

CONTEMPLATION OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT & AGRO-ECONOMY IN MEWAT GEOGRAPHICAL AREA (INDIA)

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ABSTRACT

In developing Countries like India, the agriculture sector plays an important role in the income generation activities. In India, about 70% of its rural household still depends primarily on agriculture for their income. The Researcher has dealt with a district from a feminist perspective In Many countries, the role of women in agriculture is considered just to be a 'HELP' & not an important economics contribution to agriculture production. Indian rural women act as the most effective & efficient workforce who contribute in the development of economy.

Keywords: Women Empowerment, Agriculture.

Introduction

In developing countries like India, the agriculture sector plays an important role in the income generation activities. In India, about 70% of its rural households still depend primarily on agriculture for their income. 50% Economic security of the majority of people of the country mainly depends on the agriculture sector. Women constitute approximately 50% of the population, and play an important role in the growth of the country especially in the agriculture sector. We can say that women are the backbone of the agriculture sector and allied-operational activities. Women play the role of farmers, co-farmers, wage laborers, family laborers and managers of farms. They have been participating not only in crop cultivation but also in allied areas such as fisheries, livestock and horticulture

Agriculture in India

Indian economy depends on agriculture. It is believed that agriculture is the backbone of the economy of India. The headline GDP no. of 8% contraction does not capture the differential impact of the pandemic on different sectors of economy.

Women in Agriculture

Women are the backbone of the society and an important resource in agriculture and rural economy in India. Women make significant contributions to agricultural development along with allied and household activities, and pursue multiple livelihood strategies. These activities include producing agricultural crops, cleaning animals, preparing food, working in rural enterprises, engaging in trade and marketing, caring for family members and maintaining their homes. Despite dominance of the labor force, women in India face extreme disadvantages in terms of pay, land rights and representation in local farmer organizations. Apart from this, women face many challenges due to limited access to productive resources in agricultural production which prevent them in enhancing their productivity. Women in India are major producers of food in terms of value, volume and number of hours worked. In rural India, 70% of women depend on agriculture. Rural women play a vital and crucial role not only in agricultural production (crop production) but also allied activities According to recent study conducted by Women and

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Population Division of FAO women provide 70% of agricultural labor, 60-80% labor for household food production, 100% labor for processing the basic food stuffs, 80% for food storage and 90% for water and fuel wood collection for households in developing countries. Women produce between 60-80% of the food in most developing countries and are responsible for half of the world's food production, therefore, the role of women in food production ensures the survival of millions of people all over the world.

Agriculture in Mewat (Haryana): Haryana is one of the better states in terms of agriculture performance in India. Soil of Mewat district is alkaline in reaction, poor in O.C& phosphorus. At present cropping intensity 150%. Major Field crops in kharif season are bajra, jwar and gwar. Likewise major crops in rabi season are mustard and wheat.

Literature Review

Literature survey has been done and reviewed pertaining to the field of study. Review of literature primarily focuses on understanding the role of agriculture in economic development of a country, its evolution and potential as a tool of financial inclusion in an international context. After that literature review focuses on studies related to agriculture in India and inclusion of women in agriculture and their role in development of agriculture. Literature consists of theoretical and empirical studies published in research journals and books along with reports based on study by government and recognized institutes and agencies.

The history of agriculture in India is from the Indus Valley Civilization Era and even before that in some parts of Southern India. The economic contribution of agriculture to India's GDP is steadily declining with the country's broad-based economic growth. Yet, agriculture is demographically the broadest economic sector and plays a significant role in the overall socio-economy of India. Vedic literature of India provides the earliest written record of agriculture in India. For example, Rig Veda describes ploughing, fallowing, irrigation, fruit and vegetable cultivation. Other historical evidence suggests rice and cotton were cultivated in the Indus Valley and ploughing patterns from the Bronze Age have been excavated at Kalibangan in Rajasthan. According to some scientists agriculture was widespread in the Indian peninsula, 10,000-3,000 years ago. Some claim that Indian agriculture began by 9000 BC as a result of early cultivation of plants, and domestication of crops and animals. Settled life soon followed with implements and techniques being developed for agriculture as cited by Revankar, M. & Hanamagouda C. (2018) [1].

No considerable literature is found related to women in agriculture except work of Kumari, N. (2018) [2], who evaluated Women Empowerment of Mew of District of Haryana, and found that the women of Mewat district is deprived from different viewpoints such as literacy, active participation in decision making, political life and social life. Women of Mewat have been exploited by prejudiced society for a long time. Today, growing violence against women of Mewat, exploitation and constantly neglecting them has given rise to widen and developed a considerable variability in every walk of life. There is ample state constituted provision in Mewat for protecting women rights in the society. But, the difference between the theory and practice has given rise to steadily deteriorating the conditions of women of Mewat. Keeping the situation in view, it becomes important to decrease the gap between theory and practice of the law pertaining to the rights of women in the society. It also needs some advocacy programmes for overcoming prejudices against women especially in the rural society of Mewat.

Literature Gap

Keeping the above point in view, it becomes important to assess the role of women in agriculture in the proposed study area. But, study of the role of women in agriculture has not attracted significant attention in the southern area of Haryana including Mewat district as no considerable or significant study has been reported in literature.

Objectives

The objectives of this research paper are as follow:

- To evaluate the general demography of Mewati women.
- To study the perception of Mewati Women about their extent of participation and effective agriculture.

Research Methodology

Present study is an exploratory cum descriptive study. Data has been collected from primary as well as secondary sources. Primary data have been collected through meeting female agriculture

workers in person, personal discussions and filling the questionnaire. Secondary data have been obtained from various past studies and reports. Several studies organized on female agricultural workers have stopped short of a systematic pursuit to look into socio fiscal measurement of the problem. The present study is confined to surroundings and problems related to the women agricultural workers in Mewat districts of Haryana. A detailed study of the women in agriculture with respect to their surroundings and problems have been pursued with the help of primary data and secondary data.

Need For study- Out of total geographical area 186232 hectares Mewat / 151180 hectares area was sown during 2006-2007. The district has only 994 hectares area under forest, 22675 hectares under non agricultural use & 8767 hectares as cultivable waste. It indicates that there is scope to enhance the area under cultivation by more than 31000 hectares. Women of Mewat can also contribute to the economy of the country. So study was taken to

Discussion of Research Objective

First objective of the study was to evaluate general demographic features of women in Mewat. Data obtained reveal that majority of the women respondents in the category of 30-40 years age. Women of this age group are having maximum agricultural work burden because of their responsibility as worker and as well as homemaker as they also have responsibility as housewife. It was also seen that one fourth of women with more than 50 years of age also participate to the work in agriculture. The main reason behind this may be to provide financial support to the family to increase family income and for their own survival also. 28% of women are less than 30 years of age. Frequency distribution of the data about education of Mewati women reveals that the majority of the women (72%) were found below intermediate. Very less percentage of women were found to be graduates or above. Frequency distribution of experience of women of Mewat in agriculture and indicates that the maximum number of women have above 20 years' experience in the agriculture sector. Majority of the women (about 60%) have no experience other than agriculture. Maximum respondents (More than 80%) have their annual family income between 2.5 and 5 lacs. About 20% have their annual family income above 5 lacs. More than 50% of women were found to be married. It means girls work in agriculture after their marriage also. More than 80% women in Mewat are main workers in agriculture. About 70% of women in Mewat work more than 180 days (06 months) in a year. There is very less percentage of women in Mewat who work less than 90 days. Therefore, as far as age is concerned maximum women who work in agriculture sector in Mewat are of age between 30 and 50 Years. Education of women of Mewat found to be low (below 12 th class) and very less percentage of women have higher education. Women in Mewat work continuously for a long time in agriculture. Annual family income of most of the families in Mewat is just hand to mouth. They earn to survive and saving may be negligible. Women also work after marriage as both the families (parental and in-laws) depend mainly on agriculture. This indicates that most of the families have agriculture as a source of their income. Women work mainly in agriculture. They work in agriculture as full time workers as they work for more than 180 days in a year. Personal interviews revealed that most of the women work 365 days a year in Agriculture.

Second objective of the study is to study the perception of Mewati Women about their extent of participation and effectiveness in agriculture. To achieve this objective, data about working days and level of participation and effectiveness of Mewati women in Agri- processing and crop enterprises have been collected. As per data obtained 83% women were found to be main workers in Mewat in comparison of 74% in rest of Haryana. Out of total 200, only 112 (66%) women from Mewat responded that they participate in Agri- processing such as Purchase of Raw Material, Management, Storage and sale; while, only 54 (27%) women from Mewat responded that they participate in crop enterprises like Manure & Fertilizer, Plant Protection, Harvesting, Threshing, Marketing and storing. It has found from the collected data that, the maximum number of respondents from Mewat said that they have a very low extent of participation and effectiveness in Agri-processing in all the aspects. Similar data have been obtained in case of women from the rest of Haryana. Data collected from Mewati women in case of crop enterprises like Manure & Fertilizer, Plant Protection, Harvesting, Threshing, Marketing and storing; participation of women is less as a high percentage of respondents say that they have very low extent of participation and effectiveness in crop enterprises. In the rest of Haryana maximum women have low extent in participation and effectiveness in crop enterprises.

Suggestions

On the basis of the results and discussion, following points have been suggested / recommended:

- Education in Mewati women must be increased.
- Families of Mewat must educate their girl children so that they can lead to their being respected more by husband and other family members. Through education, women will be able to contribute more by taking up various jobs, professions along with agriculture.
- Marginal worker families should respect their women and must involve them in various agricultural and other activities.
- Women must also be involved in decision making in the family.

Conclusion

As far as social demography of mewati women is concerned. Maximum women who work in agriculture sector in mewat are of age between 30-50years. Literacy below 12th class & very less in higher education. Annual family income is just hand to mouth & savings negligible. Women work more than 180 days full time in a year.

Women participate in agreement processing & crop enterprises significantly but extent of effectiveness of their participants is not significant. Study shows that mewatiwomens do not make significant decision making in different aspects.

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