

Research Paper

Exploring Challenges and Consequences for Rural Working Women affected by Moutana

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ABSTRACT

Background-Rural working women are generally involved in the agriculture and some other activities like making brooms, wooden baskets, making pots etc. such type of employment helps them to lead an independent life and somehow they support their families too. Work life balance among such females is also difficult. The situation becomes more miserable when they are affected by the peculiar tribal tradition 'moutana'. Moutana is a tradition which is still prevalent in the tribal sub plan area of Udaipur, Rajasthan. Those who are suspected to be the victims are forced to leave the village as well as have to pay the blood money as compensation. **Objective-** Aim of the present research paper is to explore the challenges and consequences for the rural working women affected by moutana. **Methodology-** The locale of the present study was confined to the Kotda block of Udaipur district, Rajasthan. The semi structured interview method was used to collect the data. **Thematic analysis in Qualitative analysis was done.** **Result and Discussion-** Results indicated that rural working women have to face dual adverse effects. On one hand they have to lose their employment and on the other the child rearing, daily living, safety and security, quality of life, independence become more challenging for them.

Keywords: *Mautana, Tribal, Rural Working Women*

Working women are those who work tirelessly to fulfill their dynamic responsibilities at work as well as life. The continuous process of gaining the best equilibrium is not easy. The working woman is always in the role of superwomen. She continuously put in efforts to achieve the goals of their job as well as their home. Agrawal (2024) stated that the wells of gender inequality are deep rooted in societal norms. For women tireless efforts are required to achieve the goals like job targets, household duties, child rearing and many more. Kaur (2020) stated that rural working women have dual role, dual burden of home and work along with the household responsibilities. The financial demands are increasing day by day. Rural working women are under stress either at home or at workplace. Sometimes she successful develops the support mechanism and come out with flying colours but many times it is not possible for her to manage all the issues and problems. Issues of rural working women are more crucial and more challenging. Kanyagui et al (2023) studied livelihood challenges faced by women in rural India through

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participatory action research. Findings indicated that mainly rural working women have to face the challenges like need of entrepreneurial skills, low earnings and limited access to land and capital. Moutana is a peculiar tribal tradition in which the affected families are compelled to leave their places and are forced to lead a miserable life. Working women are most effected ones in such case. Pathak (2023) stated that Rajasthan's Mautana tradition is the key issue in tribal sub plan areas. Due to this tradition the tribal community people have to face many injustice. The accused of Mautana and similar tradition Chadotra are affecting the lives of the tribal people. The rural working women somehow manages to earn their bread and butter by involving themselves in the agriculture activities, broom making, pot making, wooden basket making etc. but when they are compelled to leave their animals, household etc. on a very short notice then this life threatening episode of mautana leaves so many negative consequences on them. Kumar (2021) studied tribal justice system Mautana in Garasia and Bhil communities. The findings suggested that these communities still practice the tribal tradition Mautana in which the compensation for death is being asked from the suspected person in cash. When not provided the whole community of the suspected have to bear the adverse consequences including destroy or damage to property and even threat to life. Their houses, animals, crops are burnt in rage. Their inaudible cry is not heard and noticed by anyone. The need of the hour is to understand the miserable condition of the rural working women living in tribal sub plan areas.

Objective

Aim of the present research paper is to explore the challenges and consequences for the rural working women affected by moutana.

METHODOLOGY

The locale of the present study was confined to the Kotda block of Udaipur district, Rajasthan. Snowball Sampling was used to find out the families affected by Moutana. With the help of chaining method affected families were traced living in miserable condition in Sirohi. The semi structured interview method was used to collect the data. Interviews were conducted in regional language to overcome the language barrier. Using case analysis method the challenges and consequences of Moutana for the rural working women were explored. Thematic analysis was done for Qualitative analysis to understand the miserable condition of rural working women affected by Moutana. For the thematic analysis interview scripts were read and reread many times then initial coding was done. Broader patterns of themes are identified from the codes. Themes were reviewed against codes and data to refine them. Finally findings were written with evidence support for gaining rich insights into the qualitative data to uncover the nuanced meaning and perspectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thematic analysis indicates that the episodes of mautana badly affect the work life balance of the rural working women as they are left with no financial support and the economic independence. To find out Bio-psycho-social perspective of the notion Maslow's Need Hierarchy was considered as foundation. This talks of five needs in every individual which are the combination of basic needs, psychological needs and self fulfillment needs. The physiological needs consist of need for food, water, warmth and rest. Second is related to safety needs, third one is considered as Belonging and love needs. Fourth are Esteem needs which talks of prestige and feeling of accomplishment. Fifth and the highest need is related to the self actualization. The major themes identified using thematic analysis procedure in the responses received from the rural working women are as follows:

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S. No.	Themes	Description
I	Deprived of Basic Needs: Scarcity of food & Shelter	Rural working women who are affected by Mautana are not even getting basic needs fulfilled as they reported that they are not getting even food on daily basis. Verbatim of one respondent explains the agony like this- <i>“khava ku kuck nahi mile kabhi khabhi to bhuko sovno pade. Bal baccha ne bhar pet roti bhi nahi hai atta.”</i> This indicates that the episodes of mautana compelled the victims to lead a miserable life.
II	Threat to existence: Life in danger	Threat to existence is perceived by the rural women when the episodes of Mautana took place. The response verbatim of a female respondent – <i>“Kutva ne aya to bhagno pado”</i> This indicates that the threat is being perceived on the life so they had to leave their places with their children and other belongings.
III	Lost employment homes, animals & Property land: Grief of loosing belongings	As the victims of mautana are compelled to leave their native place, this inhuman act leads to the loss of their employment, homes, animals, property and every such belonging which is immovable. It creates a sense of loss, grief in them. It is very difficult for them to come out of their grief and get settled again with no money in hand. Response verbatim of the female respondent is as follows- <i>“sab kuch to vatte hi chut gayo, vahi jano chava. khet vate, gaya bakriya vate, ate to kai koi ni”</i> The pain and grief of loosing everything is very crucial for the rural working women. They perceive all these as the end of everything.
IV	Exclusion from society: Hurt on Self Respect	Social inclusion is one of the very important psychosocial need present in every individual. But due to the peculiar tribal justice the suspected families, their all relatives are being excluded from the village. This act significantly hurts the self respect of the affected people. The response verbatim of the respondent states that – <i>“ab hame kund jane? Hamari koi ye parvah ni hai”</i> This agony that the village where they were having a respectful life from the long time, now they are not allowed to even enter in the boundaries of that village. If they happen to enter or even try for that then they have to face violence against them.
V	Compelled to live with lost identities: anonymity zone	Another important dark aspects of the crucial practice is that the affected individuals are not even informed about the elections, facilities of ration cards. Many of the respondents even don't have their identity cards as everything has been lost or left behind at their native

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		village. The response verbatim of one of the respondent is as follows- <i>“hame yaha koi nahi jane. Kab vote pade ab hame kaun bataye. Hamare liye koi ni bole. Koi sath ni deve.”</i> The anonyms life with no or lost identities is very difficult for the rural working women.

CONCLUSION

Hence, it can be concluded that the aftereffects of the Mautana tradition is very severe on all the victims in general and on rural working women in particular. The punishment for doing nothing is very peculiar and weird. This tribal justice should be understood as injustice for the mankind. It is threat for the respectful life.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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