

## Female Employment in Agriculture

**Name - Priyanka Bais**

Designation - Student, St. Vincent Pallotti College

Phone No. - 7771088964

Email Id - priyankabais101@gmail.com

### Abstract

The main occupation in India is agriculture, because 70 per cent of the population is involved in this occupation. Many women in developing countries are occupied in agriculture. The objectives of the present study is: (i) To measure the season wise employment of women labor in agriculture,(ii)To examine the distribution of woman workers in India. Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields including in the main crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post harvest operation, agro/ social forestry, fisheries, etc. The nature and extent of women's involvement in agriculture, no doubt, varies greatly from region to region. Rural women form the most important productive work force in the economy of majority of the developing nations including India. Agriculture sector 4/5<sup>th</sup> of all economically active women in the country. 48% of India's self-employed farmers are women. Women's dependence on agricultural wage labor as a source of income has also increased in the regions with the destruction of many household based industries employing mainly women.

**Keywords:** Agriculture, Women, India, Industries, Employment

### Introduction

Many women in developing countries are occupied in agriculture. Women's involvement varies widely among different regions, ecological sub zones, farming system, caste, class and stages in the family cycle. Generally, the poorer the family, the greater the involvement of women in agricultural activities. Despite women's significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields, they have virtually no access to agricultural information, services or production assets and have very limited

control over their earnings. In view of the critical role of women pertaining to the agriculture and allied sectors, as producers, concentrated efforts will be made to ensure the benefits of training, extension and various programmes will reach them in proportion to their numbers. The programmes for training women in soil conservation, social forestry, dairy development and other occupations allied to agriculture like horticulture, livestock including small animal husbandry, poultry, fisheries etc. are expanded to benefit women workers in the agriculture sector.

The agricultural sector is the largest employer of women. Majority of the female workforce (84 per cent) works in rural India. A very large share (73 per cent) of this female workforce toils in the agricultural sector, mostly (96 per cent) in rural areas. In most farming systems, females participate in all phases of agricultural production, although their roles (including decision-making and control over resources and incomes varies greatly from place to place.

## Problems faced by women in agriculture

The problems of women in agriculture are more acute and distressing manner. When addressed in a women-centric manner, the potential for increased productivity, restoration of ecological balance, for high positive social impacts like increased status, self-confidence and food security for communities which all are increased much more tangibly than working in a gender-neutral manner. The problems relate to land ownership, security of tenure, land quality issues in cases where land ownership is assured, and finally, land management issues in agriculture and the support systems are required. Any changes in land ownership and agricultural patterns affect women far more than men (positive or negative), given the existing gender roles that women are expected to fulfill, mainly related to management of the household in their reproductive roles-fuel wood collection, fodder collection, livestock tending in general, food security needs and so on. Women are equally working with men in agriculture but still there is wage difference between male for the same type of work.

## Methodology

The study is based on only secondary data which were collected from books, journals, government reports, websites and NSSO data.

Objectives of the percent study.

1. To measure the season wise employment of women labor in agriculture
2. To examine the distribution of women workers in India.

#### Season-wise Employment of women Labor in Agriculture

There are three main agricultural seasons in the study area namely viruppu (Kharif), Mundakan (Rabi) and punja (summer). The women laborers get maximum employment in agriculture during Kharif and Rabi seasons. In kharif they get employment on an average of 57.62 days and in Rabi for 54.91 days. In summer they get employment on an average of man 9.96 days. Altogether the women laborers got 122.49 days of employment in agriculture in a year which accounted for only 33.56 per cent of the total days in a year. They get maximum employment in the month of june (22.79 days) and September (19.03 days) in kharif season and in the months of October (21.73 days) and January (17.87 days) in Rabi season as these were the peak months of transplanting and harvesting. They got least employment in the months of February and May. In February they get only 0.5 days of employment and in may they virtually no employment. The summer season was the off-season for agriculture. All the women agricultural laborers under study got involved in agriculture during the months from June to January. But during the months from February to May only few of them get involved in agriculture as there was no crop cultivation in these months. In the month of February only 8 women laborers get employment in agriculture. The women get employment as an average of 61 days in March and April respective sect.

#### Conclusion

The study concludes that the female worker participation rate has drastically declined from 27.9 percent in 1961 to 25.7 percent in 2001. This means that the female workers are moved from agricultural activities to non-agricultural activities. Besides, labor is a wage differences for the same type of between male and female workers which discourages the female workers to involve in agriculture.

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