

**CONDITIONS OF WOMEN WORKERS AND LABOUR
ABSORPTION IN AGRICULTURE:
A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO ERODE DISTRICT
OF TAMILNADU**

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Chapter – 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

The women agriculture labors play out a few work labour intensive jobs in farming field; they are straightforwardly append with summer, rainy and winter season agriculture framework and geographically maximum area has been considered as mono yield. In the rain fed farming framework is the predominant agricultural practices; there is no irrigation system summer and winter cultivation. Therefore, women agriculture labors are also probable to collect wood from fields, this wood is being used as a main fuel source for cooking and clean drinking water is another key problem in rural areas. Thus, the collection of wood, collecting water from remote areas is additionally the duty of women, on the grounds that a rural women agriculture labor is trustworthy for farm activities viz., keeping of livestock, milking, milk processing and preparation of ghee are likewise completed by the women.

Furthermore, the livestock is the main subsistent activity used to encounter household food needs impartial as extra farm incomes and most of farms in the rural area own some livestock, the pattern of livestock strength are generally obstructed by different aspects viz., farm size, cropping pattern, availability of range lands including fodder and pasture. Therefore rural women agriculture labors earn extra income from the sale of milk and animals, whereas, mostly women are engaged in cleaning of animals, sheds, watering and milking the animals and also rural women agriculture labors are responsible for collection, preparing dung cakes and activity that also brings additional income for poor families.

In most of the cases women agriculture labors are intricate in nearly all livestock related activities. While, the majority of women agriculture labors are involved in shed cleaning and collection of farm yard manure, it is evident that the women agriculture labors are playing a dominant role in the livestock production and management activities. In order to generate more and more

income, rural women agriculture labors often sell all eggs and poultry meat and left nothing for personal use, which is due to poverty and lack of required level of proteins most of women agriculture labors have got a very poor health. Therefore most of the women suffer from malnutrition and severe diseases and the majority of the rural women agriculture labors are illiterate, unskilled and tradition bounded. Thus their productive capacity is also small and considered as unskilled labour, though the rural women agriculture labors have very excited life.

Therefore, the present study is an attempt to analyze the socio economic conditions of women agriculture labors and labor absorption in Erode district of Tamilnadu.

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of the present study lead to the following concluding remarks.

(a) Magnitude of women agriculture labour in India

The findings of the importance of women agriculture labour in India experiential that it is very imperative for the countries like India to address the problems and issues faced by rural agricultural farm women. Though, the women oversee their role denotes indifference agricultural development of the nation, which no nation would endeavor to achieve. There are a few decisive developing extension programs has been aware by the government with give training for the skill development of women and to provide which access to productive resources. In any case, interestingly, there ought to be appropriate execution of these tasks and they should arrive at women workers.

Moreover, the agricultural policies and modernization must appearance to take away hard work, increase economic ability and wages for the time spent by women. The interest of rural women is obvious in differing types of agricultural activities. Women laborers are mainly related with tending livestock, farmstead gardening, harvesting and post-harvesting operations. Mostly, women are engaged with scrubbing of animal, sheds, irrigating and milking the animals in the study area. In any case, the women are trustworthy for collection, preparing dung cakes as an action that carries extra income to poor families. Obviously, the

rural women are concerned in almost all livestock associated activities. The women work participation in India is only 25.5 per cent, it comprises of 59.6 per cent main female workers and 40.4 per cent of marginal female workers, whereas, out of the total female populace in India about 41 per cent of women are intricate in agricultural sector.

(b) Trend in labour absorption in India

The findings of the pattern in labor assimilation in India saw that the labour absorption in Indian agriculture is intently labour increase scientific change that describes the underlying phases of improvement which would offer approach to presentation of labour saving technologies during later stages, resulting in slow substitution of the agricultural labour. It has been discovered that, on per hectare premise, the labour absorption has been declining constantly just if there should arise an occurrence of wheat from the underlying long stretches of 1970s. If there should growing of paddy and sugarcane are concerned with the labour absorption, which has been increasing till mid-1990s, and a decline has been noticeable subsequently.

Though, in cotton, the labour absorption has prolonged, fairly during 2000s, primarily in view of the Bt (it is a microbe naturally found in soil) technology, that enhanced the yields. There were notable between state and crops dissimilarities, such dissimilarities can be recognized to the difference in the extent of technology to a massive degree. In spite of the fact that, it make the impress that the trend compare with the hypothesis of movement of labour in agriculture with advance of technology, it can't be far getting, as the technology isn't mostly labour displace, which has been establish if there should be an incident of cotton.

Moreover, the technical change, that have been set labour moving in states like Punjab, for crops such as paddy, which has been labour absorbing composed with yield improvement in the Eastern Indian states such as West Bengal and Assam. Furthermore, for cotton, while the overall trend has been labour absorbing, states like Punjab and Maharashtra, revealed very reverse trends. This encourages the effect of technical variations on the nature of labour

has been towards negative side on a for every hectare basis, it varied basically depend upon the neighborhood surroundings formed by agro-environment and the existing nature of the labour markets.

Moreover, the mechanization of farm activities is an imperative factor in determining the degree of labour intensity. It is additionally noticed that mechanization, as a central point in labor displacement has been noted uniquely in the event of wheat and less significantly in paddy, and isn't strong other crops. Anyway the share of wage as a constituent of cost of cultivation has more noteworthy than before for all the crops, and all the states, it uncovered that the important development of labour productivity in physical terms over years.

It is valuable to bring up that the yield growth in recent years has relieved back down for the crops other than cotton in many states. This proves, the idea of scientific change, considered as outward move of production function, isn't going on in Indian agriculture for certain crops and some regions. The miracle of the biochemical technology as well-known during green revolution has stopped to work for such crops and places. Likewise, may be the most important factor that limits the labour absorption than some other constituents like mechanization. Hence, the strong need is felt for emerging the avenues for no-farm employment together with emerging of technical change in agriculture which might be ultimately labour saving. This would placemat the negative consequences of labour movement while at the same time enlightening the labour productivity.

(c) Socio-economic background of women agricultural laborers

The findings of the socio-economic background of the women agricultural laborers observed that the majority of women agriculture labour belongs to 31-50 age group constitutes 80.00 per cent and the Marital status of the sample respondents shows, 76.66 percent of the of laborers are married it is inferred that most of the women agriculture labour are married are many to their husband with earning for maintenance of the household. The educational qualification of the women agriculture labour indicates the majority of women agriculture labour are illiterate (i.e. 70.66%) and the castes of the sample women labors shows

72.00 per cent of them belong to Other backward caste remaining others belongs to the scheduled caste and Scheduled tribes.

Regarding the type of Family of the sample women labors shows the majority of women agriculture labors are living in Nuclear family (i.e. 90.00%), while, the employment of the majority of the women in our sample in the low-paid work in the informal sector is seen to be the outcome of their low levels of education, it was very difficult to explore the details of their earnings since their employment was not regular and their wage rates uniform for different types of work. The majority of women agriculture laborers earn less than Rs. 1000 per month. The proportion of women agriculture laborers with monthly incomes of Rs. 4001-500 and above 5000 is significantly low (i.e. 3.33%). However, the sample women agriculture laborers about the items of food consumed daily, the expenditure on food which member of the house hold is spending for consumption expenditure indicates, 80.00 per cent and 13.33 per cent of women agriculture laborers reported that rice gruel and rice meals are major items of the food consumed by them daily.

A classification of the women agriculture laborers households on the basis of weekly expenditure on food shows that 33.33 per cent of women agriculture laborers spend an amount ranging from Rs 501-600, this indicate a very low level of consumption expenditure on food Lack of regular employment and low income are the factors contributing to this. The Mode of Savings of the women agriculture laborers, it is observed that a good number of the women agricultural laborers have possessed savings habit through SHG (i.e. 70.00%), insurance (i.e. 43.33%), unorganized savings (i.e. 26.67%), cooperative society (i.e. 16.67%) and banks (10.00%) respectively. And, the earners of the women agriculture laborers families reveals, majority of 2 – 3 earners per families (i.e. 63.33%) are women agriculture laborers Since, the Erode district is a command area, the opportunities are also more when compared to other districts, which is a dry area. The Economic status of the women agriculture laborers shows the majority of women agriculture labors are having below poverty line families (i.e. 83.30%). Whereas, the Land holdings show, majority of the women agriculture laborers

belongs to marginal land holdings (i.e. 60.00%). It could be inferred that most of the respondents having marginal land holding categories in the study area.

But, the land ownership pattern shows, 63.67 per cent of the Agricultural laborers own only less than 20 cents of land ownership. Therefore, all women Agricultural laborers having land have paddy fields, according to women Agricultural laborers cultivation of rice in small fields is un-remunerative and the Possession of Livestock indicates the majority of women agriculture laborers possessed milch cow and calves (i.e. 83.33), while, 96.00 percent are selling milk having an incentive between Rs 750 to 1000 every month. In the wake of meeting the expense of feed and other expenses, the women agricultural laborers get a small income from the livestock rearing. This shows that most of the women agricultural laborers do not have livestock and a few having livestock earn only a small income from the livestock rearing.

Further, the association of socio economic factors between women agriculture laborers explains that all the socio economic factors are positively and significantly associated with the women agriculture laborers as shown in X2 values. Since, Age, Marital status, Education, Social group, Type of Family, Earning of income, Mode of Savings, Land holdings, Land ownership pattern, Possession of Livestock and Selling livestock, play a more significant role in women agriculture laborers.

Therefore, an agriculture is increasingly becoming the preserve of women has important implications for policy. Agriculture policy has been largely blind. In order to formulate policy that is sensitive to women's roles and needs in agriculture, it is first of all necessary to improve the measurement of their participation and to recognize their contribution. However, the women empowerment should involve a progression whereby women become able to put in order themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to affirm their independent right to control resources which will support in difficult and eliminate their own subordination. It gets clear from the outcomes that are referenced in this research the women agricultural laborers assumed an important

role in crop production and economic activities of family through the wage earnings.

(d) Nature of employment, wages and working conditions of the women agricultural laborers

The findings of the nature of employment, wages and working conditions of the women agricultural laborers, it is observed that the main occupation of the women agricultural laborers is jobs connected with various phase of paddy cultivation and harvesting. The sample women agricultural laborers report that during the last Virippu season, covering a period of five months, it is reveals the majority got employment for days ranging between 26 and 40 (i.e. 46.33%, 10.66% and 10.00%).

Moreover, the season wise employment of woman labour in agriculture, there are two main agricultural seasons Kharif and Rabi, they worked for 7-8 hours per day, it shows, 84 (i.e. 56.00 %) employment days per workers in Kharif season and 66 (i.e. 44.00 %) employment days per workers in Rabi season. While, work during kharif season shows the women laborers got greatest work in the long stretch of June (26 days) which represented 30.95 percent of the absolute work in the season. In September women laborers got work for 38 days (i.e. 45.24 %). In July and August women laborers got work for 11 and 6 days separately. And Employment during Rabi season indicates in the Rabi season extends from October to January. The women laborers in agriculture during Rabi season got employment for October (26 days) in agriculture, which accounted for 39.39 per cent of the total employment in agriculture in a year.

Whereas, the women laborers are apprehensive exclusively in crop production activities in the study area were mostly apprehensive 38, 26, 13 and 9 days for kharif season and 26, 18, 16 and 13 days for Rabi seasons in nursery transplanting, weeding and harvesting activities in agriculture. During *kharif* season the women laborers were unemployed for 66 days (i.e. 44.00 %) total unemployed days in this season. While, during *rabi* season the women laborers were unemployed for 84 days (i.e. 56.00 %) of the total unemployed days in the season.

Among the 150 sample, the majority of women laborers activities during off season, 23.33 per cent of women laborers worked as harvesting and they worked for 32-40 days and the wage rate was Rs. 250 per day. Impact of seasonal unemployment depicts the average debt amount was Rs.13100.00 in kharif, which is increased in Rabi Rs. 14700.00. However, during kharif season the women laborers acquired on an average income of Rs. 29,700, still during Rabi season and women laborers acquired just a normal income of Rs. 23,000 from wage income in agriculture. Hence, the impact of seasonal woman unemployment in agriculture on the income, consumption expenditure, and savings and debt position are significant in the study area.

In any case, the daily wage got for the underlying work identifying with arrangement of cultivation, planting, weeding and so on, was between Rs 70 to 80. The wages of the harvesting work is normally paid in kind, in paddy. The daily wage of harvesting ranged from 15 to 20 Kg of paddy. And non-farming employment indicates, 56.67 per cent and 36.67 per cent of women laborers got only few days of work in a year in non –farming activities like construction of fence and other casual rural employment.

Employment in National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGs) indicates, women agriculture laborers, the majority of 38.67 per cent reported that they got job under MGNREGS scheme ranging from 26-30 days employed in MGNREG, whereas, 22.00 per cent women agriculture laborers reported that they got jobs between 36-40 days employed in MGNREG. However, debt of the women laborers, 37.33 per cent of women laborers the amount borrowed money ranged up to Rs.5, 000, likewise, and 23.33 per cent of the women laborers borrowed money ranged Rs10, 001-Rs.15, 000. Because of the low income, small degree of asset holdings, lack of ownership of land, lack of income from non-agricultural activities and migration the sample households units had to get cash from all accessible sources for addressing their necessities.

The reason for borrowings of women laborers shows the money was obtained for meeting domestic expenditure, construction of house, medical treatment, marriage, repayment of loan, purchase of livestock and so forth, while

the source of loans demonstrates, greater part of women laborers borrowed money from SHGs (i.e. 39.33 percent). An outstanding angle is that the women laborers borrowed money from more than one source. It appears to be that the women laborers have availed from all accessible sources for meeting their credit needs.

Below the poverty line (BPL) and the advantages got by women laborers shows, 35.00 percent were below the poverty line families. Among the Below the poverty line families, 35.00 have Below the poverty line ration cards eligible for getting rice, wheat, sugar at subsidized rate. The different poverty alleviation schemes and pension schemes have direct effect on women laborers. It gives direct assistance in buying food grain at extremely low costs to the women laborers. These measures have helped the family units extensively in improving their welfare. The greater part of the households got money related help from the government and local bodies for construction and repair of the houses.

Whereas, the pattern of house of the women laborers reveals that 98.00 per cent of women agriculture labour having own houses and only 2.00 per cent of them having rented houses and type of house shows, majority of women agriculture laborers dwelling houses were in street house category, this shows that many of the women agriculture laborers were in street houses in the study area.

Moreover, the availability of Electricity and Latrine indicates, the major proportion of electrified houses comes under 56.67 per cent and remain 43.34 per cent are not electrified houses. Accordingly, Non-accessibility of adequate latrine facilities for a larger part of the sample households is demonstrative of their poor financial foundation. However, it must be seen additionally with regards to absence of access to adequate water supply facilities and different measures for their appropriate upkeep. Contrasted with the other a district in Tamilnadu has an intense issue of water shortage and the area under investigation is tormented with intense water deficiency particularly during summer.

Likewise, availability of Drinking Water depicts 73.33 percent of the sample women agriculture laborers rely on public water sources of the panchayat

and nearly 20.00 percent depend on neighbors well for drinking water. Most of the laborers who utilize the panchayat sources detailed that water comes sporadically for short spells. The possession of Home appliances by the women laborers reveals 63.33 per cent of women agricultural labour possessed Household appliances such as chair radio, fan, TV, and bicycle, 20.00 percent of the women agricultural labour possessed Television and cooking gas.

Further, the variance analysis obviously examine that there is a significant differences between socio economic background of women agriculture laborers with respect to employment, wage and working conditions in the study area find out ‘F’ ratio. On comparing ‘F’ values of employment, wage and working conditions between socio economic background of women agriculture laborers in the study area; it becomes quite evident that employment, wage and working conditions show high degree of correspondence to socio economic background of women agriculture laborers.

In this way, the women agriculture laborers households having a place with the socially and economically backward classifications, for example, scheduled cast/ tribes and other backwards communities. The wage income is the fundamental wellspring of income and the income from non-agricultural activities is small, whereas, the majority of female laborers and their husbands are uneducated. Because of income the women agriculture laborers are compelled to borrow money from every accessible source and are in debt. Therefore, practically all the women agriculture laborers are below the poverty line and appreciating the advantages under below the poverty line classes.

The subsidized distribution of food grains through ration shops, agricultural workers pension, old age pension, financial support given for development of the hoses have impressively helped the women agriculture laborersto keep up a superior degree of living. The investigation found that the consumption of food items is poor and not adequate to give the necessary calories, while, the consumption of alcoholic drinks by the member of the family is serious problem faced by them. It is discovered that poverty because of low wages and income lack of jobs and unemployment, lack of non-agricultural

employment, high cost of living are the other serious issues looked by the female laborers. Therefore, majority of women agriculture laborers have strong involvement in crop production, livestock husbandry, poultry keeping, food grain processing and storage, home management and handicraft making by means of seasonal employment activities in agriculture in the study area.

(e) Present working status and awareness of development programme of women agricultural labour

The findings of the present working status and awareness of development programme of women agricultural labour, it is observed that the reasons for Joining as agricultural labour by the women shows, the majority of women laborer (i.e. 28.00%) have a low family income, it is reveals the reasons for Joining as agricultural labour, the majority of women agricultural labour have a low family income, meet additional family requirement and fulfill the basic family needs in the study area. Moreover, the types of work of the women agricultural labour shows, 70 percent of women agricultural labour are agreed with sowing, 62 percent of women agricultural labours are agreed with transplanting, 60 percent of women agricultural labour are agreed with wedding and therefore, the majority of women agricultural labour are involved in transplanting and reading etc.

While, agricultural Wages of the women agricultural labour reveals that across the blocks of Erode district during 2019-2020, women are receiving fewer wages. It indicates the low bargaining capacity and helpless situation of women in agricultural sector over a period of time; gender discrimination in wages in institutionalized and despite rules and regulations there is no change in the situation. Likewise, the wage pattern of the women agricultural labour indicates, 72.00 percent of women agricultural labour are taking a daily wage. It is observed that the majority of women agricultural labour are taking a daily wage, due to fact that some causes like they are not work daily at the same place. And, the working hour's shows, 67.33 percent of women agricultural labour are working 6 to 8 hours. It is observed that majority of women agricultural labour are working 6 to 8 hours in an agricultural land.

Though, 76.67 percent of women agricultural labours are not satisfaction about their work, due to various reasons viz., shortage of wages, wage discrimination, rash behavior and pressure about work from land lords. And the reasons for not satisfaction of the work indicate, 30.67 percent of women agricultural labour are agreed with low wages. It is evident that majority of reasons for not satisfaction of the work by the women Agricultural Labour are agreed with low wages in the study area. Similarly, the preference to work and opinion on developmental programme by the women agricultural labour specifies the majority of the women agricultural labour have given their preference to work other than agricultural activities in the study area such as 64 per cent of construction work, 100 per cent of MGNREGA and 76 per cent of coolie for non-agriculture work correspondingly.

Though, the awareness on Developmental Programme by the women Agricultural Labour denotes, the majority of the women agricultural labour are very much aware about rural developmental programme such as MGNREGA (i.e. 100%). Whereas, the utilization of Developmental Programme depicts the majority (i.e. 100% and 62%) of the women agricultural laborers have fully utilized the benefits from MGNREGA and SHG respectively. Moreover, it is encouraging to note that 74 per cent great strength of the women agricultural laborers have absolutely not appeared and benefited through the health related training programme due to their illiteracy level and ignorance.

Therefore, the agriculture sector displays an important role in development of the rural economy and women agriculture laborers are socially and economically poorest section of the society. They are asset less, unemployment, low wages, under-nutrition, illiteracy and social backwardness found the poverty syndrome among agriculture laborers. There is a commanding need to small inter-generational upward movement among agricultural laborers, predominantly women laborers. It is encouraging to note that the maximum of the women laborers are not having proper infrastructural facilities in their houses excluding electricity. The study results prominent that most of the female agricultural workers are unable to take care of their family and children properly

while going to agricultural work. The shares of the laborers have not taken adequate energetic food for their existence due to poor economic conditions. Therefore, the majority of the farm workers are not being psychologically in peace of mind by due to their work nature, domestic and economic problems. Further, it is miserably to note that maximum of the workers have done overload work at agricultural field and also the discrimination on the basis of gender, caste and wage at work place has happen among them hazardously. The study results clearly elucidated that most of the agricultural workers have affected by severe economic problems and there is no possibility condition to overcome their poor status, even majority of the agricultural workers are unable to manage their day to day life activities also.

(f) Nature of work and extent of participation of women in agriculture

The findings of the nature of work and extent of participation of women in agriculture, it is observed that the women are the major contributors in agriculture and its allied fields and their work ranges from crop production, livestock production to cottage industry. In spite of such a vast participation, her role and self-esteem has yet not been acknowledged. Women's status is low by all social, economic, and political signs and they face lots of socio-economic, gender, and cultural problems. Thus, all these problems play an important part of the women agricultural laborers in responsible the nature and degree of work they do.

The women participation in several agricultural activities observed that the huge number of women agricultural labours are concerned in rearing livestock, homestead gardening and post-harvest operations as their ranks are I, II and III correspondingly. While, it displays 68 per cent of women agricultural laborers are frequently involved in rearing livestock and 17.33 per cent are infrequently involved. While, the livestock is the primary subsistent activity used to meet household food needs as well as supplement farm incomes.

Moreover, the majority (i.e. 42.00%) women agricultural laborers are concerned in farmhouse gardening regularly, 26.00 per cent of women laborers do it infrequently. The third highest participate activity is post-harvest operations,

while, 31.33 per cent of women laborers are frequently concerned in post-harvest operations, and 32.00 per cent are occasionally concerned in post-harvest operations. Therefore, how women labour play a key role in maintain the quality of food crops, the fourth significant participate activity by women laborers is storage, whereas, 17.33 per cent of women laborers are concerned regularly and 59.33 per cent are doing it occasionally and this work is frequently done by women, while weeding is also one of the most participate works of women agricultural laborers. Similarly, 26.00 per cent and 38.67 per cent of the women laborers are concerned in weeding on regular and occasional basis correspondingly. It is an important to control the weed growth experimental; it may hamper the growth of productive crops or decrease the crop quality by contaminates the product. However, in all these activities women agricultural laborers mostly take part and subsidize enormously to livestock production, food security and other works. In which their involvement is not up to the mark, whereas, women workers in the study area are not enthusiastically apprehensive in works such as grading, fencing, drain preparation or applying irrigation.

The causes of women participation in different agricultural activities, which are responsible for women to work as agricultural laborers and women agricultural laborers mostly belong to poor families and causes are not mutually exclusive. Among the various causes, the low family income has the highest total score of 241, while, 58.87 per cent of women laborer view it as their first prior cause for which they work, 31.12 per cent view it as the second most prior cause and 17.01 per cent of women laborer assign it as the third prior cause. It is clear for the reason that most of them belong to vary low income group and participate in different agricultural activities, whereas, they try to contribute to their family income so that family needs could be satisfied.

The determinants of women participation in agricultural activities, a regression model displays the work participation of women agriculture laborer as dependent variable and Age (years), Family Size (numbers), Education, Annual Family Income and Land Holding as independent variables. The results of the regression analysis confirmed that the annual family income is a significant factor

which influences the work participation of women laborers. The level of family income is negatively related with the work participation of women laborers inferring that family income is an inverse relationship with the level of participation of the women in agricultural production. Whereas, the level of education is also negatively associated with women work participation, it means that rise in level of education affects less participation by women in farm activities. Then, the level of education is a factor affecting the women participation rate however not significant. Therefore, the important reasons for the participation of women in different agricultural activities remained to rise the family income followed by low level of education.

Thus, the low family income, fulfillment of basic family needs and to meet additional family needs are the main reasons of participation of women in agricultural sector in the study area. Among the conceivable determinants the significant factor which effects the work participation of women laborers in the study area is low annual family income and educational level, which are negatively related with the overall participation index but not significant.

(g) Effects of cropping pattern and cropping intensity on labor absorption

The findings of the effects of cropping pattern and cropping intensity on labor absorption, it is observed that it has been concluded that the cropping intensity and cropping pattern could contribute to an extent of 57.16 per cent and 47.5 per cent to the labor absorption in medium farmers and small farmers. Similarly, cropping intensity and cropping pattern were found to be the best predictors of labor absorption in case of small farmers in the study area. This is due to fact that the intensive implementation of Technological inputs that have replaced the labor input from the Agriculture and acute drought also reduced farming operation, which in turn reduced labor participation in agricultural activities.

The concentration of more industries in this district, particularly textile units are absorbing more labor force (i.e. casual and agricultural labor). It is important to note that the textile industries are polluting the water bodies, irrigation source and ground water sources, which is due to negative externalities

of land utilization for cultivation. This study also suggested that establishment of cosmetic processing zone in market, which provides continuous gainful employment opportunities for the rural segments of Erode district of Tamilnadu because this district has an important place for turmeric cultivation.

(h) Main challenges and problems faced by women agricultural labour

The findings of the main challenges and problems faced by women agricultural labour, it is observed that the women facing Challenges at Family Level indicates, regarding drinking habit, a great strength (i.e. 62%) of the women agricultural laborers opined that their husbands are consuming of alcohol regularly on daily basis. Further, it is revealed that the majority (i.e. 56%) of the women agricultural laborers have victimized by different sort of domestic violence through their family members. On the subject of illness, 72.00 per cent of the women agricultural laborers have not suffered by any kind of severe illness while continuously involving in agricultural work and the rest 28.00 per cent of them have affected by some of the illness such as skin related problems, anemia, and foot problems. As far as peace of mind, the significant strength, 52.00 percent of the women agricultural laborers are not being peace of mind by psychologically because of their work nature, domestic and economic burdens in their family.

Additionally, the women confronting challenges at Work Place uncovers 76.00 percent of the women agricultural laborers have accomplished over-burden work at agrarian field for their livelihood followed by 86.00 percent of the women agricultural laborers have not earned enough and adequate pay for day by day implies and practically all (i.e. 96%) the women agricultural laborers can't get an opportunity to spare their wages because of inadequate of wage just as part of family responsibilities.

The health problems faced by women agricultural laborers in study area indicates the higher incidence of chronic skeletal muscular and postural health problems such as joint pain (i.e. 66.00%), back pain (i.e. 48.00%), and respiratory diseases such as asthma (i.e. 20.00%) were perhaps, indicative of their work-related health hazards. Further, use of pesticides was another source of work-

related health problems, though women respondents did not consider it important and causing much immediate harm to them. Women are not put to work in fields on the days in which spraying of insecticide was done and Use of high concentrations of pesticides would definitely have long-term and fatal health implications for the workers concerned.

Further, utilization of pesticides was another source of work-related health issues; however women agricultural laborers didn't think of it as significant and causing much immediate harm to them. Women agricultural laborers are not given something to do in fields on the days in which splashing of insecticide was done and Use of high concentrations of pesticides would have long-term and fatal health implications for the workers concerned.

The general Problems faced by women agricultural laborers indicates the majority of the women agricultural laborers (i.e. 70.00%) are agreed with hard work, 72 per cent of women laborers are agreed with discontinues of work culture or seasonal unemployment, 60 percent of women laborers are agreed with no transport facility, 48 percent of women laborers are agreed with lack of time, 44 percent of women laborers are agreed with dual responsibility and 30 percent of women laborers are agreed with low standard of living. It is seen that 70 percent of the women agricultural laborers are concurred with difficult work because of the reason, for example, practically all agriculture works are exceptionally hard.

Therefore, the majority of women agricultural labour faces the problems of unpaid work, wage discrimination, low wages, dual responsibility, traditional bounded, hard work, no transfer facility, low standard of living, drinking habit of husband, lack of time, absence of decision making process, inside the home and outside the home, seasonal unemployment, male dominated society and so on in the study area.

5.2 TESTING OF HYPOTHESES

This section deals with a discussion about the problem of agreement between the theories and data collected using relevant standard statistical techniques. For the present research, five hypotheses have been framed and

tested. The findings showed that these hypotheses are validated. They are explained below:

First formulated hypothesis is that there is significant association of socio economic factors between women agricultural laborers, which is validated on the basis of X² test.

Second formulated hypothesis is that there is significant difference between the socio economic background of women agricultural laborers with respect to employment, wage and working conditions, which is validated on the basis of F-ratio.

Third formulated hypothesis is that the level of income is negatively signifying an inverse relationship with the degree of participation of the women in agricultural production, which is validated on the basis of regression model.

Last formulated hypothesis is that the effects of cropping pattern and cropping intensity on labor absorption in small and medium farmers are positive significant, which is validated on the basis of regression model.

5.3 POLICY SUGGESTIONS

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are given so as to be considered in the future intervention strategies which are aimed at the promotion of women agricultural laborers in the study area. The accompanying suggestions can be made for the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the women agricultural laborers are as follows:

(a) Rural infrastructural Facilities

1. Provision of basic infrastructure, for example, road network, electricity connection, drinking water supply, communication and so forth might be given in rural areas where there is a concentration of agricultural labour households.
2. Providing financial assistance for construction and repair of houses, toilet facilities and other infrastructure development such as roads, electricity supply etc.
3. Start rural drinking water supply schemes with a view to provide drinking water to rural labour households and poor people. Pipe water supply

system, public wells, ponds for providing drinking water may be constructed or the existing one may be renovated for the purpose. The Grama Panchayats and other local self-government institutions may take necessary steps in this regard.

4. A scheme to electrify rural labour households either at subsidized rate or paying the cost in installments or free of cost in the case of very poor households may be formulated and implemented.

(b) Credit facilities

1. There should be make accessible modest credit for needy agricultural women to begin self - work and because of that our rural women may get extra chance for profitable employment.
2. A credit waiver plan may likewise be planned to forgo aggregated obligation of the agricultural labour households which are in trouble because of death or acute sickness or physical disability or mishap of the main earner of the household.
3. Provision for fortifying the availability of credit for the agricultural workers households through Commercial banks, Co-operative banks and other credit institutions, reinforcement the network of SHGs and Micro credit networks and framing special credit schemes meant for the rural labour households.

(c) Health facilities

1. Enlarge the facilities of all Public Health Institutions (PHI's) situated at Grama Panchayat, Block Panchayat and Taluks and also Public preventive health services may be extended. The house visit of medical persons to deliver medical help to the people, taking steps to prevent the outbreak of diseases, refining sanitation, health awareness and so on may be reinforced.
2. Provision of health equipment's, treatment and health care for the women in the rural areas by the state and Central governments through Panchayats and Public Health Institutions.

3. Prevent the alcohol consumption of the youth and other elder members of the households, Public campaign and other propaganda measures for rural people.

(d) Employment generation and educational training

1. Conscious endeavors are required for preparing of female work force in the rural areas in alternative skills. The vocational training might be composed by the Grama Panchayats to prepare female youth to take part in profitable employment or self-employment in rural areas and activities in agriculture, industry and service sectors with the assistance of educational institutions/ Universities/ Research institutions.
2. Some alternative employment programme and chances should be providing to agricultural women labour in rural areas.
3. Promotion of non-farming activities like livestock rearing, cottage industries and other self-employment activities by means of credit at subsidized rates to rural labour households.
4. Start new agro processing industrial units such as rice mills, oil mills and other units processing agricultural products, fruits, vegetables and so on.
5. The strategy should give need for expanding employment opportunities both in agriculture and non agricultural activities and other income earning activities through self-employment, livestock development and other household activities.

(e) Wage fixation

1. Minimum and equal wages should be fixed by state Government for agricultural labour and the rates should be appraised occasionally.
2. Better enactment of the subsidized delivery of food grains, prompt payment of pensions and effective implementation of poverty alleviation schemes and employment generation schemes.
3. The minimum wage act was passed in 1948, execution to which even state government was make inquiries to fix minimum wages for as laborers.

(f) Technology

1. It is need to intensification of agriculture through adoption of double and multiple cropping practices; it would be increase prospects of employment on the form. We should encourage labour intensive techniques in these activities and should not go for higher mechanization in the above activities, especially in dry areas.
2. Promotion of the mechanization in the paddy cultivation, harvesting and other operations, this makes farming a beneficial activity and prevents the decrease in the area of paddy cultivation.
3. Strong need is felt for emerging the avenues for non-farm employment along with extending of technical change in agriculture which may be ultimately labour saving. This would mitigate the negative implications of labour movement whereas refining the labour productivity.
4. Access to agricultural technology for women will progress by planning the agricultural technology that is women pleasant.

(g) Promotional plan

1. Promotional measures by the Department of Agriculture and other state offices to expand the quantity of paddy crops from a few in suitable spots.
2. The poverty alleviation schemes and National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme may be efficiently implement by Grama Panchayats and other implementation agencies. Due to poor implementation of NREGs, the female workers got only few days instead of 100 days of employment.
3. The poverty alleviation schemes and National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme might be proficiently actualize by Grama Panchayats and other implementation agencies. Because of poor implementation of NREGs, the female laborers got just scarcely any days rather than 100 days of work.
4. Agricultural land, livestock and extension services facilities should be provided to poor rural women.

5. Women must be aware concerning their prevailing rights, access to judicial relief and redress, eliminating discrimination over legal reforms, and providing legal aid, help and counseling.
6. The central and state governments have taken various measures to develop the economic conditions of agricultural laborer primarily women laborer.
7. The government has stringently executed the land reforms measures, which helps to the tenants, agricultural laborers, and fixing ceiling on agricultural holding and surplus land is dispersed to the land less laborers.
8. Women's access to the various agriculture schemes being implemented by the government will be protected and quota for women will be integrated by revising the guidelines of schemes particularly Rashtriya krishi Vikas yojana (RKVY). Added participation of women can be protected by providing financial and infrastructural support to SHGs for seed production, storage, preservation, and distribution.
9. Providing women with land is an imperative mechanism for empowering them economically and strengthening their ability to encounter social and political gender inequalities.
10. It is need to intensification of agriculture through adoption of double and multiple cropping practices; it would be increase prospects of employment on the form.
11. We should encourage labour intensive techniques in these activities and should not go for higher mechanization in the above activities, especially in dry areas.

5.4 CONCLUSION

It could be concluded that the agriculture is dominant to economic growth where women can acquire the best way to raise and cultivate their own nutritious food and sell at markets. So concluding the gender gap in agriculture is overbearing if we want to grow productivity and ensures food security. Agriculture policy has been largely blind, in order to formulate policy that is

sensitive to women's roles and needs in agriculture, it is first of all necessary to progress the dimension of their participation and to identify their contribution.

In the study area of Erode is one of the District in the State of Tamilnadu which is wholly depending upon the income of agricultural activities having most backward villages and the women working in agricultural activities by participating more actively than men. But, since inception women is facing more problems and difficulties in agriculture laboring than males. There are so many geographical, social, cultural and economic reasons for the same and also major reason for the same is that, highest human power is depending upon the earnings from agricultural laboring in the Erode District and they do not know other occupations other than agriculture. Therefore, majority of population in the Erode District is only depending upon the agriculture. Finally, the study clearly brings out with the conclusion that women work participation rate has been declined. It is due to the change of Worker definition only. The season wise and irrigation facilities are the main factors that determined the employment and wages of the agricultural women labour.