

Role of Women in Agriculture Sector: A Geographical Review

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Abstract:

India is developing and predominately agricultural economy. In India about 70% of population is residing in rural area and out of that 60% households engage in agriculture as their main source of income. Nearly 63% of all economically activity men are engaged in agriculture as compared to 78% of women. Today there is growing realization and commitment of the global community to achieve more sustainable and broad-based agricultural growth by addressing women. Women farmers do have equal access to productive resource and this significantly limits their Potential in enhancing productivity. The present paper shows that the contribution of women in agriculture is extremely significant. It also focused on the activity done by women in India. Women also faced obstacles by them in terms of less access and income to productive resource which do not recognized her works as productive member. In this paper discussed contribution of women in productive and non productive perspectives for developmental aspects.

Key Word: Agriculture activity, Occupation, Contribution of Women, Development etc.

Introduction:

Agriculture is under performing in many developing countries for a number of reasons. Women are formers, workers and entrepreneurs, but almost everywhere they face more server constraints than men in accessing productive resources, market and services. Women make essential contributions to the agricultural and rural economic in all developing countries. Rural women usually manage complex problem and purse multiple livelihood strategies. Agriculture along with fishery and forestry activity is one of the largest contributions to the nation income. Agriculture is an engine of growth of multiple industries in developing country. Agriculture is the main occupation of the poor society beings and poverty reduction in country. Women contribute in agriculture in India is between 60-80 percent in all allied sector.

Literature Review:

The review of literature has got its own importance by any monographic work because it provided important information about the different study angles through the subject handled by other writers.

Prof. Jayasheela G focused in his study the role of women, contribution of women in Indian agriculture, main obstacles faced by women in agriculture sector, gender discriminations, attention pay in agriculture, trafficking of women, impact of liberalization, and malnutrition problem etc.

Dr. Basavraj Patil and Dr. V Suresh Babus in his article study on women work participation, gender gap, land, labour market, financial services, livestock management, fisheries and aquaculture management, women and forestry, women role in environment management etc.

Jignesh N.Vidani in his study titled Role of women in Agriculture sector of India stated about role in rice ecosystem, post harvest activities, sericulture, fisheries, pesticide management and also focused on risk of women during agricultural activity.

Objectives:

The present study has certain specific objectives. These are as fallows.

1. To find out the role of women in agriculture and its allied fields.

Methodology:

During the study both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The necessary primary source of data generated through field work and observation. The required secondary data are collected from relevant books, journals, magazines and official website of Ministry of Rural Development, census India.

Hypothesis:

The following hypothesis consider for present study...

1. Women are a key factor in the field of Indian agriculture for developmental process.
2. Contribution of women in agriculture higher than men in Indian scenarios.

Major Activity by Women

In India, due to less skilled jobs, such as sowing, transplanting, weeding and harvesting, the typical work of the female agricultural laborer or cultivator is limited that often fit well within the framework of domestic life and child-rearing. Many women also participate in agricultural work as unpaid

subsistence labour. According to United Nations Human Development Report only 32.8% of Indian women formally participate in the labour force, a rate that has remained steady since 2009 statistics.

In India, in over all farm production, women's average contribution is estimated at 55% to 66%. In the Indian Himalayas a pair of bullocks works 1064 hours, a man 1212 hours and a woman 3485 hours in a year on a once hectare farm.

Rural women perform numerous labour intensive jobs such as weeding, hoeing, grass cutting, picking, cotton stick collection, separation of seeds from fiber, keeping of livestock and its other associated activities. Details of activities taken up by women in Agriculture and its allied activities are as follows.

The agricultural activities taken by women include the following:

Land preparation:

Land Preparation is the process of preparing the land for seeding and plantation. A land, if well-prepared helps productivity of soil, the growth of weeds, promotes plant nutrients and helps in direct seeding. Generally, it takes 3 to 4 weeks for preparation of the land before planting. In this activity in Indian contest men are more engaged than women but women are not negligible for land preparation.

Sowing:

Sowing is a process of planting seeds into the soil. In India for the purpose of sowing machinery and like tractors are used more in big land and farm but in small farm and technically prepare farmers all crops sowing with women labour. During this agricultural process, proper precautions should be taken, including the appropriate depth, proper distance maintained, and soil should be clean, healthy and free from disease and these activity should possible with women force.

Nursery management:

Nursery work is more women intensive activity in agriculture field. In the nursery preparation of soil treatment, seed treatment, tray management, coco peat handling, filling of plastic bag with seeds, plant protection, plant handling, water management, saplings, cuttings, etc., these work about 90 percent done by women.

Transplanting:

Transplantation is the practice in which a plant is moved from one field to other field. It involves growing of seedlings, plants on well managed and protected land called nursery. After few weeks the plants are transplanted into main agricultural field for further growth and development of crops. These are all activity of transplanting is mainly and done by women. The transplanting of chilly, paddy, vegetable fruits etc. work by women.

Weeding:

Weeds are nature growth plant in agri field and its affect and control on growth & development of crops. weedless crop field is favaurable for larger productivity of specific crop. Any weed less crop field growth fast and strongly within period of time. Weeds are unwanted small plants that are harmful to crop plants. These are removed from crop plants by using various methods and these methods are maximum work assigned by women.

Irrigation:

Irrigation techniques are the process of applying water to the crops artificially to fulfill their water requirements. There are various irrigation methods available for artificial fulfill of water needs. Nutrients management may also be provided to the crops through irrigation. The various sources of water for irrigation are wells, ponds, lakes, canals, tube-wells and even dams. Work of provide water for crop done by women by family member or others.

Fertilizer application:

There are different methods of fertilizer applications in practice in actual field. Out of that one method is uniform distribution over the whole cropped field second is application in hands or in bands or in pockets near the plants or plant rows and some farmer practice foliar application. In these methods using low or high volume sprayers, the fertilizers are sprayed overall plants. This works of fertilizers application like spreading, spraying etc. half of work done by women power.

Plant protection:

For the control of plant disease & protection purpose, number of chemical available like insecticide, pesticide and herbicide in the market. Chemicals are used to control bacteria, fungi and nematodes may be applied to seeds, flowers, fruit, and soil. In this purpose women's are done very carefully.

Harvesting:

Harvesting is the method where the crops are cut for processing after they mature. It is done manually with the sickle or done mechanically. In today's times, harvesting machines such as combine harvesters are used. Harvesting depends on many factors like season, crop variety, maturity period, etc. But in India due to fragmentation of land, harvesting machine is not possible in smaller field. In small size field harvesting is done by only man and women power and in Indian contest this work maximum women contribution higher than man.

Winnowing:

Winnowing is the method in which heavier components of the mixture are separated from the lighter substances with the help of wind. This method is used for separating grains from husk after the process of threshing. Threshing is the process of separating grain from the chaff. Winnowing process is strong practice by women in crop field and in also market yard.

Allied Activities**Livestock:**

Women make up an average contribution about 43 percent of the agricultural labor force in developing countries. Rural women greatly contribute to the development of the small-scale and large scale livestock management. Mostly women are engaged in cattle management activities such as like cleaning of animal and sheds, watering of cattle, milking the animals, fodder collection, preparing dung cakes, collection farm yard manure etc. It is evident that the women are playing a dominant and important role in the livestock production and management activities.

Poultry:

Poultry farming is the form of animal husbandry which raises domesticated birds like chickens, ducks, turkeys and geese to produce meat or eggs for food. Poultry – mostly chickens are farmed in great numbers. Poultry farming is one of the major sources of rural economy. The rate of women participation in poultry farming at household level is central in poultry industry. Women contribute to show chicks hatching, chick handling, guess the weight of chicks, feeding hens, heat lamps, tags.

Sericulture:

Sericulture is one of the rural based agro activity with global level. Sericulture is a labor intensive industry in all its practices. It can generate employment up to 11 persons for every kg of raw silk produced out of which more than 6 persons are women. The main work involves for rearing likewise, plucking of leaves, cleaning before the silkworm are raised, getting the trays ready, feeding the worms 4 5 times per day, changing the bed, are placing the worms harvesting and cleaning the cocoon, floss removing, marketing of cocoon etc. these whole practice is done by women .

Role of women in rice ecosystem:

Rice is one of the world's main staple crops, with nearly 25 billion people depending on it as their main food. The role of women participated in nursery management, sowing, weed management, harvesting and processing of rice cultivation practiced by women. More than 70 per cent of the farm women play an important role in rice cultivation.

Conclusion:

Women have contributing in the field of agricultural growth and development through their involvement in crop production, horticulture, animal husbandry, fisheries, natural resource management etc.. Globally they contribute large percent of economically active population in agriculture. Percentages of women contribution show that agriculture supports a very high in study region.

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