

# FEMALE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN HARYANA: A STUDY OF KARNAL DISTRICT

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**ABSTRACT:** *The main occupation of rural women is agriculture, about ninety per cent of rural women are engaged in agricultural and allied activities. This study analyzed women participation in agricultural production of Karnal, Haryana, India. For this study primary and secondary data were collected. Secondary data were collected from Census of India (2011), National Sample Survey, directorate of economics and statistic, Karnal and for primary data survey was done by using purposive sampling. Percentage method is used to explain the variables. The objectives of the study are (i) To study the role of women workers in agriculture sector (ii) To study the nature of work perform by women laborers. The nature and extent of women's involvement in agriculture varies from region to region. Women workers have lower participation rate in agricultural work as compared to males. Women have to work at low wages for improve economic condition of their family.*

**Key Words:** *Agriculture, Women workers, Karnal Region, Working hours, Seasonal employment*

## INTRODUCTION

India is a developing country and agriculture sector plays an important role in the income generation activities fifty six per cent of the rural population depends on agriculture for their income. Economic security of majority people of country heavily depends on this sector. Women constitute approximately fifty per cent of population and they played an important role in the growth of the agriculture sector. We can say that women are the back born of the agriculture sector and allied-operational activities. Women play the role of farmers, co-farmers, wage labors, family labors and managers of farms. They have been participating not only in crop cultivation but also in allied areas such as fisheries, livestock and horticulture. Women constitute one-third of the labor force and consume 2/3 of the world working hours and yet own only 1 per cent of the world property and earn only tenth of the income. In Asian countries the number of women engaged in this sector as a percentage of economically active population is higher. Asian women contribute to about 50 per cent of the food production (Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO 2011)).

Swaminathan, a well-known agricultural scientist said that "it was women who first domesticate crop plants and there by initiated the art and science of farming while men went out hunting in search of food. Women started gathering seeds from the native flora and began cultivating those of interest from the point of view of food, feed, fodder, fiber and fuel." (Bibhu Santosh Behra 2013)

A micro study conducted in Indian Himalayas found that a pair of bull workers for 1064 hours, a man 1212 and a woman 3485 hours in a year on a hectare farm ( Food and Agriculture Organization 2010). In agriculture sector women works in a day from 4 a.m to 8 p.m with only one hour break in middle. They do not have any maternity leave or special breaks (Abdul Saad Khan 2014).

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimates that women produced 60 to 80 per cent of food in most of the developing countries and they are responsible for half of the food production of world. Women do not prefer to go out for work at long distance and they do time consuming work near to the home. In India only one out of every four workers is a female.

## Objectives of the study:

- I. To study the role of women workers in agriculture sector.
- II. To study the nature of work performs by women laborers.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data is collected from secondary and primary sources. First objective is based on the secondary data collected from various Census reports, Analytical of Haryana, article papers and various journals. For

second objective field survey was conducted. Data collected through interview schedule. Sample size of 120 female agricultural workers has been taken randomly.

## REVIEW OF LITRATURE

There are many studies in India and abroad on workers in agricultural sector and problems faced by them. The review of literature aims to show the need for the study economics empowerment of agricultural women workers.

K. Chayal and B.C Dhaka (2010) conducted a study on analysis role performance of women in from activities. Main objective of the study was to find out the participation of from women in agricultural activities. The study was done by colleting the primary data. Sample of 200 female workers was selected from Bundy district of Rajasthan. Study revealed that work participation of women was maximum cutting, picking, cleaning of grains, storage, shifting production to threshing floor. Participation rate of women was affected by several factors like. Age, family condition , land holding , educational level, women participation was least in fertilizer application , leveling of field and ploughing of field and absence of women participation in marketing operations .

Dr. Roshan Lal and Dr. Ashok Khurana (2011) conducted a study on gender issues: the role of women in agriculture sector. Paper was based on secondary data collected from research papers, articles and government published documents. Hurdle faced by women in agricultural sector was main objectives of the paper. Paper revealed that agri. sector created many jobs for women workers. Women performed activities like grass cutting, separation of seeds from fiber, weeding etc. paper point out obstacles in women growth in agri. sector like unknown to their legal rights, wage discrimination. Women had no decision making power related to agriculture task. This paper suggested that women must have the right of participation in decision making process.

Khema Sharma (2012) conducted a study on role of women in informal sector in India. This study was based on secondary data collected by NSSO foe 2004-2005, 2009-2010 and research papers. The objective of study was to investigate the role of informal sector in income and focus on the role of women in agriculture and non-agriculture in informal sector. The study shows that 94per cent of the total women workers worked in the in formal sector in India. They have faced many problems like gender discrimination, low wages etc. their contribution in terms of income generation was less than male workers. This study suggested that women worker need economical and political support from government. New government measures are needed to the development of unorganized sector.

Dr. Vandna Dave (2012) examined a research to understand the socio-economic condition of women workers, their working condition and their type of work. It was carried out with 350 respondent including domestic helpers, agricultural laborers and construction workers in unorganized sector. The result shows that in construction industry majority of the migrant women were engaged. They faced discrimination at work site. They get low wages for same type of work and their poverty, indebtedness and illiteracy forced to work under unjust condition.

Anthony P.D'souza (2013) conducted a study on the status and contribution of unorganized sector focused on challenges faced by the youth in selecting the job as self employed. The result shows the larger number of workers was getting their livelihood from unorganized sector and entrepreneurs plays an important role in bringing up this sector at the position.

## ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND ALLIED FIELD

Women contribute around 50% in Indian population. In our society women plays a multi dimension role. In rural area women mainly engaged in agriculture and allied field. Women participation in agriculture is decided by several factors like- socio-economic factors, their family income, age, education, owner of field, caste etc. in present time women carried out almost field task. In some areas of India women are trained and they know how to operate machines. They are doing leveling on their own field. But unfortunately in some areas women have no decision making rights related to field. They perform all un-mechanized tasks in agriculture and carry out task which add more burden to them. Women plays significance role at home and in field. They also collect the wood from field and these woods are used as a fuel at home. Rural women have very difficult life. Their day starts from 4am to 10 pm (**Abdul Saad Khan**).

### In economic terms (Chouhan 2003), women are:

1. Quantitatively: women provide labor force through reproductive function.
2. Qualitative: through her proper care at home she improves productivity of workers.
3. Helps in improving the standard of living by providing income to family.

Activity of women can be divided into two major parts:-Market activities and nonfarm activities. Market activities include task perform by women at field and non farm sector, nonfarm activities include task like cooking, washing clothes, personal care of children, fetching water, animal care etc. in these activities female plays an active role. But throughout the world rural women have been under-represented in the development process because male dominant society has not recognized their contribution. This invisibility of women's work is a part of our society which views man as a main bread-earner. Control over women's mobility is an essential element of property structure in the economy and this affects almost seen in all community of women.

## FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

In this paper I have discuss the role of women in agriculture field. For this objective I used census of India 2011 and other secondary sources.

**Table - 1: Percentage distribution of workers (main and marginal) in Haryana 2011**

Category	Percentage of workers		
	Total	Male	Female
Agricultural laborers	17.14	15.30	23.08
Cultivators	27.82	26.28	32.78
Workers in household industries	2.944	2.74	3.59
Other workers	52.10	55.68	40.55
<b>Total workers</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Director of Census Operations, Haryana

Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of workers in Haryana including both main and marginal workers. 55.86% of women worker are engaged in agriculture sector. Only 3.59% female workers are in household industries and 40% of female workers are engaged in other works.

**Table-2: Share of Farm Women in Agriculture Activities (India)**

Activities	Involvement (Percentage)
Land preparation	32
Seed cleaning and sowing	80
Inter cultivating activities	86
Harvesting reaping, winnowing, drying, cleaning and storage	84

Source: National Commission for Women, New Delhi Report (2005)

The above table shows that 86% of farm women are involve in inter cultivating activities followed by harvesting reaping, winnowing, drying, cleaning and storage. These activities require lots of physical strength and 80% involved in seed cleaning and sowing.

**Table-3: Seasonal Employment (maximum)**

Name of Seasons	No. of Days	No. of respondents	Percentage
Kharif	40-50	93	77.5
Rabi	20-30	27	22.5
Zaid	10 – 20	0	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Source :Field survey

Table 3 depicts the seasonal wise maximum employment. 77.5 per cent of respondents said they got maximum employment in kharif season. 22.5 per cent of the respondents said that they got maximum employment in rabi season. But not a single respondent said she have maximum employment in zaid season.

Respondents get employment in zaid season only for 15- 20 days. Therefore according to the table conclude is that respondents get maximum employment in kharif followed by rabi season.

**Table-4: Working Hours in a Day**

Working hours	No. of respondents	Percentage
1-4	53	44.16
4-8	57	47.50
More than 8	10	8.33
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey

According to table 4, 44.16 per cent of respondents working 1 to 4 hours in day in field, 47.16 per cent of respondents are working 4 hours to 8 hours in a day and 8.33 per cent of respondents are working more than 8 hours. This table show the hours female agricultural laborer spend in field in a day. Along with field work women do domestic work also.

## FINDINGS

Rural women in India are the major contributors in agriculture and allied fields. They performs different type of works at field like planting seeds, weeding, harvesting, storage, post harvesting operations etc.

- 55.86% of women worker are engaged in agriculture sector. Only 3.59% female workers are in household industries and 40% of female workers are engaged in other works.
- 77.5% of respondent said they get maximum employment in Kharif season followed by Rabi (22.5%).
- They spend average 4 to 8 hours at farms and after that they do their domestic works.
- 86% of women are engaged in inter cultivating activities, 84% in harvesting reaping, storage etc followed by seed cleaning and sowing (80%).

## CONCLUSION

Women plays multi dimensional role in growth and development of our society. They are the important part of a country. Women labor work with family but women like to work independently. Women face many problems during their work like wage discrimination, gender discrimination, they get low quality of work because of illiteracy. Sometimes its very difficult for a women to get work because of male dominant society of rural India. But women select to go through all the problems and helping their family economically. The participation of women in agriculture depends on many factors like their economic condition, education status, age, marital status, type of agricultural activities, whether the agricultural production is cash or subsistence crop. The study shows that female work participation rate has increased according to NSS data. Government provides support to women farmer and labor to enrage them. Providing them subsidy on agricultural tools, pesticides, seeds. This is a big step taken by our government towards women empowerment.

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