

2.1 The changing patterns in the role of women in the field of agriculture of rural Sri Lanka

A.H.M.S.N. Abeysinghe¹

ABSTRACT

The contribution of the male in agriculture was higher than women's in the traditional Agro-economic system in Sri Lanka. In this context the role of the traditional women was exclusively looking after children and bringing them up. But the role of traditional woman has become more complex because of the social change in social, economic, cultural and political processes in the society.

The status and role of the traditional women has changed with the social change and this condition has highly influenced for the creation of role conflict in the family. As the side effect of this changing situation; unemployment, poverty and domestic violence were the major issues they had to face in their life. The women used to make a dynamic contribution to the agro-economic society with particularly regard to wellbeing of her family. In this context, the women had to play major role to stabilize and strengthen family economy.

The major objective of this study was to evaluate the contribution of women in the rural agro-economic system; To identify the differences between the role of rural and modern women, To study the contribution of women with regard to the rising of economic status in her family were the other objectives of this study.

Survey method and functional method were used as the research method. Primary data was collected through observations and interviews. Kotawehera Secretariat Division in Kurunegala district was selected as the research area and 10 Graqma Niladari Divisions (GNDs) were selected out of 31 GNDs and 10 families were selected in one GND, Totally 100 families were investigated.

The modern rural woman was able to make a great contribution for the agro-economic system in her family and she was able to achieve specialization in a range of agricultural activities. The data revealed that the rural women empowerment should be enhanced for the social development in Sri Lanka.

Key words; Rural agriculture, Women role, Women empowerment, Social development

1. Department of Sociology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka