

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapter, attempts have been made to examine the women participation in agriculture. In context and magnitude, the data and information collected for the study was rich. This chapter, as such, lists out the important observations drawn from the earlier chapter and presents suggestions to improve the women participation in agriculture.

Women constitute half of the global population and one- third of labour force, but receive only one- tenth of world income and own less than one per cent of the world's property. The process of economic development induced several key changes in the structure of the developing economies that includes changes in the allocation of labour in different economic activities. The most important change concerns with the participation of women in the economic activities. The major occupation of rural women lies with agriculture and related activities, there by contributing about three- fourth of the labour required for agricultural operations. The prosperity and the growth of not only a nation but also the remaining half of the population depend on the status and development of its female population.

9.1 Findings of the study

The comprehensive analytical study on women participation in agriculture has mapped out important findings of theoretical value. These findings would provide the vital empirical support required for any future study on women participation in agriculture. The major results and the unique features of the present study are briefly and crisply summarized here.

Trend and pattern of women agricultural laboures

Women are regarded as the backbone of the rural panorama. About 75 percent of the Indian female populations are from rural families, who belonged to the small and marginal farmers and landless agricultural labourers (Census of India, 1991). The association of women in agriculture is an age-old practice. Over the years, there is a gradual realization of the key role of women in agricultural

development and their vital contribution in the field of agriculture, food security, horticulture, processing, nutrition, sericulture, fisheries, and other allied sectors. Women form the backbone of agriculture, in India, comprises the majority of agricultural labourers; women have been putting in labour not only in terms of physical output but also in terms of quality and efficiency.

The data on female workers in Cuddalore District shows that has increasing trend. The percentage of female workers is 32.6% in 1961 increased to 35.9% similarly the percentage of female cultivator is also increasing over the years that it is 27.9% in 1961 increased to 29.8% in 2011. Whereas the percentage of agriculture labour shows that at decreasing trend from 1961 to 2001 (48.9% in 1961 and 47.9% in 2001) further it is likely increased to 48.2% in 2011.

Total block wise data on male and female total worker population in Cuddalore district as per census 2011 shows that that the total worker population is greater in Cuddalore Block (101394) than the other blocks and it is smallest in Kattumannarkoil block (50365). In Nallur (13%) and Mangalur (31%) Block the percentage of female cultivator to its total is greater than the male cultivator's percentage. Main Agricultural Labourers is greater in Kurinjipadi Block (101394) than the other blocks and it is smallest in Keerapalayam block (13123). In most of the blocks the number of male Main Household Industrial workers is more than the female Main Household Industries in Cuddalore District.

The Marginal Worker is greater in Keerapalayam Block (29562) and it is smallest in Annagaramam block (13487). The marginal cultivator is greater in Mangalur Block (3954) than the other blocks and it is smallest in Annagramam block (668). In all the block the number of male marginal cultivator is more than the female marginal cultivator in Cuddalore District. The marginal agriculture labourers is greater in Keerapalayam Block (23576) than the other blocks and it is smallest in Annagramam block (10019). In most of the block the number of

female marginal agriculture labourers is more than the male marginal agriculture labourers in Cuddalore District.

Socio-economic characteristics of women agricultural labour

The select sample consists of 77.3 percent of labourers, 14.3 percent own field labourers and 8.4 per cent of the worker are working in their own field as well as labour. The socio- economics characteristics explain the condition of women agricultural labourers in the study area. Age is an important factor determining the occupation and income. majority of sample women are middle age group, 221 respondents (59.7%), only 79 respondents, (21.3%) and 70 respondents, (18.9%) are young and old age group respectively. Among 370 sample respondents majority of sample women are Hindu religion 75.4% only 24.6% sample women are Christian. Majority of sample women are SC/ST community, (56.4%), only 26.7% and 16.7% sample women are BC and MBC community respectively.

Among 370 total sample women, the majority are having primary school education 117 (38.1%) respondents, next to this 113 (36.8%) respondents, 99, (32.2%) and 41, (13.3%) are secondary and higher secondary, illiterate and college education respectively. It is inferred from the table that majority of the respondents are having completed school education. Majority of sample women are in nuclear family (84.9) only (15.1) sample women are in joint family. 48.1 % of the respondents are in roof type of house, 28.6 % and 23.2% of the respondents are in tiled and thatched types of house respectively. Majority of sample women households are not having children (60.8%), (34.3%), and (4.8%) sample women household are having 1 to 3 children and above-3 children respectively. majority of the sample women's households are having more than 3 adults in their family as well as the number of children in their family is too low.

With respect to the work experience in agriculture, majority of the sample respondent's experience in agriculture lies below-20 years (50.5%), only 39.4 % and 10% of the respondents experience lies between 20 to 40 years and above 40 years respectively. Major portion of the labourers are having work experience as below 20 years. The next second majority of them are having work experience as 20-40 years. It is clear from that the sample women are get into the agricultural work of their earlier ages. The respondents are having four different sub-occupations such as NREGP, Petty Shop, Street Vender, Milk Shop. In the total sample, majority of them are doing NREGP work (70.8%), 15.1%, 11.6% and 2.4% of the work respondents are doing business as milk shop, petty shop and street vender respectively. The sample women are getting work through NREGP when they are not getting any work in agriculture (off season). Thus NREGP helps the rural poor agricultural women labourers to support and run their families easily.

Majority of the respondents (61.6%) are working 5 hours (25.6%) and 12.8 are working 6 hours and 7 hours respectively in a day in agricultural work. Two third of the respondents works for 5 hours per day, less than one third of the respondent works for 7 hours a day and least number of respondents are (47) works for 6 hours a day. Majority of the respondents are works 50-100 days (52.4%), only (33.5%), and (14.0%) respondent are works for 100-200 and 200-350 days in a year in agriculture. Since agriculture sector provides employment only for particular season to the workers the majority respondents are getting work 50-100 days in a year. When they are not getting job in agriculture they go for other works.

Average household wealth composition of the sample women agricultural labour shows that the house wealth is the highest (Rs. 561400) the second largest wealth is house (Rs. 391000) and the least wealth is furniture (Rs. 343500). the average household income is the highest from main occupation (Rs. 1257) the

second largest household income is milk/ milk production (Rs. 30300) the third largest household income is subsidiary occupation (Rs. 28000) and the least income is income for others (Rs. 9600). There are five different sources of household expenditure namely; food item, education, fuel, health and others. Among these the average household expenditure is the highest for food item (Rs. 72900) the second largest expenditure is education (Rs.68300).with respect to the sample respondents about manage the household expenditure when there is no agricultural work. Among 370 sample women, the majority of the respondents manage the household expenditure by borrowing from money lenders (39.7%), 29.7%, 12.9%, 10.5%, and 7.0% are managing their household expenditure from the savings, borrowing from bank, NGO aids and government aids respectively.

Women participation in Agriculture

Participation refers to taking part in activities in various types of work often with others. If there is a need there is participation. Rural women have very hectic life. Her work starts from dawn and ends at mid night. The daily routine work begins from house cleaning, fetching water, dish washing, laundry, preparing food for family, care of children and sewing cloths. In addition to this, they take part in various agricultural activities. In the study area the women labourers take part in various agricultural activities.

Majority of the respondents entered in agricultural work in 21-30 years of age (49.1%), whereas 34.0% and 16.7% of the respondent entered in agriculture at 16-20 and below-15 years of age. majority of the respondents getting work (71.8%) in agriculture four to five days in a week (21.3%)] and (6.7%) respondent are getting work six to seven days and one to three days respectively. With respect to number of days of work in Various Agricultural Activities such as planting, leaf cutting, weeding, manuring, fertilizing, harvesting and threshing for the Crop Sugarcane. Majority of the sample women are works in planting weeding and harvesting for 5 to 10 days in the cultivation of sugarcane. There are seven

categories in the cultivation of Banana they are, planting, leaf cutting, making sand band, weeding, manuring, fertilizing, others. Majority of the respondents works for 5 to 10 days in each of the activities. There are five categories in women in agricultural work in the cultivation of ground nut they are, sowing, making sand band, weeding, fertilizing, and harvesting. Majority of the respondents works for below 5 days in the all the activities in the cultivation of ground nut. There are six categories in women in agricultural work in the cultivation of Paddy they are, sowing, weeding, harvesting, fertilizing, threshing and irrigation. The majority of the sample women works for 5 to 10 days in all these activities in the cultivation of Paddy. Majority of the sample women getting Rs. 1000 to Rs. 2500 as wage in cultivation of all the major crops in the study area.

All type of labourers are allocate maximum time to do agricultural work, it is 300.5 minutes in a day by married labour, 280 minutes by unmarried labour, 300.2 minutes by divorce and widow category of labourer. Second highest time devoted by these type of labourers is for cooking. The least time allocate by the women labourers is for caring animal. The contributions of rural credit facilities are remarkable on the improvement and development of the agriculture sector in rural areas. They study found out that, most of rural women are aware and applied for rural credit although there are some challenges which limit their access including poor organization of women and other cumbersome procedures in accessing them. Women in Cuddalore mentioned rural banks, micro finances, money lenders and peer to peer lending as the source of rural credits. Rural women who participated in agricultural activities had positive attitude towards agriculture..this implies that the factor of attitude have the highest significant relationship with women participation in agricultural activities. The finding are similar to the study on factors that influence the interest of women in agricultural entrepreneurship as pointed by Abdullah, (2013) who found that attitude is the factor which significantly influence the women interest in agriculture. That the

large number of women agricultural labours is involved in weeding, Homestead Gardening, Storage, Applying manure and Rearing Livestock. It is evident that the women are playing an important role in the livestock production and management activities. According to the problem faced by them in agricultural work in the study area. Majority (264) of them are told that low wage is the main problem 43 respondents converted that not enough work 67 respondents told that health problem are in agriculture work. It is interested to note that 56 respondents told that they are not facing any problem in agricultural work.

The relationship between female literacy rate and the work participation rate of women agricultural labourers is negative. It shows that the female labour participation in agriculture is affected by literacy and it is found to be significant at 1% level of significance. The relationship between sex ratio and female work participation rate in agriculture is positive and significant at 5% level of significance. Male work participation rate for agriculture is also the important factor included in the model, and the relationship between WPRFAL and WPRMAL is positive and significant at 1% level of significance. Low family income is the most important reason for the involvement of women labourers in various agricultural activities.

Socio economic variables were significantly related to the participation of women labourers in agriculture, the variables were age, community, education household size and nature of employment were significantly influenced by the participation at 5% and 1% level of significance respectively. With regard to age and education the negative coefficient (-0.02043 for age and -0.03004 for education) indicates that as age and education increases level of participation in agriculture decreases, the higher the age the women participation in work will decrease and the higher the level of education of farmer, higher the chances of getting better paying jobs. Further, this result re-affirms the position of many other studies, including Ogunbameru et.al. (2006), who identified age and education as

factors affecting women participation in agriculture. The coefficient of household size is positive (1.50103) and significant at 1% level of significance. The coefficient of nature of employment and community are positive (0.59603 for nature of employment and 0.37125 for community) and significant at 1% level of significance. The coefficient of marital status, farming experience and farm size is positive and insignificant. Coefficients of marital status, farming experience and farm size are not significant with the level of participation in agriculture. Rural women play multi-dimensional role ranging from household activities to farm activities. There is significant variation in the time that allocate by agriculture women labour on various activities on a day.

9.2 Suggestions

1. Making appropriate technologies available to rural women which focus on utilizing locally available materials.
2. Recognition of labour work of working women in the rural economy may be accounted in monetary terms.
3. Priority must be given to women in accessing credit on soft terms from bank and other financial institutions for setting up their business, for buying properties, and for house building so that they do not get exploited by the landlords.
4. Measures should be taken to enhance women's literacy rates. A separate education policy for women workers may serve the purpose.
5. Women must be involved in decision making bodies that have the potential to introduce structural changes. This action will bring some changes in the gender relations in the society.
6. Loans should be provided at free of interest to the rural women to start self-employment programmes like poultry, livestock, etc.
7. Initiatives should be taken by the government to pay uniform wage rates for both the sexes.

8. Women agricultural labour must be encouraged to form into labour unions in order to bring greater awareness on various issues and to resolve various problems like gaps between genders.

9.3 Scope for Future Research

1. A comparative study on male participation and female participation in agricultural work in Tamil Nadu
2. Comparative study on female participation in agricultural work in two different states.
3. Agricultural women workers perception on Agriculture.
4. Landless agricultural women labourers.
5. Women work in Non farm employment.