

HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION SEGMENTS AND HER IMAGE: DISCOURSE ON CURRENT SITUATION OF RURAL WOMEN IN DRY ZONE AGRICULTURE IN ANURADHAPURA, SRI LANKA

✉ **K.R.N.S. Rajamanthrie¹ & M.R. Pinnawala²**

¹*Postgraduate Institute of Arts, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

²*Department of Sociology, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

ABSTRACT

Since time immemorial, agriculture has been firmly rooted in Sri Lankan civilization, especially in the rural economy. Dry zone agriculture which is characterized by paddy and highland shifting cultivation occupies two thirds of the country and largely responsible for the overall performance of the agriculture sector. Interdependent household production segments maintain the momentum of the rural society in which women play a key role. Rural context defines roles for its members based on social learning and reading. This paper examines the current situation of rural women in dry zone agriculture with regard to their footing in household production segments, with special reference to selected rural villages in Anuradhapura District. The sample consisted of 150 rural women in agriculture. Primary data regarding household production segments were collected through a household survey and triangulated by household case studies, in-depth interviews, key informant discussions, discussions with respondents' family members and participatory observations. Secondary data sources were available literature and reports. This was a cross-sectional study and was conducted in 2011/12. The purpose of the research was descriptive. Three main household production segments namely; home production segment, agriculture and farm production segment and community production segment depended on one another for various aspects. A vast array of tasks was performed by women within each of the production segment and contributed immensely to maintain links among those thus their image was well established as dependable resource. Role, role-sharing and working conditions were dynamic and persistently get redefined in the wake of progression of the social change influencing household production segments and its members. Socio-cultural changes penetrated overtime has introduced additions, deductions or modifications to alter respondents' role, role involvement and role sharing. Family-livelihood-community co-operation established through interdependent household production segments provided 'rewarding experience' that 'cemented respondents' union' with interdependent household production segments and its members.

KEY WORDS: *Agriculture, dry zone, household production segments, rural women.*