

Women Labour Participation of Agricultural Production in Sindh Pakistan

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Abstract

The women labourers got 120 days of employment in agriculture in a year. The labourers got maximum number of days of employment in weeding (64 days) followed by harvesting and post harvest operations (34 days). They received wages in cash for all operations except harvest and post harvest operations. They worked for 7-8 hours a day. The women labourers had maximum unemployed days in summer (120 days) as this is the off season for agriculture in the study area. Their family consumption expenditure, their savings and debt position is presented the average debit amount was Rs.3100.00 in kharif . It increased in Rabi Rs. 4700.00. The impact of seasonal woman unemployment in agriculture on the income of the labourers, their family consumption expenditure, their savings and debt position .That the during *kharif* season the labourers got on an average Rs. 19700.00 as income. But during rabi they received only Rs. 18000.00 as income from wage earnings in agriculture .The expenditure on food item was on an average Rs. 10300.00during *kharif* . It reduced by 13.94 per cent during rabi 8300.00. The expenditure on non-food items also decreased from Rs. 7500.00 to Rs. 62000.00. The change was Rs.1300.

Keywords: *Women labour*, Agriculture, Consumption, Kharif, Rabi, Sindh

1. Introduction

Pakistan is basically an agro-based economy in a way that the biggest chunk of economic resources is generated by agriculture sector. Described the total population of Pakistan reached to 166.45 million in 2011-12, majority of which depends upon agriculture which remains the dominant sector in its capacity of labour absorption and in employment creation for 45 % of population. Pakistan Ministry of Finance (2012) in its overview of Pakistan's Economy reported that after much diversification in agriculture sector, it still remains the largest sector of economy which contributes 23.3% to GDP by engaging 42.1% of the labour force in the year 2010. In Pakistan's economy women play an active role. But their contribution has been grossly underreported in various censuses and surveys. Consequently, official labour force statistics show a very minimal participation of women. For example, the 2010 Labour Force Survey revealed that only about 16% of women aged 10 years and over were in the labour force and in comparison, the men's participation rate was 84%. On the contrary, the agricultural census showed that women's participation rate in agriculture was 73% and that women accounted for 25% of all full-time and 75% of all part-time workers in agricultural households. Also, the 1990-1991 Pakistan Integrated Household Survey indicated that the female labour force participation rate was 45% in rural areas and 17% the urban areas. Thus it is clear that if women's contribution to economic production is assessed accurately, a conservative estimate of women's labour force participation would be between 30% and 40% (ESCAP, 2011).

Women have been the invisible and unrecognized link in the cycle of economic development of a country. Women also play a significant role in the social development of a country. In rural areas, from which males have migrated in large numbers in search of work, many farms are managed by women, who may not have legal control of the farms and are performing their household maintenance tasks. Women in South Asia keep the rural way of life alive. They participate in all operations pertaining to livestock management, crop production' such as sowing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting as well as the post-harvest operations such as threshing, winnowing, drying, grinding, husking and storage of the products. It has been estimated that a working class village woman in South Asia works from 12 to 16 hours a day. In Nepal, for example on an average women work for 12.07 hours, 47 percent higher than men who work on average 8.21 hours. The engagement of women in agriculture is spread over a large number of activities. In fact in most regions, they perform more tasks than men. The participation or involvement of women in South Asia agriculture depends on a number of factors such as the type of activity, the crop in question, the particular geographical area, socioeconomic status of the family (S.M, 2003).

In the rural areas of Pakistan, agriculture land is owned by men and they use family labour including women for producing crops. Women are not paid but are fed, clothed and provided dowry by father at time of marriage, ornaments from cradle to grave and are not mourned as men are. Their mud covered graves are leveled up by occasional rain runoff. In recent years some families educate them so that chances of marriage in well to do families are ensured. Sindh Rural Women's Uplift Group tried to help women by engaging a number of

between 10-15 on the farm under the guidance of women Farm Supervisors paid same salaries as men and gave them similar hobs to perform. Their monthly output of two groups of men and women were being compared. The women were the best in case of mowing, grasses for mulch, collecting fallen leaves, twigs, bark and etc. Their full time employment in sustainable agriculture in the past 2 years, in preference to men has changed the life pattern of a group of 12 women consisting of one couple of parents, their daughters, daughter-in-laws and nieces. In two years since starting of operations house-hold life pattern of these families has changed. In the beginning men took away all the salaries of women but gradually women have asserted and now they are better clothed a women have asserted and now they are better clothed and say that they will send their children to the school. Man's attitude toward the social set-up in the house has changed somewhat and are a little more considerate but, time may bring about further changes (Farzan, 2012).

2. Objectives

1. To analyze the role of rural women in agriculture operations.
2. To measure the season wise employment of woman labour in agriculture
3. To examine the pattern and composition of woman labour employed
4. To study the impact of seasonal woman unemployment in agriculture.

3. Methodology

The present study was designed from and conducted in District Mirpurkhas. Primary purpose of this chapter is to explain various tools and techniques in the selection of sample, collection, analysis and interpretation of data relating to research. Intend of this study was to investigate the existing women labour participation District Mirpurkhas. Planned strategy was used to study the area, type and number of respondents without which it would be an ineffective effort. Therefore, it is essential to define variables included in the research to make it more scientific and objective.

3.1. Study Area

The study was based on primary data. The data was collected through field survey using face to face interview with farmers simple 60 households are engaged in agriculture activities in Mirpurkhas area.

3.2. Data Collection

Interview schedule (questionnaire) was used as a research instrument to elicit information on women participation in agriculture activities. A well structured questionnaire was prepared for the collection of data. Efforts were made to keep it simple and understandable so as to capture all the necessary information on family income, household composition, age groups, and participation of men and women in agriculture. This interview schedule was pre-tested and modified according to the feedback from respondents. The primary data for this study was collected through a household survey.

3.3. Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted to find out the required results of the study. Women participation in agriculture activities was measured in man days/seasons and one day consists of 8 hours. The following model was used to study the relationship between women participation in agriculture activities and a few selected but relevant variables with a view to identify factors that would have significant impact on women participation.

$$WP = f(E, M, A, D, SY)$$

WP = Participation of women in agriculture activities (man day/Season)

E = Total income of family (Rs per annum)

M = Number of adult male in household

A = Age of respondent

D = Dummy variable for Tenure status

SY = Schooling years

3.4. Econometrics Analysis

To quantify the impact of various variables on Women participation, the following econometric model was used.

$$WP = B_0 + B_1 INC + B_2 M + B_3 A + B_4 SY + B_5 T + E$$

Where, INC is income of household, M is number of adult man, A is the age of respondent, SY is education level of respondent and T is tenancy status of sampled respondents are independent variables. These independent variables were considering having possible effect on the dependent variable and regressed on the dependent variable.

4. Results

The study area was Mirpurkhas District of Sindh, Pakistan. The study was expressed into two subsections.

4.1. Age

Table 1: Distributions of the respondents according to their age

Age	No. of farmers	Percentage
81-22 years	13	21.66
23-35 years	12	20.00
36-45 years	15	25.00
46-50 years	13	21.66
More than 50 years	07	11.66
Total	60	100

It is evident from the table 1 that majority of the women labourers, 25.00 per cent belonged to the age group of 36-45 years. About 21.66 per cent were in the age group of 81-22 years, 20.00 per cent were above 23-35 years of age. Only less number of women labourers was in younger age group that is 21.66 per cent in age group of 46-50 years and 11.66 per cent in age group of above 50 years.

4.2. Education Level

Table 2: Distribution of the respondent according to their education level

Education level	No. of farmers	Percentage
Illiterate	13	21.66
Primary	15	25.00
Middle	20	33.33
Matriculation	10	16.66
Collage/University	02	3.33
Total	60	100.00

The educational level of labourers showed table 2 that 25.00 per cent of the labourers had primary education, 21.66 per cent of the labourers were illiterate, 33.33 per cent of the labourers had middle education, 16.66 per cent of the labourers had matriculation education and 3.33 per cent of the labourers had Collage/University education.

4.3. Occupation

Table 3: Distributions of the respondents according to their occupation

Occupation	No. of farmers	Percentage
Self Farming and Labour	08	13.33
House wife	03	5.00
Agriculture Labour	49	81.66
Total	60	100.00

Among the women labourers showed table 3 that 81.66 per cent women had agriculture labour as their main occupation. 13.33 per cent women labourers did both farming and labour activities. Only 5.00 per cent women house wife.

4.4. Family type

Table 4: Distributions of the respondents according to their family size

Family Type	No. of farmers	Percentage
Nuclear family	15	25.00
Extended family	28	45.66
Joint family	07	11.66
Total	60	100.00

It is observed from the Table 4 that 25.00 percent of the women labourers belonged to nuclear family, 45.66 per cent of the women labourers belonged to extended family and 11.66 per cent of the women labourers belonged to joint family.

4.5. Marital Status

Table 5: Distributions of respondents according to marital status in the study area

Marital Status	No. of farmers	Percentage
Single	17	28.33
Married	37	61.66
Divorced/ Widow	5	8.33
Total	60	100.00

It is observed from the Table 5 that 61.66 per cent of the women labourers were married, 8.33 per cent of them were widows, 28.33 per cent of the labourers were unmarried.

4.6. Type of labour

Table 6: Distributions of respondents according to Type of labour in the study area

Type of labour	No. of farmers	Percentage
Skilled	17	28.33
Un-Skilled	43	71.66
Total	60	100.00

It is observed from the Table 6 that in the study area are 71.66 percent not technically skilled. 28.33 percent skilled works. They worked for 7-8 hours a day.

4.7. Type of work

Table 7: Distributions of respondents according to Type of work in the study area

Type of work	No. of farmers	Percentage
Permanent Labour	0	00.00
Casual Labour	52	81.4
Cultivators cum Casual Labour	18	18.6
Total	60	100.00

It is observed from the Table 7 that in the study area are 81.40 per cent labourers worked as casual labour. 18.600 per cent worked as both cultivators and casual labour. There was no permanent labour in agriculture in the region.

4.8. Season wise employment of woman labour in agriculture

Table 8: Distributions of respondents according to Season wise employment of women labourers in agriculture

Season	Employment days per worker	
	Days	Percentage
Kharif	67	55.83
Rabi	53	44.16
Total	120	100.00

The season wise employment of woman labour in agriculture is given in Table 8. There are two main agricultural seasons in the study area Kharif and Rabi. They worked for 7-8 hours per day.

Table 9: Distributions of respondents according to Employment of women labourers in agriculture during kharif season

Months	Employment days per worker	
	Days	Percentage
June	23	34.32
July	11	16.41
August	6	8.95
September	27	40.29
Total	67	100.00

It is observed from the Table 9 that in the Kharif season generally extends from June to September. The women labourers got on an average 67 days of employment in agriculture during this season. They got maximum employment in the month of June (23 days) which accounted for 34.32 per cent of the total employment in the season. In September they got employment for 27 days (40.29 %). In July and August they got employment for 11 and 6 days respectively.

Table 10: Distributions of respondents according to Employment of women labourers in agriculture during rabi season

Months	Employment days per worker	
	Days	Percentage
October	21	39.62
November	10	18.86
December	6	11.32
January	13	24.52
Total	53	100.00

It is observed from the Table 10 that in the Rabi season extends from October to January. In this season the labourers got employment for 53 days in agriculture which accounted for 44.84 per cent of the total employment in agriculture in a year. They got maximum employment in the month of October (21 days) which accounted for 39.62 per cent of the total employment in the season. They got 13 days of employment in January, 10 days of employment in November and 6 days of employment in December.

Table 11: Distributions of respondents according to No. of farmers of women labourers employed in agriculture

Months	Number of women agricultural labourers
June	60
July	60
August	60
September	60
October	60
November	60
December	60
January	60
February	4
March	30
April	30
May	0

Table 12: Distributions of respondents according to Operations carried out by women labourers in crop production

Operations	Type of implements	Wage in cash (Rs.)	Number of days worked		Total days
			<i>Kharif</i>	<i>Rabi</i>	
Raising the nursery	Hand	200.00	2	1	3
Transplanting	Hand	200.00	16	15	31
Weeding	Hand/ sickle	200.00	20	19	39
Gap filling	Hand	200.00	2	2	4
Irrigation	Pot	200.00	2	2	4
Harvesting	Sickle	200.00	12	11	23
Threshing	Hand/ Thresher	200.00	4	3	7
Winnowing and sun drying	Hand winnower	200.00	6	4	10
Total			64	57	121

It is observed from the Table 12 that in the study area the women labourers are involved only in crop production activities. The women labourers were mostly involved 2, 16, 20 and 12 days in nursery transplanting, weeding, harvesting activities in agriculture and 4, 6 days in threshing and winnowing.

Table 13: Distributions of respondents according to Season wise unemployment of women labourers in agriculture

Season	Unemployment days per worker	
	Days	Percentage
Kharif	138	57.50
Rabi	112	42.50
Total	240	100.00

It is observed from the Table 13 that in the study area during *kharif* season the women labourers were unemployed for 138 days. 57.50 per cent of the total unemployed days in the season. During *rabi* season the women labourers were unemployed for 112 days. 42.50 per cent of the total unemployed days in the season.

Table 14: Distributions of respondents according to Alternative sources of employment for women labourers in agriculture

Alternative sources	No. of labourers involved	Months	Average number of days	Wage rate (Rs. per day)
Domestic work	15	February, March	30-100	150
Harvesting	20	February, March, April	32-40	250
Home industry	11	March	24-26	220
Construction	3	February, March	21-23	200
Small industries	4	February,	40-42	220
Handicraft	7	February,	45-50	180
Total labour	60			

It is observed from the Table 14 that in the study area among the 60 sample labourers activities during off season. About 15 labourers also worked as domestic servants. They worked for 30-100 days and the wage rate was Rs. 150 per day. The labourers also worked in home industries and in construction. They worked for 25-30 days and earned Rs.220 per day as wages. Some of the labourers got employment in small industries and handicrafts.

Table 15: Distributions of respondents according to Impact of seasonal unemployment of woman labour in agriculture

Variable	<i>Kharif and rabi</i> (Average in Rs.)	<i>Rabi</i> (Average in Rs.)
Income (wage earnings)	19700.00	18000.00
on Food items	10300.00	8300.00
Expenditure on. Non-food Expenditure items	7500.00	62000.00
Saving	1800.00	1300.00
Debt position	3100.00	4700.00

It is evident from Table 13 that the impact of seasonal woman unemployment in agriculture on the income of the labourers, their family consumption expenditure, their savings and debt position is presented the average debit amount was Rs.3100.00 in kharif . It increased in Rabi Rs. 4700.00. The impact of seasonal woman unemployment in agriculture on the income of the labourers, their family consumption expenditure, their savings and debt position .That the during *kharif* season the labourers got on an average Rs. 19700.00 as income. But during rabi they received only Rs. 18000.00 as income from wage earnings in agriculture .The expenditure on food item was on an average Rs. 10300.00 during *kharif* . It reduced by 13.94 per cent during rabi 8300.00. The expenditure on non-food items also decreased from Rs. 7500.00 to Rs. 62000.00. The change was Rs.1300.

5. Conclusion and suggestions

The study "economics analysis of women labour participation in agricultural production in Mirpurkhas Sindh" concluded that majority of rural women from Mirpurkhas district have strong participation in activities such as crop production, livestock husbandry, poultry keeping, food grain processing and storage, home management and handicraft making. Almost all of the respondents were desirous of having information about crop production, livestock and their preventive measures.

- In addition, the high income study subjects were in need of training in agriculture related skills.

- Credit should be provided at government level to interested women who want to start small business industry.
- Government should take initiatives to promote local handicrafts. Mirpurkhas is well known for its handicrafts throughout the province. The public sector institutions need to patronize and promote this industry by providing ample trainings.
- Skill development training programs should be arranged for women focusing on crop production, handicrafts making and interior decoration in order to enhance their earnings for quality life.
- Development of sound infrastructure can't be ignored anymore. No development can be achieved unless paved roads, hospitals and schools are built. Access to clean drinking water sanitation and electricity is a must.
- A well orchestrated infrastructure of amenities like clean drinking water, sanitation, electrification, schools and hospitals would change the fate of desert women.
- Women agricultural agents should be appointed with a special focus on rural females and to bridge the information gap between applied research and rural women.
- The role of rural women labour should be strengthened through print and electronic media.
- By engaging local community boards, training programs should be planned in areas such as home management, budget making, child care, education and saving strategies.
- Agricultural policy maker should give such type of alternative in which farmers can provided their own energy. Such as befool plants should be given at subsidized rate so that farmers can produce energy.
- The farmers of our Sindh province are mostly un-educated and lack of new technical knowledge. So Government of Sind must be positive in the farmer's education.
- The majority of our farmers are very poor and they often live in a hand to mouth position. Most of them are always under heavy burdens of debts. Government must be financial support through the micro-finance and other sides.

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