

A Sociological Study of Participation of Rural Women in Agricultural Activities in District Faisalabad

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ABSTRACT

Women played a very effective role in the agriculture sector of Pakistan. They have been very helpful in every respect. They have helped the male member related to the agriculture sector. Their contribution in the agriculture sector can be traced in the livestock management, In the poultry management, in the preservation of the food items, in the harvesting season and there are many other departments which are utilizing them to a large extent women no doubt, are provided with fewer facilities as compared to man, but it is a fact which is noteworthy that without their proper contribution the lot of the agriculture sector cannot be maintained. The main purpose of this research is to identify the factors which are effects the female participation in agricultural activities. The study was designed to find out the participation of rural women in agricultural activities in district Faisalabad. The universe of the present study was comprised of only rural areas of district Faisalabad. First of all one tehsil was selected randomly. Then two union councils were selected randomly from the selected tehsil. Then four villages (two from each UC) were

selected randomly. At last 40 respondents (10 from each village) were selected through simple random sampling technique from selected villages. Data were collected with the help of interview schedule. The research has found that A huge majority of them had no participate in seed preparation activity and 17 percent respondents have participation in agricultural activities. A majority i.e., 70.0 percent friends had unfavorable attitude and 11.7 percent friends had indifferent attitude with them. A huge majority i.e., 97.5 percent of the respondents had opinion that low level of education among female farmers affecting female participation in agricultural activities. It was suggested on the basis of results that women must be facilitated that they may be able to establish agriculture enterprises. Creating and enabling environment that helps rural poor women and community's access to improve knowledge, skills and technologies especially in seed preparation, picking, drying, and storage system in particular.

KEYWORDS: Rural Women Empowerment, Women Awareness, Rural

Women Labourer, Rural Sociology, Women Participation in Agriculture.

INTRODUCTION

Generally, development assistance has failed to reach women in the rural areas, both in absolute and relative terms compared to man, for two reasons (1) agriculture development programmers were traditionally focused on men as producer and (2) a lack of knowledge or a false assumption about the role of women in agriculture (BOSADP, 2005).

In a globalizing world, gender equality and empowerment of women are vital tools to achieve sustainable development of society. Women need to be empowered in the spheres of life but in socio-political spheres of life as well (United Nations, 2004).

Women participation in production of major field crops has been estimated to be approximately 30% in rice, 25% in cotton, 23% in sugarcane, 18% in wheat and 26% in vegetable (Ahmad & Husain, 2004) in rural areas of Pakistan, women play a major role in agriculture production, livestock raising and cottage industry and remain busy from dawn to dusk to supply food to men in the fields, fetch water, collect fuel wood, and manage livestock (shah khan, 2004).

Women sweeps more share of agricultural employment than an in the East Asia south Asia, sub-Sahara Africa and Middle East and North Africa. Eventually in the developing country this share is on much more higher side. In general women involved in agriculture are poor in decision making, and not valued or paid for work. They faced more complexity than man in receiving good land, credit, training and access to markets. Wars and migration of men for paid employment and rising mortalities due to HIV\ AIDS have led to arise in the number of female headed households especially in rural areas of the developing world. Women can be empowered if these issues would be headed and resolved (GEP, 2007).

Rural women comprise more than one quarter of the total world population and world over they are an integral and vital force in the development processes that are the main factors to socio economic progress. Women perform 30% of the agricultural work in industrialized countries. Women help in producing 100% of basis household food in Africa, 60% food in Asia and participate 50% of the labor involved in intensive rice cultivation and they own only 2% of the land, receive only 1% of all agricultural credit and can avail only 5% of all agricultural extension resources. In countries such as Egypt, morocco,

Somalia and turkey, women constitute over 50% of the total labor engaged in agriculture: while in Pakistan, Cyprus, Sudan, Syria, Lebanon and Iraq at least one third of the labor required to sustain agriculture production is provided by women. The value of women unpaid house work and community work was observed between 10-35% of GDP World Wide, amounting to \$11 trillion in 1993 (WWSF, 2006).

Pakistan is the 6th most populous country in the world with the population of 160.9 million in mid-2008. Pakistan total population is 155.4 million with 48.4% males and 51.6% females, having a growth rate of 1.90%. The literacy rate is 55% with a significant gap between male and female literacy rate 67% and 42% respectively. Similarly this gap exist in urban areas as literacy rate is 72% and 45% in rural areas literacy rate in Punjab stood at 58% followed by Sindh 55% NWFP 47% and Baluchistan at 42% the literacy rate of Punjab and Baluchistan has improved considerable during 2004-5 to 2006-7. In current decade, the four indicators of literacy rate enrollment rate, gross enrollment rate and net enrollment rate has improved at a moderate pace. In Pakistan the total labor force is 46.9% of its population aged 10 and above, out of this 57% is present in rural areas with the little share of 28% of female. The total GDP growth rate of

Pakistan is 6.61% (Govt. of Pakistan, 2008).

In Pakistan women cover half of the rural population. Women participate in almost all activities related to crop production. Their involvement in farm work especially in the post-harvest operation is considerable. After the harvest, drying, cleaning and storage, threshing and winnowing are the main task of women in Pakistan cotton provides livelihoods to millions of people involved in its cultivation, industrial use and trade. Most of these cotton picker are women and the reason of the women dominance of women workers is that the man coming from the cotton growing belt has more choice in the labor market and the migrate for industrial or construction employment to urban areas the lack of alternative opportunities in the rural economy also leads to increase of women laborers during the harvesting season. Along with their poverty this significantly reduces the bargaining power of women cotton picker in negotiation with cotton growers. Remuneration are paid per unit of output rather than of per unit time, as in the case of daily wage labor. As a whole, women cotton pickers earning are lower than those of the male agricultural laborers like sprayers and tractor drivers. This gender based gap is due to the social perception of men as the household main breadwinner and women as its supplementary

income earners. Most of the health risk involved in it picking cotton is also common during pregnancy and breast feeding, which poses additional risk to the health of the women laborers and their children (karain, 2007).

Women represent over 50% of the world population and provide 60-80 percent of the world agriculture labor, yet some research indicates they own less than 5% of the world land. More than 80% of farmers in Africa are women, yet women in most African countries do not have secure land rights provide women with greater incentives to adopt sustainable farming practices and invest in their land and makes a powerful contribution to household food security (RDI, 2007).

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of this research is to find out the factors, knowledge and participation of female family members in agricultural activities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The study site selected for this research is district Faisalabad purposively. One tehsil of district Faisalabad was selected randomly. Two union councils were selected randomly. Then four villages two from each UC were selected randomly.

Sample Size

Sample can be defined as accurate envoy of the population, which has all the characteristics of preferred population. 40 respondents (10 from each village) were selected randomly from the study area.

Data collection:

Construction of data collection tool

Social science deals with human nature, Feelings, emotions and minds of human being. To study all these factors it was compulsory that data collection tool was very accurate and reliable. Interview schedule was prepared with open and close ended questions to collect the data from respondents. It was structured to get all the required information from the respondents.

Interviewing the respondents:

Interview was conducted from respondents to collect facts. The investigator himself interviewed each respondent to make sure unbiased response and then rechecked each questionnaire for accuracy and uniformity because it was very difficult to approach the same respondent at any subsequent stage.

Analyzing of data:

Collected data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies,

percentages, means and standard deviations, were used to summarize different variables. Data was interpreted with the help of a computer software i.e. statistical package for social sciences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table.1

Distribution of the respondents according to their education

| Education of the respondents | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Illiterate | 8 | 20.0 |
| Primary | 9 | 22.5 |
| Middle | 7 | 17.5 |
| Matric and above | 16 | 40.0 |
| Total | 40 | 100.0 |

Table 1 shows that 20.0 percent of the respondents were illiterate, while about one-fourth i.e. 22.5 percent of them were primary passed, 17.5 percent of

them were middle passed and 40.0 percent of the respondents had matric and above level of education.

Table 2

Distribution of the respondents according to their occupation

| Occupation | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Housewife | 25 | 62.5 |
| Work as agricultural Labor | 15 | 37.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100.0 |

Table 2 shows that a huge majority 62.5 percent of the respondents were housewives, while 37.5 percent of the respondents were working as agricultural Labor.

Table 3

Distribution of the respondents according to their knowledge about livestock, poultry and crop disease

| Knowledge | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 12 | 30.0 |
| No | 28 | 70.0 |
| Total | 40 | 100.0 |

Table 3 shows that the respondents knowledge about livestock, poultry and crop disease. More than one-third i.e., 30.0 percent of the respondents had knowledge about livestock, poultry and crop disease and a majority i.e., 70.0 percent of them were replied negatively.

Table 4

Distribution of the respondents according to face any problem in looking after their children when they are engaged in agricultural activities

| Face problem | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Yes | 25 | 62.5 |
| No | 15 | 37.5 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Table 4 shows that a vast majority i.e., 62.5 percent of the respondents faced problem in looking after their children when they are engaged in agricultural

activities, while 37.5 percent of the respondents never faced problems in looking after their children when they are engaged in agricultural activities.

Table 5

Distribution of the respondents according to their work affected their health

| Work affected their health | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Yes | 24 | 60 |
| No | 16 | 40 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Table 5 shows that a huge majority i.e., 60 percent of the respondents reported that their work affected their health, while 40 percent of the respondents told that their work never affected their health. Karin (2007) also estimated that most of the pesticides are used on cotton

and most of the health risks are involved in it. Picking cotton is also common during pregnancy and breastfeeding, which poses additional risk to the health of the women laborers and their children.

Table 6

Distribution of the respondents according to their work affected their health

| Work affected their health | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Yes | 24 | 60 |
| No | 16 | 40 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Table 6 shows that a huge majority i.e., 60 percent of the respondents reported that their work affected their health, while 40 percent of the respondents told that their work never affected their health. Karin (2007) also estimated that most of the pesticides are used on cotton

and most of the health risks are involved in it. Picking cotton is also common during pregnancy and breastfeeding, which poses additional risk to the health of the women laborers and their children.

Table 7

Distribution of the respondents according to time spent in agricultural activity

| Time (hour) | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| One | 12 | 25 |
| Two | 10 | 25 |
| Three-four | 8 | 20 |
| Five-eight | 10 | 25 |
| Total | 40 | 100 |

Table 7 shows that a major proportion i.e., 25.0 percent of the respondents were spending one hour daily activities, while 25.0 percent of them were spending two hours, 20.0 percent of

them were spending three- four hours and only 7 percent of the respondents were spending five- eight hours daily in agricultural activities.

Table 8

Distribution of the respondents according to their participation in agricultural activities

| Farming activities | Mostly | | Occasionally | | Not at all | |
|---------------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|
| | Freq. | %age | freq. | %age | Freq. | %age |
| | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|----|------|----|------|-----|------|
| Seed preparation | 10 | 8.3 | 20 | 16.7 | 90 | 75.0 |
| Sowing | 10 | 8.3 | 37 | 30.8 | 73 | 60.8 |
| Spreading chemical | 13 | 10.8 | 23 | 19.2 | 84 | 70.0 |
| Taking off fodder | 20 | 16.7 | 13 | 10.8 | 87 | 72.5 |
| Weeding | 3 | 2.5 | 25 | 20.8 | 92 | 76.5 |
| Harvesting | 9 | 7.5 | 52 | 43.3 | 59 | 49.2 |
| Binding | 6 | 5.0 | 13 | 10.8 | 101 | 84.2 |
| Threshing | 20 | 16.7 | 28 | 23.3 | 72 | 60.0 |
| Drying | 15 | 12.5 | 15 | 12.5 | 90 | 75.0 |
| Storage | 29 | 24.2 | 16 | 13.3 | 75 | 62.5 |
| Selling | 16 | 13.3 | 23 | 19.2 | 81 | 67.5 |
| Picking | 10 | 8.3 | 31 | 25.8 | 79 | 65.8 |

Table 8 presents respondents' participation in agricultural activities. About 8.3 percent of the respondents mostly participated and 16.7 percent of them were occasionally participated in 'seed preparation' actively, whereas 75.0 percent of them had no participation in seed preparation activity.

About 8.3 percent of the respondents mostly participated and 30.8 percent of them were occasionally participated in 'sowing' activity, whereas 60.8 percent of them had no participation in sowing activity.

Only 9.2 percent of the respondents mostly participated and about one-fourth 25.0 percent of them were occasionally participated in 'sealing' activity, whereas 65.8 percent of them had no participation in sealing activity.

Only 9.2 percent of the respondents mostly participated and about one-fourth 25.0 percent of them were occasionally participated in 'sealing' activity, whereas 65.8 percent of them had no participation in sealing activity.

About 16.7 percent of the respondent mostly participated and 10.8 percent of them were occasionally participated in

‘taking off fodder’ activity, whereas 72.5 Percent of them had no participation in this activity.

Only 2.5 percent of the respondents mostly participated and about one-fourth 20.8 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘weeding’ activity, whereas 76.7 percent of them had no participation in this activity.

Only 7.5 percent of the respondents mostly participated and a major proportion 43.3 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘harvesting’ activity, whereas 49.2 percent of them had no participation in this activity.

About 5.0 percent of the respondents mostly participated and 10.0 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘binding’ activity, whereas 84.2 percent of them had no participation in this activity.

About 16.7 percent of the respondents mostly participated and 23.3 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘threshing’ activity, whereas 60.0 percent of them had no participated in this activity.

About 12.5 percent of the respondent mostly participated and another 12.5 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘drying’ activity, whereas 75.0 percent of them had no participation in this activity.

About one-fourth 24.2 percent of the respondents mostly participated and

13.3 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘storage’ activity, whereas 62.5 percent of them had no participated in this activity.

About 13.3 percent of the respondents mostly participated and 19.2 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘selling’ activity, whereas 67.5 percent of them had no participation in this activity.

Just 8.3 percent of the respondents mostly participated and about one-fourth 25.8 percent of them were occasionally participated in ‘picking’ activity, whereas 65.8 percent of them had no participation in this activity.

CONCLUSIONS

A huge majority of them had no participate in seed preparation activity 17 percent respondents have participation in agricultural activities. 60.8 percent of them had no participation in sowing activity 8.3 percent of the respondents mostly participated and 30.8 percent of them were occasionally participated in sowing activity. A huge majority i.e., 97.5 percent of the respondents had opinion that low level of education among female farmers affecting female participation in agricultural activities. A majority 70.0 percent of the respondents reported that their friends had unfavorable attitude and 11.7 percent of the respondents told that their friends had indifferent attitude with them. The impact of development on

economic status of women is assessed in the context of modern ideals of equality. Women are mostly involved in the production of livestock, providing labor and management but without having direct access to income generating or decision-making power on how the products are disposed. Evidently, the success of any livestock enterprise relies heavily on effective involvement of women, as they are closely involved in animal husbandry activities. Pakistani women play a very vital role in agriculture livestock besides her house hold works. They participate in all operations related to crop production such as sowing harvesting etc. It was suggested on the basis of results that women must be facilitated that they may be able to establish agriculture enterprises. Creating and enabling environment that helps rural poor women and community's access to improve knowledge, skills and technologies especially in seed preparation, picking, drying, and storage system in particular.

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