



GENDER ISSUES IN AGRICULTURE LABOUR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO INDIA

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Abstract

In India 72% population mainly involved in agriculture occupation. Because of green revolution agriculture sector has developed rapidly. Women make essential contributions to the agricultural and rural economies in all developing countries. Rural women often manage complex households and multiple livelihood strategies. But yet they remained as invisible workers. Ignorance of woman labour is the major issue in Indian agriculture. This paper looks gender issues in Indian agriculture labour like difference between male and female labour force participation rate in rural area, difference between male and female average daily earning in all agriculture operations & in principle agriculture operation, difference between male and female nature of employment (By number of full days in a year). Secondary data were collected for the research. Analysis is done the Labour Force Participation Rate is always higher for male. Nature of employment by number of full days spend in agriculture in a year is also higher for male. Average daily earning in all agriculture operations & in principle agriculture operation is always more for male than women. Woman paid less wages for the same agricultural work.

Keywords : Agriculture Labour, Gender Gap, Labour Force Participation Rate, Average Daily Earnings, Nature Of Employment

INTRODUCTION

India has a national tradition bound to agriculture fertility. Based on 2011 World Bank data, only 17.5% of India's gross domestic product (GDP) is accounted for by agricultural production. For a majority of the country, an estimated 72% of the 1.2 billion people who live in rural India, it is a way of life. Indian economy mostly depend on agriculture.

Many women in developing countries are occupied in agriculture. Rural women often manage complex households and multiple livelihood strategies. Their activities typically include producing agricultural crops, tending animals, processing and preparing food, working for wages in agricultural or other rural enterprises, collecting fuel and water, engaging in trade and marketing, caring for family members and maintaining their homes. Many of these activities are not defined as “economically active employment” in national accounts but they are essential to the well-being of rural households. Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields including in the main crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post-harvest operations, agro social forestry, fisheries etc. But yet they remained as invisible workers.

The gender gap in wages is a widely documented phenomenon. In developing countries, agriculture is typically the largest employer and most of the work force is rural. And in these countries, wage differences between males and females are commonly seen in agriculture and in the rural sector (World Bank, 2009; Food and Agriculture Organization, 2010 and 2011).

OBJECTIVE

1. To obtain difference between male and female labour force participation rate in rural area.

2. Analysis of difference between male and female average daily earning in all agriculture operations.
3. Analysis of difference between male and female average daily earning in principle agriculture operation.
4. To obtain difference between male and female nature of employment. (By number of full days in a year)

1. Labour Force Participation Rate In Rural Area

The rate and level of employment of rural labour force vary from region to region. The measurement of employment in rural agriculture sector in India is very complex. Every region having different cropping pattern, climatic condition, Physiographic condition, available working population, irrigation facility, level of mechanization etc. so that employment of rural labour force vary from region to region. Other economic activities having impact on agriculture labour force.

Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is the proportion of people eligible to participate in the labour force who are actually participating in it by working and looking for work. It is usually expressed as a percent of total labour force eligible population in an economy.

Table 1

Labour Force Participation Rate Principal Status in Rural Area		
Year	Male	Female
38 th Round (1983)	54	25.2
43 th Round (1987-88)	53.2	25.4
50 th Round (1993-94)	54.9	23.7
55 th Round (1999-2000)	53.3	23.5
61 th Round (2004-05)	54.6	24.9
66 th Round (2009-10)	58.8	20.8
68 th Round (2011-12)	54.7	18.1

Source : national sample survey office

In table 1 all given year the LFPR for male is double as a compare to female. From year 1983 to 2011-12 LFPR is slightly increased by 0.7% for male. But in case of female LFPR decreased rapidly by 7.1%. In year 1983 LFPR for female is 25.2% and its decreased up to 18.1% in year 2011-12. The major reasons for decreasing female participation are raising educational enrolment of young women, problem of underestimation, gender discrimination of women for getting lower returns from their work etc.

2. Average Daily Earnings In Agricultural Operations

Wage rate in India are not same in region to region. Despite the beneficial provision of the minimum Wage act 1948 for agriculture labours , the wages are not consistent. Many social, physical and economical factors affect the wages structure in rural India. During the peak agriculture season which increase the demand of labour leads to increase the wages. But during agriculture lean season demand of agriculture labour decrease leads to decrease in wages. The details on earning for the reference week were collected during the rural labour enquiry for each of the activities engaging the household members on wages paid labour. The

number of days to which the earning related were recorded in the term of defined intensities. The time intensity of an activity was measured in half day unit.

Table 2
Average daily earning in all Agriculture Operation (All India in Rs.) -

All Agriculture Operation	Agriculture Labour Wage Rate (All India in Rs.)		
	1993-94	1999-2000	2004-05
Men	21.34	40.15	47.53
Women	15.18	28.38	33.41

Source : Indian labour year book

In table 2 for the same agriculture operation female worker getting lower wages than male, so female worker discourage to involve in agriculture. In 1993-94 the difference between men and women all agriculture operation wage rate are 6.16 rupees, where in 1999-2000 it becomes 11.77 rupees & in 2004-05 it reaches to 14.12 rupees. The wage difference increases day by day.

Table 3

All Agriculture Operation	Wage Rate (All India in Rs.)						
	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Men	78	88.7	103.9	124.2	149	176.3	232.2
Women	57.9	66.3	80.1	97.2	117	138.7	182.5
Men & Women Wage Difference	20.1	22.4	23.8	27	32	37.6	49.7

Source : Labour Bureau

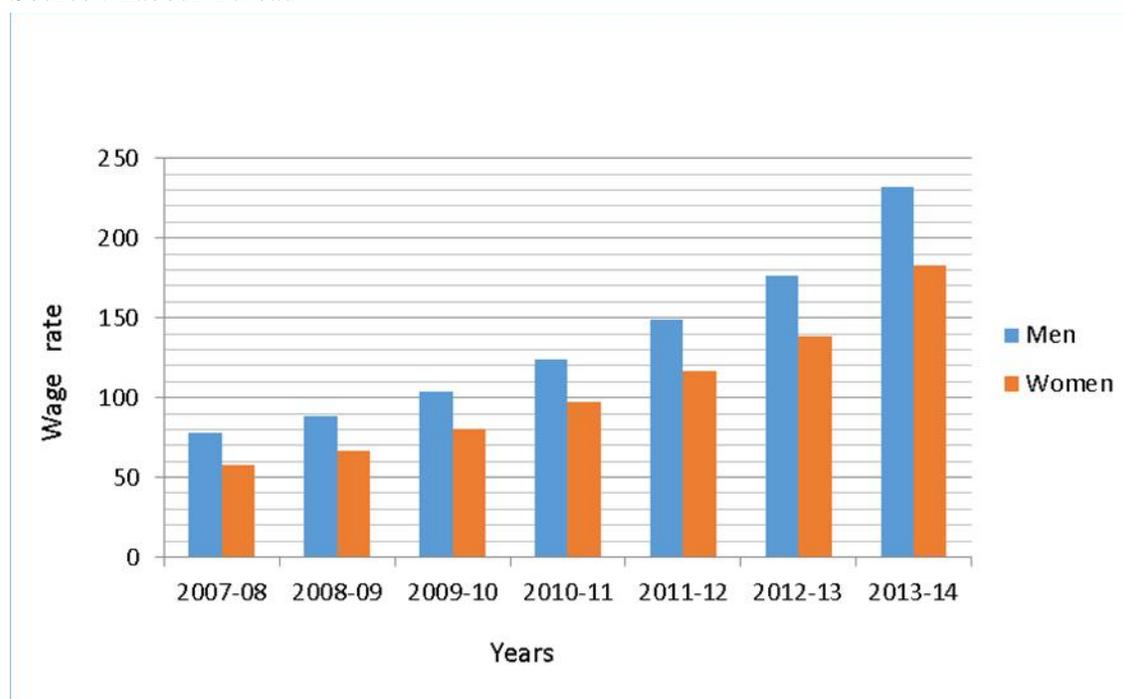


Figure 1: Average Daily Earning In All Agriculture Operation From Year 2007-08 To 2013-14.

In 2007-08 men & women wage difference is 20.1 rupees, where in 2013-14 it reaches to 49.7 rupees. According to data wage rate difference continually increased from 1993-94 to 2013-2014.

3. Principal Agriculture Operations (All India in Rs.)

Table 4

Principal Agriculture Operations	Agriculture Labour Wage Rate (All India in Rs.)					
	1993-94		1999-2000		2004-05	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Ploughing	21.17	19.85	42.36	33.21	52.19	36.86
Sowing	21.63	15.76	38.75	28.3	45.03	32.09
Weeding	18.4	13.06	34.99	25.41	41.58	29.86
Transplanting	19.85	15.34	39.53	28.59	50.85	36.58
Harvesting	20.75	16.03	38.44	29.3	46.42	33.79
Cultivation	21.31	14.91	39.31	27.72	47.1	32.86
Forestry	23.54	19.69	46.03	33.41	46.38	31.76
Plantation	30.6	22.09	58.27	43.99	67.72	53.63
Animals Husbandry	16.29	11.21	32.25	22.68	36.34	30.29
Fisheries	35.58	21.09	54.11	34.33	63.54	25.00
Other (Agriculture)	22.1	15.45	43.3	27.97	47.71	34.77

Source : Indian labour year book

In table 4 all principal agricultural operations female are getting lower wage rate than male. From 1993-94 to 2004-05 female having higher wage rate in plantation, ploughing, transplanting, harvesting & cultivation etc. principal agriculture operations.

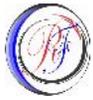
4. Nature Of Employment (By Number Of Full Days In A Year) Of Agricultural Households In India

Some modification were made in the concept of employment over successive enquires with view to generating better estimates. During the first agricultural labour enquiry, wage employment for half a day or more was counted as a full day's occupation and less than half a day was ignored. The reference period for recording was a month and all those who worked even for a day during this period were taken to have been gainfully employed. In respect of unemployment, firm data were collected only from those adult male labourers who reported wage employment in each month. Thus, for those labourers who did not report wage paid employment, it was assumed that they were self employed for that period.

During the second agricultural labour enquiry the number of days spent in a different type of activities was recorded separately under defined intensities of employment. The days of work put in were calculated by adding up to the days of employment reported with suitable weight in rural labour enquires the concept of employment was the same as in agriculture enquiry.

Table 5

Nature Of Employment	1977-1978	1983-1984	1987-1988	1993-1994	1999-2000	2004-2005
Male	229	227	231	247	238	230
Female	186	190	157	220	214	186



Source : Rural Labour Enquiry Report On Employment And Unemployment Of Rural Labour Households

According to the table 5 from 1977-78 to 2004-05 male employment days always higher than female. Nature of employment for male in year 1977-78 was 43 days higher, In year 1983-84 it was 37 days higher, In year 1987-88 it was 74 days higher, In year 1993-94 it was 27 days higher, In year 1999-2000 it was 24 days higher, & In year 2004-05 it was 44 days higher than women. This shows female having lower proportion of spending days in agriculture.

CONCLUSIONS

In Villages women are always expected to fulfill the management of the household like fuel wood collection, livestock tending, fodder collection etc. The labour burden of rural women exceeds that of men, and includes a higher proportion of unpaid household responsibilities related to preparing food and collecting fuel and water. In all seasonal and part-time agriculture operation work women are paid less than men, for the same work. So female worker discourage to involve in agriculture. The major reasons for decreasing female participation in agriculture are raising educational enrolment of young women, problem of underestimation, gender discrimination of women for getting lower returns from their work etc. So that the gender gap in Indian agriculture increases day by day.

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