

**Women Workers In Agricultural Field In
Kanyakumari District**

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Abstract

India is an agricultural country and one third of the population depends on the agricultural sector directly or indirectly. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Indian economy from time immemorial. Indian agriculture Contribution to the National gross domestic product (GDP) is about 25 percent. Women are the backbone of the development of rural and National economies. They Comprise 43% of the World agricultural labour force which rises to 70% in some Countries. Female work participation in agriculture depends on the intensity and relative growth of agriculture. This paper seeks to highlight the socio-economic conditions, problems and the expectations of women workers in Kanyakumari District.

Key words: Agriculture Sector, Women Workers, Economy, Gross Domestic Product.

Introduction

In India, one third of the population depends on the agricultural sector directly or indirectly. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Indian economy from time immemorial. Indian Agriculture Contribution to the National Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is about 25 percent. Women are the backbone of the development of rural and National economies. They Comprise 43% of the World agricultural labour force which rises to 70% in some Countries. Female work participation in agriculture depends on the intensity and relative growth of agriculture. The incidence of Women Agriculture labour appears to be connected to factors, underlying regional impoverishment. Generally in poor families, women have to participate in wage labor regardless of style care and domestic work.

Statement of the Problem

The women workers in agricultural sector are confronting with more problems, which includes low wage for long hours of work with insecurity of job and inadequate legal protection, women are more vulnerable to exploitation. This situation is more aggravating due to labored supply, more scenarios highlighting by literacy, poverty and unskilled nature of labour in this sector and so they are lacking in collective bargaining power. The investigator has chosen the topic “Women workers in agricultural field in Kanyakumari district.”

To study the reasons for the problems faced by the women workers in agricultural field in Kanyakumari district and also this study aims to give reasonable suggestion for these problems. Now a day's women workers in agricultural field are facing lot of problems like gender issues, wage discrimination, etc. So this study reveals the various problems faced by women workers in the study area.

Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the women workers in agricultural field. The socio economic conditions, problems and their expectations were analyzed to evaluate the problems faced by women workers in the study area.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the relationship among variables
- To find out the problems faced by women workers in Agricultural field
- To analyse the level of satisfaction towards their expectation about their work.

Review of Literature

T. Rajulashanthi (2009) her study “Efficiency of Women Agricultural Laborers in Rice Farming Systems of Kerala and Tamil Nadu” reveals that in general, majority (63 per cent) of the women agricultural labourers were low in labour efficiency. There is a significant difference between the women agricultural labourers of Kerala and Tamil Nadu with respect to their overall labour efficiency level. The difference was mainly due to labour attachment practices and increasing demand for non-agricultural works.

Manas Mondal (2013) in his study “The Role of Rural Women In Agriculture Sector of Sagar Island, West Bengal, India” disclose that Women participation in rural labor markets varies considerably across regions, but invariably women are over represented in unpaid, seasonal and part-time work, and the available evidence suggests that women are often paid less than men for the same work.

Arti Sharma (2014) in the study “A survey of available literature on rural women and women's work in agriculture” reveals that. The introduction of capital – intensive technologies in the agricultural sector has differential impact on different sections of people and women are negatively affected due to women's lack of access to technology the WHO's initiatives on women's health which has a history of more than three decades, began with a focus on maternal health and family planning. However, overtime, with new knowledge and understanding of the deeper issues in women's health, the vision has widened to relocate women's health in wider social context with a perspective of gender mainstreaming.

Unni, P.T. Musiimenta (2002) explores the continuity of the practice by discussing the problems encountered by urban farmers and especially women. Although women are said to be prospering in this informal sector, a number of constraints characterize their survival strategy. This sound like a contradiction because despite the problems they encounter, most of those involved in urban agriculture are not ready to quit the practice.

VijayaMani (2013) has revealed the major factor influencing the Work Life Balance of Women professionals in India such as role conflict, lack of recognition, organizational politics, gender discrimination, elderly and children care issues, quality of health, problems in time management and lack of proper social support.

Methodology

The present study is both descriptive and analytical in nature. Formulation of methodology of the study helps the researcher to draw a systematic approach for the research process. The study consists of both primary and secondary data.

Sampling Method

Since the objective of the study is to study the women workers in agricultural field, the researcher has adopted convenient sampling technique for data collection. The researcher has taken 150 samples for the present study.

Tools for Analysis

The analysis of the primary data has been done with the help of percentage, chi-square test, weighted average rank test.

(i) Percentage: Percentage is a simple statistical tool used by the researcher. The demographical factors of respondents are analyzed with the help of percentage.

(ii) Chi-Square Test (χ^2): An analysis is made to find out whether there exists any relationship between their experience and level of satisfaction and income and level of satisfaction. The analysis is made with the help of chi-square test. The chi-square test is determined by using the following formula

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \quad \text{where,}$$

O = observed frequencies

E = expected frequencies

Expected frequencies for the cell can be calculated by the following formula

$$E = \frac{RT \times CT}{N} \quad \text{where,}$$

E = Expected frequency

RT = The row total for the row containing a cell

CT = The column total for the column containing a cell

N = The total number of observation

(iii) Weighted Average Method: The term weights stands for relative importance of different items. Weights have been assigned for various ranks. The weighted score is calculated multiplying the numbers of respondents in a cell with their relative weights and the whole number is summed up to give the weighted score for that factor. In this method weights are assigned to the items. The formula for weighted average is

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum wx}{\sum w} \quad \text{where,}$$

$\bar{x}$ = Weighted arithmetic mean

x = The variable value i.e. $x, x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n$

W = weight attached to the variable value i.e. $W, W_1, W_2, \dots, W_n$

Hypothesis

Hypothesis is framed based on the tools applied in this study.

HO₁ There is no relationship between Experience and Level of Satisfaction.

HO₂ There is no relationship between Income and Level of satisfaction.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

In this study, the socio-economic conditions of women workers in agricultural field in Kanyakumari district is analysed. An interview schedule was developed and collected data from 150 respondents. These informations are loaded in the table given below for statistical analysis.

Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Educational qualification is an important tool for increasing and improving the scope of women's self – employment and empowering them to think for themselves. The following table shows the details of educational qualification of the women workers in agricultural field.

Table 1: Educational Qualification of the Respondents

Educational Qualification	No.of Respondents	Percentage
Uneducated	32	21.3
Below 10 th std	73	48.7
10 -12 th std	40	26.7
Graduate	5	3.3
Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Out of 150 respondents, 73 respondents (48.7per cent) are studied below 10th standard.

Experience of the Respondents

Work experience increases the productivity and income of the workers. So experience is considered as a main factor for this study. Table 2 shows the details of work experience of women workers in agricultural field in Kanyakumari district.

Table 2: Experience of the Respondents

Experience (No. of years)	No. of respondents	Percentage
One Year	36	24
Two Year	54	36
Three Year	45	30
Four Year and above	15	10
Total	150	100

Source : Primary data.

Out of 150 total respondents , 54 respondents (36 per cent) are having more than two years of experience.

Working Hours of the Respondents

Working hours determine their earnings and jobs satisfaction. So the researcher has considered the working hours as important information of this study. The following table shows the working hours of the respondents.

Table 3: Working Hours of the Respondents

Working hours	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 5 hours	21	14
5 – 10 hours	100	66.7
Above 10 hours	29	19.3
Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Out of 150 total respondents, 100 respondents (66.7per cent) are working 5 to 10 hours per day.

Reason for Selection of this Work

People are selecting one work for various reasons. So selections of work depend upon their ambition and education. So the researcher is very eager to know the reason for selecting this work. The following table shows the reason for selecting this work.

Table 4: Reason for Selection of this Work

Reason for selection	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Illiterate	24	16
Poverty	43	28.7
Insufficient husband income	32	21.3
Un employment	35	23.3
Others	16	10.7
Total	150	100

Source: Primary data

Out of 150 total respondents, 43 respondents selected this work due to poverty.

Income of the Respondents

The income distribution of the sample respondents is presented below in the table.

Table No. 5: Income of the Respondents

Income (Rs)	No. of respondents	Percentage
Below 10000	36	24
Rs 10000 – Rs 15000	54	36
Rs 15001 – Rs 20000	45	30
Above 20000	15	10
Total	150	100

Source: Primary data.

Out of 150 total respondents, 54 respondents (36 per cent) are getting income between Rs.10000 – Rs.15000 per month.

Respondents Level of Satisfaction towards the Work

The following table reveals the respondents satisfaction level towards the present agricultural work.

Table 6: Respondents Level of Satisfaction towards the Work

Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
Highly satisfied	36	24
Satisfied	54	36
Dissatisfied	45	30
Highly dissatisfied	15	10
Total	150	100

Source: Primary data.

It is clear from table that, among the total respondents 36 respondents (24 per cent) are highly satisfied. 54 respondents (36 per cent) are satisfied, 45 respondents (30 per cent) are dissatisfied and 15 respondents (10per cent) are highly dissatisfied about their work. Out of 150 respondents, most of the respondents (36per cent) are satisfied in their work.

Chi-Square Test:

Experience and level of satisfaction

The experience and level of satisfaction are compared and analyzed using Chi-Square test.

Table 7: Experience and Level of Satisfaction

Experience	Level of Satisfaction				Total
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	
One Year	12	12	8	4	36
Two Year	14	18	16	6	54
Three Year	7	21	15	2	45
Four Year above	3	3	6	3	15
	36	54	45	15	150

Source: Primary data.

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between experience and level of satisfaction

Degree of freedom = (c - 1) (r - 1)

$$= (4 - 1) (4 - 1)$$

$$= 3 \times 3 = 9$$

Table value of X^2 @5% level of significance = 16.919

Calculated value = 9.3

Inference: Since, the calculated value is (9.3) is less than the table value (16.919) at 5% level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. So it can be concluded that, there is no relationship between experience and level of satisfaction.

Income and Level of Satisfaction

The income and level of satisfaction are compared and analyzed using Chi-square test.

Table 8: Income and Level of satisfaction

Income	Highly satisfied	satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	Total
Below Rs.10000	10	14	8	4	36
Rs.10000 – Rs.15000	11	20	17	6	54
Rs.15001 – Rs.20000	12	17	14	2	45
Above Rs.20000	3	3	6	3	15
Total	36	54	45	15	150

Source: Primary data.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between income and level of satisfaction

Degree of freedom = (c - 1) (r - 1)

$$= (4 - 1) (4 - 1)$$

$$= 3 \times 3 = 9$$

Table value of X^2 at 5% level of significance = 16.919

Calculated value = 5.6

Inference: Since, the calculated value is (5.6) is less than the table value (16.919) at 5% level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. So it can be concluded that, there is no relationship between income and level of satisfaction.

Weighted Average Method

Under Weighted average method proper weightage is to be given to various items, the weightage to each item being proportional to the importance of the item in distribution.

Problems Faced by the Women Workers

Following nine problems were given to the respondents and they were requested to rank them

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Lack of motivation | 6. Working hours |
| 2. Health problem | 7. No income from Partner |
| 3. Low wage rate | 8. No support from children |
| 4. Harassment | 9. No allowance |
| 5. Work burden | |

Weighted Average Ranking Method was used to analyze the above problems and the results were tabulated as given below.

Table 9: Computation of Weighted Average Rank for the Problems faced by Women Workers

Sl. No.	Particulars	Weight										Total
		9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1		
1.	Lack of motivation	1 9	6 48	9 63	10 60	19 95	15 60	23 69	50 100	17 17	521	
2.	Health Problem	19 17	17 136	50 350	23 138	6 30	9 36	10 30	15 30	1 01	922	
3.	Low wage rate	17 153	23 184	15 105	19 114	9 45	1 4	6 18	10 20	50 50	693	
4.	Harassment	50 450	10 80	23 161	15 90	17 85	6 24	9 27	1 2	19 19	938	
5.	Work burden	23 207	15 120	19 133	50 300	1 5	10 40	17 51	6 12	9 9	877	
6.	Working hours	9 81	50 400	6 42	1 6	10 50	17 68	19 57	23 48	15 15	765	
7.	No income from partners	15 135	1 8	10 70	9 54	23 115	19 76	50 150	17 34	6 6	648	
8.	No support from children	6 54	9 72	1 7	17 102	50 250	23 92	15 45	19 38	10 10	670	
9.	No allowance	10 90	19 152	17 119	06 36	15 75	50 200	1 3	9 18	23 23	716	
	Total	1350	1200	1050	900	750	600	450	300	150	6750	

Table 10: Weighted Average Rank for the Problems faced by Women Workers

Particulars	Weighted average	Rank
Lack of motivation	3.4	IX
Health problem	6.1	II
Low wage rate	4.62	VI
Harassment	6.2	I
Work burden	5.8	III
Working hours	5.1	IV
No income from partners	4.3	VIII
No support from children	4.4	VII
No allowance	4.7	V

Source: Calculated data

It can be inferred from the Table 10, that among the different problems faced by the women workers, the major problems faced by the respondents is harassment with a mean score of 6.2, Health problem is the second important problem with a mean score of 6.1, Work burden ranks third, with a mean score of 5.8, working hours ranks fourth with a mean score 5.1, No allowance fifth ranks, with a mean score 4.7. Low wage mean sixth rank, with a mean score 4.62. No support for children seventh rank, with a mean score 4.4. No income from partner eighth rank, with mean score 4.3. Lack of motivation ninth rank with a least mean score of 3.4

Findings of the Study

- Most of the respondents (48.7 per cent) studied below – 10th standard.
- Majority of the respondents (36 per cent) are having more than two years of experience.
- Most of the respondents (66.7 per cent) are working 5 to 10 hours of work per day.
- Out of 150 respondents, 43 respondents (28.7 per cent) selected this work due to Poverty.
- Out of 150 total respondents, 54 respondents (36 per cent) are getting income between Rs.10000 – Rs.15000 per month.
- Out of 150 respondents, most of the respondents (36 per cent) are satisfied in their work.
- Since, the calculated value is less than the table value at 5% level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. So it can be concluded that, there is no relationship between experience and level of satisfaction.
- Since, the calculated value is less than the table value at 5% level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. So it can be concluded that, there is no relationship between income and level of satisfaction.
- The loan for children education hold the first rank, with a mean score of 3.28, equal wages hold the second rank, time to relax hold the third rank, reducing working hours hold the fourth rank, and the least rank is given for benefit from government.
- Among the different problems faced by the women workers, the major problems faced by the respondents is harassment with a mean score of 6.2, health problem is the second important problem with a mean score of 6.1, work burden had ranks third, with a mean score of 5.8. Working hours, no allowance and Low wage stands fourth, fifth and sixth rank respectively.

Suggestions

The researcher recommends the following suggestions to uplift the life of the female workers in agriculture in Kanyakumari district.

- The government should be provided with hard gloves, oils and soaps to safeguard their health
- Measures should be taken to increase their wages.
- The government should give training to the workers to increase the efficiency of the workers.

- The researcher suggests that, the government should come forward to grant maximum loan to agriculturists with minimum interest.
- Educated people should come forward to agriculture in order to reduce unemployment.

Conclusion

Now a day's Women workers facing lot of problems in their work place and wage discrimination. As far as this study is concerned, women workers in agricultural field in Kanyakumari district are facing main problems like lack of motivation from family, wage discrimination and low awareness about government schemes available for them. The agricultural department authorities should provide the awareness programmes and training to the farmers to improve the cultivation.

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