

A Socio-Economic Analysis of Agricultural Women labour: A Case Study of Bhuratwala village of District Sirsa (Haryana)

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Abstract

In Indian society, women have a multi-dimensional role and play significant role in agriculture. Women contribute about three-fourth of the labour required in the field. The contribution of female labour is towards agricultural production beside their usual domestic work always more than the male labour in all types of land holdings. Based on that, the status of rural women is improving day by day. This paper says that agriculture creates many jobs for women in agriculture sector. Jobs that bring many household resources under women control leads to greater earnings in the family. With the help of agriculture women support financial to their family. Hence, the present paper aims to study the socio-economic status and utilization of development programmes and problems faced by agriculture women labour in Bhuratwala village of Sirsa district in Haryana. Totally Bhuratwala rural area 90 respondents were interviewed to collect the primary data. In the survey it is noted that most of the rural women are uneducated, unskilled and tradition bounded, therefore their productive capacities are also low, and counted as unskilled labour. Agricultural labourers encounter enormous number of problems. The chief among them lack of sufficient work, facing domestic violence, low wages for women, lack of training and wages are not given in time.

Introduction

Agriculture in India is the backbone of the country and is regarded as the largest sector of the country's economic activity. India is developing country. The main occupation is agriculture, because 70 per cent of the population is involved in this occupation. It is the major sector of the state economy, in which the majority of people earn their livelihood. Though the share of agriculture in the aggregate economy has declined rapidly during the planned development of the country, it assumes a vital role in the rural economy. Rural women play a crucial role in agricultural sector production by working with full hardwork in production of crops correctly from the soil preparation till harvesting and food protection activities. In India, rural women are extensively involved in agricultural activities and form the most important productive workforce. Approximately 50 per cent of rural female workers are classified as agricultural labourers and 37per cent as cultivators. As per census 2011.out of total female main workers, 55per cent ere agricultural labourers and 24 per cent were cultivators. However, only 12.8 per cent of the operational holdings were owned by women, which reflect the gender disparity in ownership of landholdings in agriculture. Moreover, there is concentration of operational holdings 25.7 per cent by women in the marginal and small holdings categories. Rural women perform diverse labour intensive jobs such as weeding, hoeing, grass cutting, picking, cotton stick collection, separation of seeds from fibre, keeping of livestock and other activities like milking, milk processing, preparation of ghee etc.

As per state, Bhuratwala is the gram Panchayat of Bhuratwala village. As per census 2011 total geographical area of village is 2595 hectares. Bhuratwala has a total population 5119. There are about 916 houses in Bhuratwala village. Average sex ratio of the village was 899 which were higher than Haryana state average of 879. Literacy rate of 61.72 percent compared to 75.55 percent of Haryana. Ellenabad is nearest town to Bhuratwala.

Role of women in agriculture

Women play an important and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields. Women have played and continue to play a key role in crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post-harvest operations, agro/ social forestry, fisheries, etc. They are the main decision makers and participants in various agricultural operations like seed sowing, transplanting, and weeding, harvesting, threshing, application of manure, storage of seeds and food grains and post-harvest home level processing. Apart from all these they also involve in bringing fodder from field, chaff cutting, feeding and cleaning of cattle, maintaining cattle shed, compost making etc.

Objective of the study

1. To study the socio-economic conditions of the agricultural women labourer.
2. To study the response of women labourer about Government development programme.
3. To study the problems faced by agricultural women labourer.

Methodology

Sampling Design:

To select the sample of respondents, random sampling technique is employed. In the present study a total 90 respondents are taken randomly.

Source of data:

In the present study primary data are used to analyse the objectives. To collect the data Interview schedule method has been used. A well-designed pre-tested interview schedule is drafted to collect the primary data.

Analytical Tools:

To analyze the collected data, simple percentage method is used in the present study.

Results and Discussion

The present study highlights the socio-economic status of the selected women labourers. The study highlights the responses of selected respondents about

development programme implemented by the Government. The study also highlights problem faced by the selected women labour.

The detailed analysis of the socio-economic conditions of the women agricultural labours has been indicated in table-1.

Table -1
Socio-economic status of the respondents

Socio economic Factors	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Age	20-30 years	5	5.55	90
	31-40 years	35	38.88	
	41-50 years	50	55.55	
Educational qualification	Illiterate	73	81.11	90
	Primary	15	16.66	
	Secondary	02	2.22	
Size of family	Small (1-3)	10	11.11	90
	Medium (4-5)	20	22.22	
	Large (6-8)	60	66.66	
Marital status	Married	75	83.33	90
	Unmarried	15	16.66	
Caste group	Schedule caste	65	72.22	90
	OBC	20	22.22	
	Other	05	5.55	
Types of family	Nuclear	15	16.66	90
	Joint	75	83.33	
Monthly income	2000-3000	10	11.11	90
	4000-5000	60	66.66	
	6000-7000	20	22.22	
Type of house	Kachha	15	16.66	90
	Pacca	30	33.33	
	Semi pacca	45	50	
Own house	Yes	90	100	90
	No	00	00	

Source: Field Survey

The table-1 show that the majority (55.55 per cent) of the women agricultural labourers belong to the age group of 41-50 years. A total 81.11per cent of the women agricultural labourers were illiterate and only 16.66 per cent of the women labourers have primary school education, but only 2.22 per cent of the women labourers have secondary school respectively. A total 11.11 per cent of the female workers live in small size family (1-3 members), 22.22 per cent in medium and 66.66 per cent in large size family category in the study area. In terms of monthly income, the majority 66.66 per cent of the respondents are able to earn Rs.4000-5000 per month as their source of livelihood. It is found that number of

married women labourers was 83.33 per cent and 16.66 per cent of the women labourers were unmarried. A total 72.22 per cent of the women agricultural labourers were from scheduled Caste (SC) and 22.22 per cent from backward class (BC). This is mainly because they are from low income, landless category that fully depends on agriculture for their livelihood. About 16.66 per cent of the respondents had come from nuclear family and only 83.33 per cent of the respondents come from joint family. The participation of females in a joint family is found to be more than that in the nuclear family. Analysed data show that majority of 16.66 per cent respondents have kaccha house, 33.33 per cent respondents have pacca house whereas 50 per cent respondents have semi pacca house and 100 per cent respondents live in their own house.

Table -2

Awareness on Developmental Programmes

	Sub groups	Yes		No	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	percentage
1	Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee act (MGNREGA)	90	100	00	00
2	Self-help group (SHG)	10	11.11	80	88.88
3	Swawlamban	5	5.55	85	94.44

Source: Field Survey

The table-2 denoted that the majority of the respondents are very much aware about rural developmental programmes such as MGNREGA (100 per cent); SHG (11.11 per cent); Swawlamban (5.55per cent).

Table -3

Distribution of the respondents by their mode of saving

Sub group	Frequency	
	Yes	No
Self-help group	5 (5.55)	85 (94.44)
Insurance	2 (2.22)	88 (97.77)
Banks	4 (4.44)	86 (95.55)
No saving	65 (72.22)	25 (27.77)

Source: Field Survey

The table-3 expressed that the mode of savings wise distribution of the respondents. Out of the total 90 respondents in each category, it is observed that the women agricultural labourers have savings habit through SHG, insurance and banks only (5.55 per cent), (2.22 per cent), (4.44 per cent) respectively. Further, it is heartening to note that the rest (72.22 per cent) of the workers have not any form of savings through their wages due to economic needs of the family.

Table -4
Problems faced by agricultural women

Problems	Frequency	
	Yes	No
Drinking habits problem	80 (88.88)	10(11.11)
Facing domestic violence	65 (72.22)	25(27.77)
Suffered by severe illness	60(66.66)	30(33.33)
Overload work at work palace	70(77.77)	20(22.22)
Any work during night time	15(16.66)	75(83.33)
Seasonal nature of the demand for labour	80(88.88)	10(11.11)
Take care of family properly	10(11.11)	80(88.88)
Low wages for women	85(94.44)	05(5.55)
Lack of training	90(100)	00(00)
wages are not given in time	50(55.55)	40(44.44)

Source: Field Survey

The table-4 showed that regarding drinking habit, a great strength (88.88 per cent) of the respondents opined that their husbands are consuming of alcohol regularly. It is heartening to note that the majority (72.22 per cent) of the women workers have victimized by different sort of domestic violence through their family members. Regarding illness, (66.66 per cent) of the respondents have suffered by any kind of severe illness affected by some of the illness such as skin related problems, anaemia, and foot problems. The (77.77 per cent) of the respondents have done overload work at agricultural field for their livelihood. It is observed that the majority of (11.11 per cent) the female agricultural labourers are unable to take care of their family members properly while going to agricultural work. The (88.88 per cent) of the labour seasonal nature of the demand, (94.44 per cent) low wages for women, (100 per cent) lack of training and (55.55 per cent) wages are not given on time.

Conclusion

Agricultural labourers are not organized like industrial labourers. They are illiterate and ignorant. They live in scattered villages and they could not organize in unions. In India, the rural women have been under represented in the development process but the male-dominated society never recognizes their proper contribution. Women face many problems like illiteracy and child marriage. The husband does not work properly, and if they earn also them don't give the money for the house expenses. The men's harsh the women by scolding, beating etc. so the women go in the search of job by which the can look after the responsibilities and care her children. The wages are not paid properly and the wage given to them is not fulfilled. So these are the problems faced by women agriculture labour. The study clearly explained that most of the agricultural workers have affected by severe economic burdens and there is no feasibility condition to overcome their poor status, even majority of the respondents are unable to manage their day to day life activities also.

Suggestion for improvement

1. More facilities should be provided to poor rural women for land, agricultural and livestock extension services.

2. Priority must be given to women in accessing credit on soft terms from banks and other financial institutions for setting up their business, for buying properties and house building.
3. Women must be involved in decision-making bodies that have the potential to structural changes.
4. Women must be aware regarding their existing rights, access to judicial relief.
5. The training of rural women is very important, especially with the adoption of modern agricultural technique that are tailored to local conditions and that use natural resources in a sustainable manner.
6. Creating alternative sources of employment.
7. Improving working conditions and regulations of hours of work.

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