

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad

In Association with



Chetna Shikshan Prasarak Mandal's Vaijapur,  
Art's Senior College, Aurangabad



One Day National Conference

On

**Women Empowerment :**  
**Issues & Challenges**  
**(An Interdisciplinary Approach)**

02/03/2015

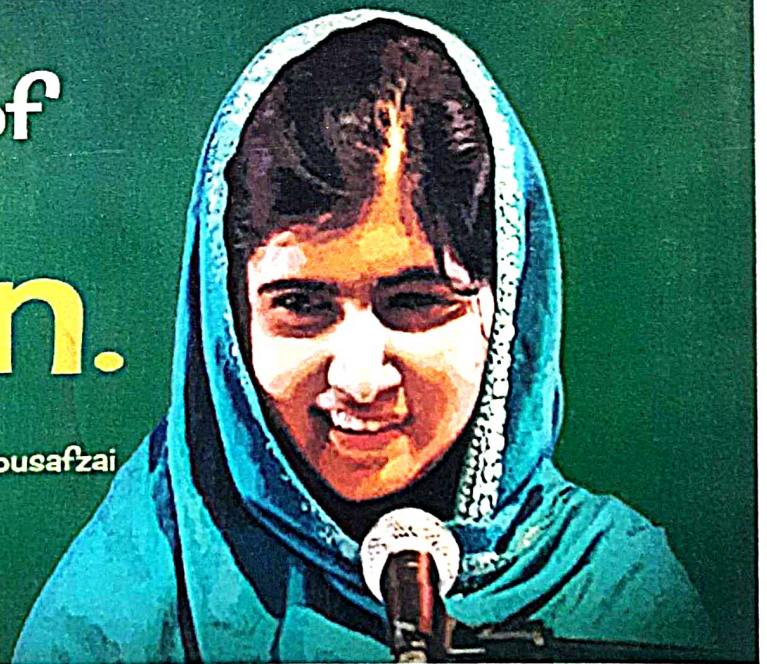
Part - I

I believe  
in the power of  
the voice of  
**women.**

-Malala Yousafzai

**Editor**

**Dr. Vinod Bairagi**



**AJATNA PRAKASHAN**

**Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University,  
Aurangabad**



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**Women Empowerment : Issues & Challenges**  
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**2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015**

**PROCEEDINGS**

**Part - I**

Editor  
**Dr. Vinod Bairagi**



**Ajanta Parkashan,**  
Jaisingpura, Aurangabad.

अध्यक्ष  
प्रा. आर. जी. शर्मा  
सचिव  
इ. वाय. शिंदे

**Printed by**

Ajatna Computer, Near University Gate, Jaisingpura, Aurangabad.

**Published by :**

Ajatna Prakashan, Near University Gate, Jaisingpura, Aurangabad.

Cell No. : 9579260877, 9822620877

Ph. No. : (0240) 2400877, 6969427

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www.ajantapublishing.com

**ISBN : 978-93-83587-18-6**

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# An Overview : Empowerment of Rural Women in Agriculture Sector in Maharashtra

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## Abstract

Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy specially of Maharashtra. And women contribute in the field of agriculture & allied sector, food security and this role has proved these are the backbone of agriculture sector. Jawarlal Nehru says, "you can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women". Therefore women empowerment is essential. Rural women play a vital role in agriculture & allied sector. But there have need of education & training programmes and also gender equality through society because by constitution it got. There have less awareness about micro finance among women. Overall this study is the way of defining, challenging & overcoming obstacles in her life through which she increase her ability to shape her life.

## Introduction

India is an agricultural country. Agriculture is the main occupation of India from thousand of the year. Agriculture is vital source of economic assistance and all round progress of our country. The Indian agriculture and allied sectors contributed approximately 13.9% of country's GDP during the year 2013-2014 & employs just a little less than 50 percent of the country's workforce. It is a most significant part of Indian economy. The agricultural sector of India has occupied almost 43 percent of India's geographical area. The net sown area is 141.6 million hectares out of 328.7 million hectares total geographical area of the country. The net irrigated area is 63.6 million hectares.

The Green revolution came into existence with the aim to improve the agriculture in India. This concept has strengthened the country's economy and simultaneously, it is leading to self-sufficiency in food production with the same rate of progress in agriculture.

### Agriculture sector in Maharashtra

Maharashtra is one of the most important states of India given its size and contribution to the nation's income and wealth. Agriculture is the mainstay of the state of Maharashtra. It is the main occupation of the people. Total 308 lakh hectares land in Maharashtra. Out of that 2/3 means approximately 225.6 lakh hectares of land is under cultivation. Again out of that approximately 80 to 85% land has arable type of farming, whereas 16% area has horticultural farming. Maharashtra is a state leading in drip irrigation, 60% of India's drip irrigation system is found in Maharashtra alone. 58% of the state's population of ten crore live in the rural area & around 55% of the population is dependent upon agriculture. The Maharashtra agriculture sector accounts for 16.86 percent of Maharashtra's gross domestic product (GDP).

The proportion of total 308 lakh hectares land usage in Maharashtra

No.	Particulars	Areas (In lakh Hactares)	Percentage
1	Net area sown	174.80	56.80
2	Waste land	25.30	8.30
3	Forest land	52.10	16.90
4	Other uncultivated land	24.20	7.90
5	Land not available for cultivation	31.30	10.10

(Source: MNS)

Typically, 4 types of agriculture can be identified in the state as follows-

Rain-fed agriculture, Irrigated agriculture, Step or Terrace farming & shifting cultivation.

Both food crops & cash crops are grown in the state, these are mangoes, grapes, bananas, oranges, wheat, rice, jawar, bajra, pulses and groundnut, cotton, sugarcane, turmeric, tobacco respectively. The productivity of some of the food crops such as wheat, paddy & cash crops such as cotton has however remained low.

Proportion of crops in Maharashtra (in '000 tones)

Crops	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Total Cereals (A)	242197.1	238782.3	243433.4
Total Pulses (B)	17088.9	18342.5	19772.4
Food grains (A+B)	259285.9	257124.7	263205.9
Total Oilseeds	29798.6	28977.7	32983.0
Non Food grains	57253.4	55.399.8	566511.7

(Source: DAC)

## Proportion of Population of Maharashtra with Rural, Urban &amp; Agriculture sector

Particular	Maharashtra	Urban	Rural	Rural Women in Agriculture Sector
Male	5,82,43,056	2,67,04,022	3,15,39,034	
Female	5,41,31,277	2,41,14,237	3,00,17,040	77,00,259
Total	11,23,74,333	5,08,18,259	6,15,56,074	

(Source: Census 2011)

### Needs & Significance of the study

The need of this study is to focus on empowerment of rural women in agriculture sector in Maharashtra. Because of women are involved in all aspects of agriculture, from crop selection to land preparation, to seed selection, planning, weeding, pest control, harvesting, crop storage, handling, marketing and processing. Women has to completely perfect in this sector with knowledge and physically.

The significance of this study is to empowerment of women for generating employment, self-employment, entrepreneurship, serves our farming community, agricultural development, family developments & contributes in the economic development of the state and country.

### Objectives of the study

- 1) To study the empowerment of rural women in agriculture sector in Maharashtra.
- 2) To know the women are the backbone of agriculture sector.
- 3) To study of Govt. programmes for empowerment of women.

### Research Methodology

This study is based on secondary data. It is collected from books, Magazines, journals, articles, research papers, internet, agriculture reports, other publications, etc.

### Rural Women in Agriculture Sector

The women are the backbone of agricultural workforce and play a very vital role in the contribution of economy. Also after limited productive resources and employment opportunities. For holding back their capacity to improve their lives and to better contribute to the economic growth, food security and sustainable development of their communities and countries. Rural women report more experiences of physical abuse than urban women. The jobs of rural women who are employed tend to be shorter term, more precarious and less protected than those of rural men and urban people. In comparison of work hours, women's are works more than men's. That illustrates women's significant contribution to agricultural production. They contribute as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs. Present study report that the majority of the state's farmers are women and they cover a wide variety of roles. Women face greater difficulties and constraints than their male counterparts with regards to land ownership, access to credit, markets, technology, seeds, water, information & education and other services.

They perform numerous labour intensive jobs such as weeding, grass cutting, hoeing, picking, separation of seeds from fiber, cotton stick collections, etc. Women face difficulties in searching of fire wood as a fuel for cooking, fetching water, clean drinking water, washing cloth, care of children & adult, farm activity, other activity like milk processing, sanitation of house, preparation of ghee are also carried out by the women. In this condition the major thing is that there have lot of pressure of lot of work activities to women but also we not listen or seen anywhere women do suicide. This is the major thing. Farmer suicides but women not do that, she has ability to face the condition & strive for family surviving.

### **Empowerment of Women**

It involves many things such as economic opportunity, economically independent, self-reliant social equality and personal rights, agenda of gender equality, increased self esteem, participate in the development activities & in the process of decision making. Women are deprived of these human rights, often as a matter of tradition.

### **Historical Background**

The concept of empowerment of women and women rights came into being in 20th century. Nowadays position of women is changing time to time. In the history of India, some social reformers like Guru Nanak, Rajaram Mohan Rai, Savitribai Phule, Jainism, Pandita Rama Bain, Ishwarchandra Vidya Sagar and others who devoted their life for the welfare & development of women. It is not that the Britishers nothing done anything for developing the condition of women, with the help of some laws such as "Abolition of practice of Sati". "Widow Remarriage Act 1856, etc. After Independence came the real change in the form of "Constitution of India". It guarantees equality to women according to article no. 14 & women got voting right also.

### **Need of Empowerment of Women**

In rural areas, women are generally not perceived to have any meaningful income generation capacity and hence they are relegated mainly to household duties and cheap labor. Women responsibilities are only related with Kitchen, Kids and Knitting. Without the power to work and earn a good income, their voices are silenced. Even in matters of sex and child bearing, women often do not have the ability to oppose the wishes of their men. Here comes the question, how it is possible to empower women? when in a society where men control the destiny of women. Here in rural area this attitude of society has to be changed; both men & women begin to respect and accept the contribution of women. Now in India has equal status of women with men as per constitutional and legal provision. But the Indian women have come a long way to achieve the present positions. There have various schemes of state & central government to empower the women. But there are discriminated & marginalized to women at every level of the society. Like social, political & economic participation, access to education and also reproductive healthcare.

### **Need of Govt. Schemes & rights for empowerment of Women**

Women are found very poor in agriculture knowledge, healthcare (weak to work), access education, economic condition, consume less food but work more, & other social factors affect on mentality of women



like dowry, kidnapping, rape cases, other harassment. Therefore there have need of laws, rights & schemes to women for their security and empowerment, but also have need of strict implementation of these.

### **Agricultural Departments & Programmes**

ICAR means Indian Council of Agricultural Research is an autonomous organization under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India. ICAR is the apex body for coordinating, guiding and managing research & education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country. With over 99 ICAR institute and 66 agricultural universities spread across the country this is one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra work under ICAR. It is providing lot of services as an institution for vocational training at the grass root level to farmers, farmwomen, rural youth with emphasize on "learning by doing" for generating self-employment, entrepreneurship. Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Krishi Vikas Mandal, Rashtriya Mahila Kosh, Mahila Samridi Yojana, Indira Mahila Yojana, Department of Women & Child Development, National Women's Commission & State Women's Commissions for empowerment of women in society & agriculture sector. Maharashtra implement women policy & engendering the budget by establishing separate "Women & child Development" department, 'Employment Guarantee scheme'. FDI up to 100% is permitted under the automatic route in the under mentioned activities viz., floriculture, horticulture, development of seeds, animal husbandry, pisciculture, aquaculture and cultivation of vegetables and mushrooms, under controlled conditions and services related to agro and allied sectors. SHG's have paved the way for economic independence of women. But also has to make awareness of women's regarding that.

### **Steps for Empowerment of Women in Agriculture Sector**

- Promoting education & agricultural knowledge of women
- Prohibition & elimination of violence against women & reduce the incidence of early marriage, Govt. should make transparent act about safety, security, wages & incentives.
- Women's rights & Gender equality in rural areas
- Credit and Savings Mobilization & Establishment of linkages
- Organize credit camps in village & educate about banking system to women for agricultural credit supply
- Group Development & Capacity Building program for increased economic opportunity
- Arrange the seminar, workshop regarding the problems of agriculture sector
- Formulation of agricultural, monetary, commercial & economic policies.
- Training of life, vocational, entrepreneurial & make employment readiness
- Govt. organization & NGO's should work effectively at every level of rural area from national & international level

- The state has to be prepare schemes & programmes in budgets for agriculture sector & also increase funding for family planning
- Established Krishi Vigyan Kendra at every taluka's for arrange training programmes & follow new agricultural technologies for increasing productions.
- Promotion & establishment of microfinance for women and also make awareness about it like SHG's, & income generation activity, it supports in agriculture sector to women.
- Introduce agro based industries to women & implement mechanization in agriculture
- There should fulfillment of esteem needs of women in agriculture sector.
- Educate about water resources & agriculture management
- Healthcare & reproductive facilities, safety & security
- Distribution of land to the landless women
- Investment in w omen's capacities to ensure more equitable access to assets & services like credit, innovation, land, financial services, technology, markets & training and these effects will made on strengthen women's rights & potential & made a win-win solution.

### Conclusion

Real India means rural India. A few numbers of women have been able to establish their potentialities. Therefore, each and every should be careful to promote the women statuses.

Govt. & Agricultural departments must facilitate training, education, safety, security to rural women. Mahatma Gandhi says, "If villages perish, India will perish". Here women are less educated, less empowered & education plays an important role in bringing about awareness on women's rights. Govt. fight for women empowerment no doubt about that, it has many weapons like Acts, Rules, Regulations, Policies, Programmes & Departments in agriculture sector etc. but should strictly implementation of these, then we achieved women empowerment in all sector.

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