

Economic and Social survey in Mandawar Village

Topics of Research

1. Poverty
2. Gender Inequality
3. Unemployment
4. Menstrual Practices

The process

An extensive research was conducted by the students of Humanities and commerce of class 11 of Pallavan School on the above said topics. For the purpose, basic research tools were prepared by the students with the help of the teachers. The questionnaires included questions on current situation, reasons and way to improvement on above social problems. The students developed a hypothesis before the research that only the economic factors are not responsible for poverty, unemployment, gender based inequality and Dangerous menstrual practices rather social forces also play important roles in the above foresaid social problems. Then the students' responsibility was to test the hypothesis based on personal interaction with the community of all class, caste and other social background.

Sampling

The random clustered sampling method was used where the students were guided to interview people whosoever was available randomly and also to try to ensure that 50 per cent of the people belong to each gender and of different classes. 25 people for each of the above social problems were contacted and interview was completed.

Key Findings:

Poverty and unemployment

Most of the people are of the opinion that most important reason of poverty is either unemployment or underemployment. Some people also blamed the education system for poverty as they thought that when the rural rich people or students belonging to big farmer families get higher education, they get either government jobs or involve in economic activities other than agriculture. Since, they own most of the lands, they quit agriculture and at the same time, they do not sell the lands. This impacts the families of agriculture labours as they lose their employment as they earned their livings by working on the fields which are now barren resulting in increase of poverty in the area.

Another important issue which came as per most of the people is government's inability to fight the increasing rate of unemployment. Of people from the poor family get educated and do not get jobs, they are not ready to do odd jobs forcing the family to face extreme poverty. It might be a disturbing statement, but many of the respondents said that everyone should not get higher education as if they do not get jobs, they won't do labour work.

One of the reasons according to most of the respondents is heavy pressure of population. According to them the government is unable to meet the employment demand of rising

population. Some people were also of the view that capital deficiency on behalf of the rural people is also one of the reasons of poverty and unemployment. The loaning system of the banks is also not so flexible so that poor people get benefitted and start their own enterprise. Apart from that the people are of the opinion that the government is also not able to control the price of daily commodities forcing the people to invest more resulting in poverty.

Some of the people are also of the opinion that the rich people are being richer and poor are being poorer. Two of the respondents gave very responsible statement as according to them the social structure of our country is full of outdated traditions and customs like caste system, laws of inheritance and succession. These hamper the growth of economy.

Other reasons as stated by the people

Improper use of Natural Resources:

India has large natural resources like iron, coal, manganese, mica etc. It has perennial flowing rivers that can generate hydroelectricity. Man power is abundant. But these sources are not put in proper use

The means of transport and communication have not been properly developed. The road transport is inadequate and railway is quite less. Due to lack of proper development of road and rail transport, agricultural marketing is defective. Industries do not get power supply and raw materials in time and finished goods are not properly marketed.

Loss of small-scale/cottage industries

Industrial development has made cottage and small-scale industries considerably less economically attractive, as they do not offer the economies of scale generated by large-scale mass production of goods. Oftentimes the demand for cheap, mass-produced goods outweighs the desire for goods that are handcrafted by those with very specific skill and expertise. The result is that cottage and small-scale industry have significantly declined, and artisans have become unemployed as a result.

Seasonality of agricultural occupations

Agriculture offers unemployment for a large segment of the population, but only for several months out of the year. The result is that for a considerable portion of the year, many agricultural workers lack needed employment and income. More stable sources of income are essential to permit fulfilment of basic needs.

Gender Inequality

Questions on causes, impacts and address the issue of gender inequality were also asked with several respondents. As in Indian context, gender inequality refers to health, education, economic and political inequalities between men and women. The various reasons and impacts as stated by the respondents are as follows:

Most of the respondents stated that the root cause of gender inequality in India is patriarchal system and that cannot be eliminated in centuries to come. The traditional patrilineal joint

family system confines women's roles mostly to the domestic sphere, allocating them to a subordinate status, authority and power compared to men. Some of the respondents were also of the view that most of the women are not aware of their basic rights and capabilities and this is also one of the reasons for gender inequality. In addition to that, almost all the respondents were of the view that the social stigma that women are housekeepers and should be confined to the four walls of the house is perhaps a viable cause of gender disparity.

Regarding impact, most of the respondents said that gender discrimination not only disturbs the woman and girls, but it impacts the whole family and the society as a whole. Since, the gender inequality in India starts at an early age, this impacts the behaviour of the children also. In addition, most of the respondents were also of the view that gender inequality is also one of the major causes of violence against women, low income of the women, lack of opportunities, lack of health care, lack of education especially higher education and so many other issues.

Regarding the way to address the gender inequality, most of the respondents said that most important tool to eradicate gender inequality is educating the young generation, especially the boys and young adults in addition to matured people. Some of the respondents gave really good suggestion like we should start talking in the issue with the young people and on each front, in schools, colleges etc.

Menstrual Practices

With regard to this, we did a survey keeping in mind the current scenario of the issue. It was very disturbing to learn that out of 20 women contacted; only two of the women accepted that they use sanitary pads. The remaining of women uses either old clothes or several other issues. Since most of the respondents belonged to poor families, mobility of the women is not an issue as they need to work to help their families, they cook food and do all the household activities. When asked the reason why they use old dirty cloths, most of the women said that the sanitary napkins are either not available at the Anganwadi or even if it is available; the centre is not always open.

Conclusion

Poverty, unemployment and gender discrimination are issues which are being discussed since centuries. The government and other social organizations are trying their best to eradicate poverty or address the issue of unemployment and gender based discrimination. However, most important and alarming situation is the menstrual practices of the women. Since, we did an empirical investigation; we were shocked to learn the current situation. We are in the 21st century and India is claiming to be a part of developed country, but the condition of women is really shameful for us. After the survey, we did an informal survey with the women of other villages and found that most of the poor women use dirty used cotton, polyester or any cloth. We also discussed the issue with some gynecologists and learnt that most of the diseases of the young girl and even married women are related to infection caused to unclean cloths used during menstruation.



