policy. Jijabai is not aware of ATM card, Mobile banking, Internet banking and online transactions as she doesn't have smart phone. She never avails the facility of direct cash transfer schemes of centre government. Even she doesn't know the interest rate and interest rate calculations. She always faces difficulty while operating her bank account then she takes help of strangers in bank. It is very strange that anybody can misuse of it. Jijabai said that if she got an economic emergency then she will utilise the savings. She said Corona affects their financial status; she didn't get corona relief fund from government. She got only grains from government grocery shop. Jijabai said that Government schemes like beti bachao beti padhao, and swadhar gruh schemes are useless for common people as they didn't get the benefits. Government has not given enough facilities to rural women workers so she expects many things from government that Government should provide higher education loan to their children and insurance coverage for rural women workers because there is no security of their lives while working in agriculture as it is very tough work for women workers. Jijabai is more confident women for handling the financial matters but she said we require training about new technology and financial schemes for women workers. This research evaluated the actual status of financial inclusion of women workers in Nagpur's rural area.

Conclusion

Indian history has recorded the strength of rural women, who are deprived by the circumstances of abuse, inequality, and lack of opportunities. These challenges have hindered their personal development, economic empowerment, and community leadership. Rural women make a quarter of the world's population as well as Rural women workers are key contributors to agricultural production, food security, climate advocacy, enterprise, and citizenship. Sadly, the active contribution and the effort of rural women are not recognized and their full potentials underutilized. So rural women workers should be motivated to join the path of development, for their overall development, rural women workers should be economically empowered then they should be financially included and they must receive the wages on their work basis not according to their social status basis. Financial inclusion of rural women workers plays significant role for women empowerment in our country.

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