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Subsistence economy and the role of women in rural India

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Abstract

The paper explains the meaning of 'Subsistence Economy' and uses a de-constructivist approach to do so. I have also tried to highlight the role women play in a subsistence economy and how patriarchy is dominant in even a small need-based economy. It can beargued that patriarchy exists in our minds and our idea of what is 'normal', as in many societies it is not normal for women to work and on the other hand in subsistence economies women work but still do not possess the same regard and recognition as that of a working male. We have a long way ahead of us in terms of becoming a gender-neutral society and like any change that is sustainable, this needs to happen in a gradual manner and needs to start at the basic unit of our society. Thewomen who work in subsistence economies need to be provided with sufficient opportunities ofeducation, and we need to stop commodification of women to recognise the work and labor doneby them in a subsistence economy. This paper also tries to highlight many issues that women insubsistence economies in the rural parts of India face.

Keywords: Subsistence, Labour, recognition