

## PARTICIPATION OF RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL OPERATION

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The development of any community, society or nation in any field either economic, political, social or spiritual depend upon equal participation of men and women. Therefore women must enjoy a feeling of equality as well as decision making role to exercise and exhibit their latent talents. They should also get opportunity to participate in all kind of activities whether it is social or related to agricultural operation.

Anthropological studies show that women were the first agriculturists in the world. When men were basically involved in hunting it was the women who collected grain, fruit and cooked for men. They also looked for domestic animals like cattle, sheep, goats, poultry etc. Throughout the history of mankind women directly or indirectly influenced the course of agriculture and animal husbandry.

In developing country like India 81 percent of Rural women depend upon agriculture either as cultivator or labourer and participate in several activities such as sowing, transplanting, weeding, fertilizer application, plant protection, harvesting, winnowing, processing, storing, looking after animal and selling etc.

Several of these operations are carried out exclusively by women only. The role of women in agriculture varies on the basis of caste, regional difference, socio-economic status of the family etc. The nutrition of the family entirely depends upon the vision and activity of the women. While women plays most significant role in the agriculture, her

participation is taken for granted in the male dominated societies.

Based on the review of Indian studies. It could be seen that the census of India estimated on all India economic participation rate of 21 percent women and 53 percent for men in 1981. Nearly 63 percent of economically active men were engaged in agriculture compared with 78 percent of women. Almost 50 percent of Rural female workers were classified as agricultural labourers and 37 percent as cultivators. The respective proportion of male rural workers have been reversed with 55 percent reported as cultivators and 24 percent as agricultural labourers.

The community development programme in 1952 with its emphasis as integrated Rural development did identify rural women as target group. The emphasis on women's role as consumers and the home science extension approach not only contributed to low profile of the programme but also resulted in its isolation from main rural development programme.

ICAR has made special effort to involve women in agriculture, not only in agricultural operation but in agricultural profession also including research, education and extension education. In the field of Extension education, the enrolment of women in the past year was not very encouraging. However now about 15 percent of the total enrolment in the State Agricultural Universities consists of girls specially from Rural areas.

ICAR has also initiated and sponsored Programme and Project in home science

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mainly with the purpose of helping rural women to overcome malnutrition, disease and socio-economic constraints involved in their development. The Council has established many KVKs in country which impart necessary skills to the practicing farmers and farm women in agriculture and allied Professional skill like Poultry keeping, fisheries, piggery, sericulture, mushroom cultivation, goatry etc. The rural women are also trained in preparation of nutritional but low cost recipies from locally available food materials, post harvest technology, storage of grains, tailoring, knitting etc.

It has been observed by the scholars that female labourers play a significant role in field and subsidiary occupation in terms of working hours. FAO has found out that due to migration of Rural men to urban areas in search of employment rural women have to carry out all aspect of work related to farm and home. In this way burden of women increases, women do entire work related to agricultural operation moreover much time is spent in cooking and serving. It has been found out that role of women belonging to schedule caste and backward caste is significant in enhancing the farm income and thereby improving status of family to great extent.

Keeping all things in view the present study was conducted in the light of following objectives.

- (1) To study the socio-economic profile of Rural women involved in Agricultural operation.
- (2) To study the participation of Rural women in activities related to agricultural operation and animal rearing.
- (3) To study the role of rural women in decision making in matters related to farming and hose hold affairs.
- (4) To study problems faced by Rural women in house hold affairs due to

agricultural operation and their family adjustment.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted to see the participation of Rural women in agricultural operation in the selected villages of Bankati Block in Basti district, U.P. Bankati Block was selected purposively. Five village of this block namely Khirati, Ghughasa, Dewakali, Shankarpur, Makdoompur were selected on random basis. Out of these five villages twenty respondents from each village were selected randomly. Thus total number of sampled was 100. Women from all caste were included in the sample. The data were collected through personal interview with the help of pretested interview schedule developed scientifically for the present study. The data thus collected were tabulated, interpreted in the light of objectives set up for the study. To measure the family adjustment of Rural women an arbitrary scale was developed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analysed in the light of above said objectives. The data clearly reveals that 2 percent Rural women are in the age group of 25-30 years, 4 percent in 30-35 years, 17 percent women are in the age group of 35-40 years, 27 percent are in group of 40-45 years, 50 percent women are in age group of above 45 years. It is evident here that of the women involved in agricultural operations are between age group of 35-45 years or above.

**Table 1. Caste of the respondents**

S.No.	Caste	Frequency	%
1.	High Caste	9	9
2.	Backward caste	57	57
3.	Schedule caste	34	34
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

As far as the educational attainment is concerned, most of the women 65 percent are illiterate, 24 percent are educated upto high school, 6 percent middle, and 5 percent are educated upto Primary level.

**Table 2. Participation in Agricultural Operation**

S. No.	Agricultural Activities	Participation		Total
		Yes	No	
1.	Transplanting of seed	83(83%)	17(17%)	100
2.	Sowing of seed	95(95%)	5(5%)	100
3.	Weeding	96(96%)	4(4%)	100
4.	Application of Fertilizers	92 (92%)	8 (8%)	100

The above table shows that most of rural women 57 percent are from Backward caste, 34 percent are schedule caste only 9 percent

**Table 3. Participation in Harvesting and Threshing**

S. No.	Agricultural Activities	Wheat		Total	Paddy		Total
		Yes	No		Yes	No	
1.	Harvesting of crops	96 (96%)	4 (4%)	100	95 (95%)	5 (5%)	100
2.	Threshing of crops	96 (96%)	4 (4%)	100	95 (95%)	5 (5%)	100

The above table indicates that 96 percent participate in Harvesting and threshing of wheat whereas 95 percent women participate in Harvesting and threshing of paddy.

As far as storage of grain is concerned 93 percent women are involved in storage of grain only 7 percent women are not involved in the storage of grain.

Participation of Rural women in animal rearing, in this regard 96 percent women are involved in cow or buffalo rearing only 4 percent women are involved in poultry farming.

The most important part of women's life is their participation in decision making in matters concerning agriculture and family affairs. It has been observed from the data that 98 percent women are consulted in the marriage of their children only 2 percent women are not consulted in this matter. 68 percent women are not consulted in taking or giving loan for family affairs whereas 32 percent women are consulted in this matter.

Consultation in matters related to agricultural operation. In this regard 90 percent women are consulted in selection of good seed,

women belong to high caste. So it is clear that majority of the women involved in agricultural operation are either backward or schedule caste.

It is clear from the data that 83 percent women participate in transplanting of seed. 95 percent participate in sowing of seed. 96 percent in weeding of crop. 92 percent women participate in application of fertilizer. Hence it can be said that majority of Rural women are involved in all kind of farm activities like transplanting, sowing, weeding, application of fertilizer etc.

31 percent fertilizer, 36 percent storage of seed and 88 percent are consulted in selling of farm products.

Satisfaction of husbands with the working of their wives at farm. The data clearly indicates that 58 percent husbands are highly satisfied with the working of their wives at farm. 39 percent are satisfied only 3 percent husbands are not satisfied with the working of their wives at farm.

**Table 4. Who take care of the children while women are working at farm**

S.No.	Care of children	Frequency	%
1.	Mother in law	32	32
2.	Other family members	41	41
3.	Children are with their mother at farm	27	27
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

32 percent women revealed that their mother in law take care of their children while they are at farm. 41 percent said that other family members take care of the children. 27 percent women said that children are with them at the farm.

Effect of farm operation on emotional life of Rural women.

In this regard 93 percent women said that there is no effect of farm operation on their emotional life. Only 7 percent women said that love and affection is increased.

Difficulty faced by Rural women in house due to farm operation.

On this statement 96 percent women said that they do not get enough time for house hold work, 81 percent said that their children are neglected. 39 percent said that their mother in laws are not happy with their working at farm.

Same way women face difficulty at farm due to family affairs. In this connection 13 percent women said that owner of the farm scold them. 3 percent said some times they beaten by the owner of farm. But 84 percent women had no problem at farm due to family affairs.

**Table 5. Family Adjustment of Rural women**

S.No.	Adjustment	Frequency	%
1.	Good adjustment	2	2
2.	Medium Adjustment	30	30
3.	Poor Adjustment	68	68
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

The above table shows that 2 percent women had good family adjustment. 30 percent medium and 68 percent women who are working at farm had poor family adjustment.

## CONCLUSION

On the basis of the findings of the study it can be concluded that most of the women

involved in agricultural operations are either backward or schedule caste. 57 percent women belong to backward caste, 34 percent schedule caste only 9 percent women belong to high caste.

Rural women are participate in all kind of agricultural operation like transplanting of seed, sowing, weeding and application of fertilizer, 96 percent women are also involved in harvesting and threshing of crop. Same ways 96 percent women are involved in animal rearing. As far as participation of Rural women in decision making in matters related to agricultural operation and family affairs is concerned. 98 percent women are consulted in marriage of their children, 68 percent women are not consulted in money matters i.e. taking or giving loan. Most of the women are consulted in selection of seed, storage and selling of farm product.

58 percent husband are highly satisfied and 39 percent are satisfied with working of their wives at farm. Most of the women (93 percent) said that there is no effect of farm operation on their emotional life. 96 percent do not get enough time for house hold work due to agricultural operation. 81 percent women said that their children are neglected due to their involvement in agricultural operation. Majority of the women 68 percent had poor family adjustment only 30 percent had medium family adjustment. The adjustment may be poor due to involvement of rural women in farm operation.

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