

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RURAL WOMEN OF WESTERN UTTAR PRADESH IN AGRICULTURAL AND NON- AGRICULTURAL SECTORS

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to know the employment status of rural women of Western Uttar Pradesh in unorganized sector. For the study, Bulandshahr and Rampur districts of Western Uttar Pradesh were selected purposively. In all, 200 women respondents were selected from 20 villages of four blocks. The study reported that rural women of both the districts had lower avenues of employment in non-agricultural sector as compared to agricultural sector. Employment of rural women in non-agriculture sector was found rare in the study area. However, in off-season, some rural women worked for non-agriculture wage earnings. The study showed that the employment of rural women in agriculture sector is significantly affected by their household income and women's educational status. The negative relationship between socio economic variables and involvement of respondents in crop production confirms this fact. Women respondents of low income group households and low educational status involved more in performing the farm activities.

Key words : Agricultural Labour, Non-agricultural sector, Employment

INTRODUCTION :

Like other countries of the world, rural women in India actively participate in many agricultural and animal husbandry related activities, besides their usual role of child bearing and home keeping. Rural households are the basic productive units in India and women play a very significant role in various activities. Being a fineable part of work force in rural areas, they do not only participate in agricultural operations but also participate in non-agricultural activities too. The type of work, which they do, depends on the social class to which they belong. With the increase in size of family's land holding, women are doing many other 'unpaid' works instead of 'paid' works. Now-a-days, with the introduction of modern technologies in agriculture, the employment position of rural women have seen structural changes. They are pushed out of jobs, which they performed prior to introduction of modern technologies of crop production, and thus they are denied the chance of earning their livelihood and economic independence. This situation leads them to non-agricultural activities to a greater extent and almost all the women of low income group families engage themselves in non-agricultural works during slack agricultural season to supplement family income. Thus, with the above aspect, the employment status of rural women of Western Uttar Pradesh in unorganized sector was studied during 1996-2002.

METHODOLOGY :

For the study, Bulandshahr and Rampur districts of Western Uttar Pradesh were selected purposively on account of having the highest cropping intensities in the western region. A three stage random sampling was

adopted for selection of blocks, villages and representative samples. From the list of blocks obtained from the each district headquarter, two blocks were selected randomly. Thus, in all four blocks were selected for study purpose. At second stage, list of villages was obtained from each Block Development Office, and from each list, five villages were selected randomly. At third stage, list of women between age group of 18 to 60 years was prepared for each village and from each list women were selected randomly in ten per cent proportion. In all, 200 women respondents were selected from 20 villages of four blocks. For collection of information, interview method was adopted, interview was conducted personally by the investigator with the help of structured schedule prepared for the purpose. Collected information was quantified, wherever required and analysed. The results were interpreted accordingly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

The employment pattern of rural women of different socio-economic groups of households was analysed. It was found that women got a total employment of 198.58 days per annum per head in the study area. Of this, employment from agriculture sector was 186.38 days (93.85 per cent) and 12.20 days (6.15 per cent) from non-agriculture sector (Table 1). Break-up of agriculture sector shows that the employment in crop production was to the extent of 115.40 days (61.92 per cent) while in allied agricultural activities it was 70.98 days (38.08 per cent). Almost, similar trend was observed in both the districts. However, total employment was higher (200.74 days) in Bulandshahr district in comparison to Rampur district (196.40 days).

Table 1. Total employment of women in different sectors (Days/annum/head)

Sector	Rampur	Bulandshahr	Pooled
A. Agriculture	184.40	188.34	186.38
1. Crop production	114.25	116.54	115.40
2. Allied agricultural activities	70.15	71.80	70.98
B. Non-agriculture	12.00	12.40	12.20
1. Non-agriculture wages	10.85	1.08	10.96
2. Trade/business	-	-	-
3. Service	-	-	-
4. Miscellaneous	1.15	1.32	1.25
Total (A+B)	196.40	200.74	198.58

The findings indicate that rural women of both the districts had lower avenues of employment in non-agriculture sector as compared to agriculture sector. Employment of rural women in non-agriculture sector was found rare in the study area. However, in off-season, some rural women worked for non-agriculture wage earnings. The extent of such employment in both the districts was almost equal i.e. 12 days in Rampur and 12.40 days in Bulandshahr district. It was found higher in lower income group households. Less opportunities of employment in non-agriculture sector may be attributed to male dominancy, inherent shyness of women and unsuitability of jobs for women in rural area.

The study shows that the employment of rural women in agriculture sector is significantly affected by their household income and women's educational status.

The negative relationship between socio economic variables and involvement of respondents in crop production confirms this fact (Table 2). Women respondents of low income group households and low educational status involved more in performing the farm activities. Singh (1968) and Laxmi Devi (1991) have also observed similar findings in their studies. Usha *et al.* (1983) have reported that economic necessity is the most important factors for female labour participation.

Table 2. Relationship between involvement in crop production and socio-economic variables

Socio-economic variable	Zero order correlation coefficient (r)
Age	-0.0416
Education	-0.4337***
Caste	-0.0396
Land holding	-0.0936
Materials possession	-0.1157
Family income	-0.5313***
Family educational status	-0.1615
Family size	-0.0617

*** Significant at 0.1 per cent

CONCLUSION :

On the basis of findings, it may be concluded that rural women of both the districts had lower avenues of employment in non-agricultural sector as compared to agricultural sector. Whatever employment they get in agricultural sector is affected by their household income and education.

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