



ROLE OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE AND THEIR STATUS: A STUDY OF DISTRICT ALMORA IN UTTARAKHAND

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ABSTRACT India is an agricultural country. Where half the population is engaged in agriculture. Due to rural economy, women participate more in agricultural work. Because she also does household work like taking care of children, taking care of animals and cleaning. The purpose of the present study is to examine the role of women in agricultural and their status of district Almora in Uttarakhand. The present study has been taken from both primary and secondary sources. The study reveals the role of women in agriculture and their status of the respondents. It can be concluded that despite active participation in economically productive activities, women still do not have equal property rights and equal pay. And through this proposed study some suitable suggestions have also been given to improve the condition of women.

Keywords: Women, agricultural, participation, improvement, decision making,

1. INTRODUCTION

India is an agricultural economy in which most of the population lives in villages and most of the population is engaged in agriculture. Since agriculture is the main occupation in every developing country, participation of women in it is high. In the whole world, more than one fourth of the total population of women is engaged in agricultural work. On an average, 43 percent women in India, 20 percent in Latin America and 50 percent in Africa are engaged in agricultural work. (Patil and Babus 2018).

Women play an important and decisive role in all socio-economic sectors. The agricultural sector is the largest employer of women in any developing country. The number of female workforce in rural areas depends on the agricultural sector and allied sectors. In this region, women are playing an important role as wife and mother along with agricultural work. Men alone cannot achieve success in farming without the cooperation of women. Therefore, for successful farming, women need to get everything. Fabiyi, Danladi, & Mahmood, (2007). Women constitute 50 percent of the total population. With the passage of time and development women are

progressing everywhere. They are also part of the process of development. They are contribute not in the field of home making but also in educational development and also in the work force participation of the population. In all it is widely argued that rural women constitute the most vulnerable section of our society. There is also direct relationship between women employment and well-being of the community. An increase in women employment has directly affect the economic status of their family and also into better child health nutrition. Hazarika (2011). The contribution of women in the agricultural sector and the change in their status has brought significant changes towards the improvement of the society from social and economic point of view. Women have been playing an important role in agriculture since time immemorial, but their contribution has often been overlooked. In the early period, women were employed in traditional responsibilities and their contribution was not recognized socially and economically. However, with time, women are making progress towards equality in the agricultural sector. They are getting more rights to education and are getting training and support in agriculture through government schemes. Women are not only contributing to farming in the agricultural sector, but they are also moving towards progress. To enable them to work in a safe and developed environment, for example, retail and advanced technological measures are also being used more. With greater participation of women in agriculture, an important step is being taken towards social and economic equality in the society. With support, women are improving their status in the agricultural sector and are also gaining recognition socially. Sharma, (2019). Despite making important contributions in the agricultural sector, women are not allowed to take decisions in domestic work. Women still have to face discrimination in the field of equality. She is not able to make even the income from agriculture a part of her savings; she spends it all on household expenses. Singh & Solanki (2014). Women are now gradually increasing their work participation by taking shelter under the government schemes, there is diversity in their work. According to the Periodic Labor Survey 2022-23, the work participation rate of women in India is 37.0 percent. This is 4 percent more than last year, which shows that the condition of women is gradually improving. (Ministry of Statistics October 2023).

In the context of uttarakhand - The total population of Uttarakhand is 7231745, in which the total number of women is 3569030. And the number of households is 1479742. There are a total of 324336 widows in Uttarakhand which is 4.48% of the total female population. In which the number of divorced women is 5222 which is 0.07 percent of the total population. In the total population of Uttarakhand, 319155 women are playing the role of head of the household which is 21.57% of the total population.

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The present study proposed to the role of women in agricultural and their status of district Almora in Uttarakhand:

1. To see the different activities of agricultural and to examine the work participation of women in agricultural.

2. To examine the role of women in the family as a decision maker.

3. METHDOLOGY

The study has been conducted in Khatyari Panchayat of Almora district in Uttarakhand to study the participation of women in agriculture. There are a total of 63 villages in the Panchayat where a total of 1462 people live of the total population, there are 716 males and 746 females. Of the total female population, 240 are females aged between 18 to 55 years who are working. Out of every woman, the third woman has been randomly selected for the study proposal. The sample consist of 80 women actively engaged in various type of agriculture work. Data collection for the present study has been taken from both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consist of an interview program designed with the aim of securing information on various aspects of current research problems. Secondary sources have been taken from various magazines and journals and government sources. In the present study, the work participation of women in agricultural and decision making position of the respondents have been studied. The data is shown in tables and percentages to ensure correct interpretation of the data. $PERCENTAGE \% = \frac{frequency}{N} \times 100$

Where F = Number of Frequency

N = Number of Total Sample

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 WORK PARICIPATION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL

In rural areas, most of the agricultural work is done by women because besides looking after the household, women also contribute immensely in agriculture. In the proposed study, data has been collected from 80 women regarding their role and participation in agriculture. So that information can be obtained about the role of women in agricultural work through the study. The data collected is presented in a table. Table 4.1 shows the various activities of 80 women in agriculture from sowing seeds to harvesting crops. The table shows that 95 percent of women are involved in grass collection activity. Whereas the participation of women in livestock and threshing is 90 and 80 percent respectively.

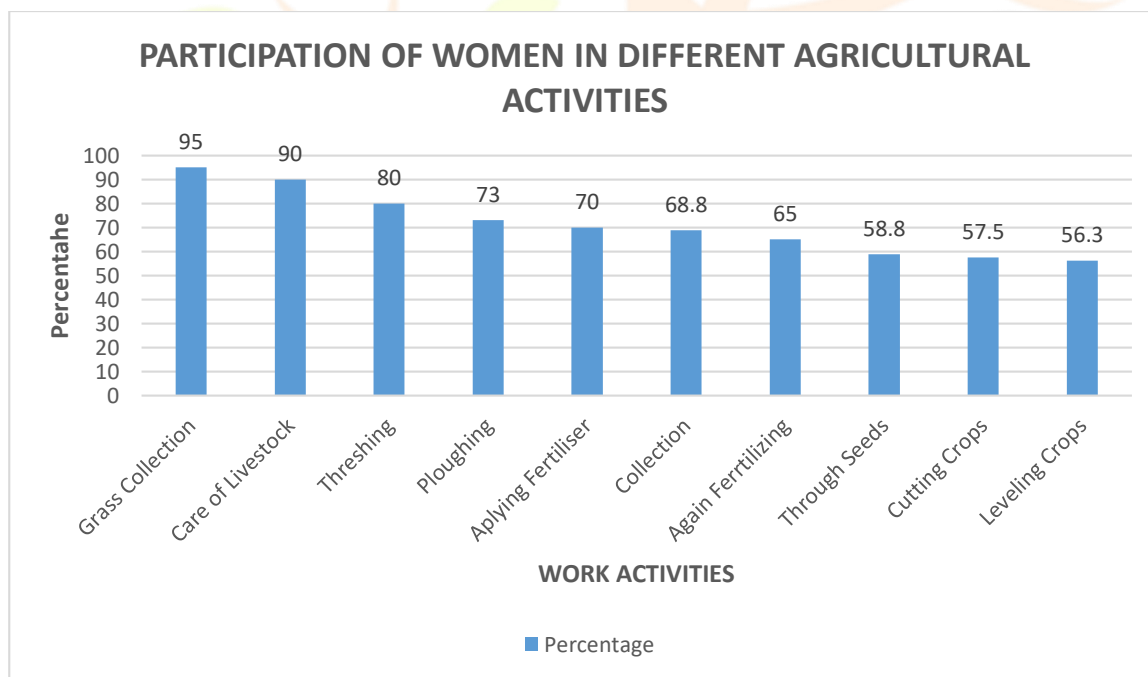
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TABLE NO. 4.1 PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN DIFFERENT AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

(N=80)

S.NO	WORK ACTIVITIES	NO OF FEMALE	PERRCENTAGE	RANK
1	GRASS COLLECTION	76	95.00	I
2	CARE OF LIVE STOCK	72	90.00	II
3	THRESHING	64	80.00	III
4	PLOUGHING	59	73.00	IV
5	APPLYING FERTILISER	56	70.00	V
6	COLLECTION	55	68.80	VI
7	FERTILIZING	52	65.00	VII
8	THROUGH SEEDS	47	58.80	VIII
9	CUTTING CROPS	46	57.50	IX
10	LEVELING FIELDS	45	56.30	X

Source: Field Survey (2024)



The table shows that 73 percent of women do the work of ploughing while 70 percent of women do the work of applying fertilizers in the fields. The table also shows that 68 per cent of women store grains while 65 per cent of women again work in adding manure. 58.80 per cent of women work in picking vegetables while 57.50 per cent of women work in harvesting the crop and 56.30 per cent of women spend in managing the fields after ploughing.

4.2 WOMEN WORK PARTICIPATION AND THEIR STATUS

TABLE NO. 4.2 WOMEN WORK PARTICIPATION AND THEIR STATUS

RESPONDES	YES	NO	Total
PROPERTY RIGHTS	24 (30.00)	56 (70.00)	80 (100%)
CASTING VOTE	80 (100.00)	0.00 (0.00)	80 (100%)
Any Political Position	35 (43.80)	45 (56.30)	80 (100%)
DECISION MAKER OF FAMILY	33 (41.30)	47 (58.80)	80 (100%)
GET EQUAL WAGE	30 (37.5)	50 (62.5)	80 (100%)

Source: Field Survey (2024)

Note: Figure in parentheses indicate percentage.

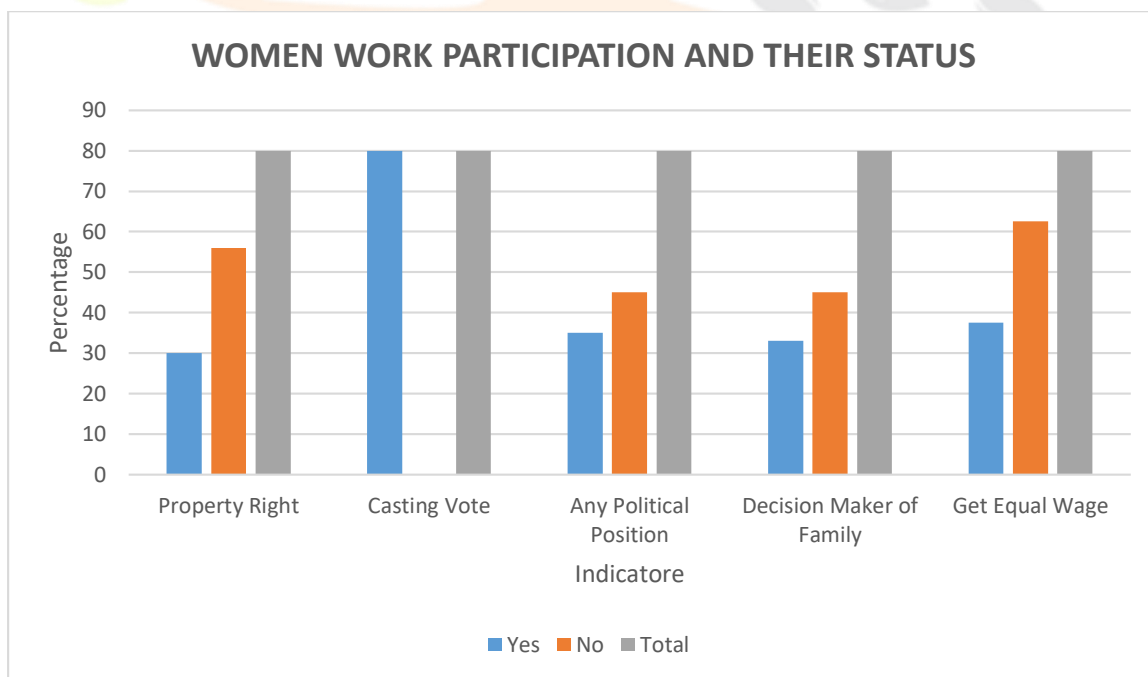


Table 5.1 shows the socio-economic status of women which includes indicators like property rights, voting participation, political representation, power to take family decisions and equal pay.

The table shows that only 30 per cent of women have rights over the property while 70 per cent of women do not own any kind of property. 100 percent women participate in the voting process which means that women are fully aware of their right to vote.

The table shows that 43.5 percent of women are politically active; they have either held political office in the past or are currently holding it. Whereas 56.5 percent women have not got opportunity in politics, which indicates that participation of women in the field of politics is still limited.

The table shows that only 41.3% of women participate in taking family decisions while 58.7% of women do not take decisions regarding their husbands, which shows that male dominance still prevails in the society.

The table shows that about pay equality, 37.5% of women get equal pay as men while 62.5% get less pay than men which points towards wage inequality.

5. CONCLUSION

It concluded that despite active participation in agriculture as an economically productive activity, women do not own property. Very few women have the right to own property. The study also concluded that women are playing an active role in exercising the right to vote. Even in the field of politics, women are less active than men and a huge difference is seen in equal wages. The percentage of women having decision making rights is very low. The present study suggests to improve the education level of women for better improvement in the status of women. They should be made more efficient to take up economic activities to uplift their economic status. To empower women, there is also a need to create awareness about their economic and political rights. Some reforms given below may be useful in improving the status of women.

1. Women should be shifted from agricultural sector to industrial sector so that they can get better opportunities.
2. Women should be encouraged to take up employment by giving them industrial opportunities and developing leadership qualities in them.
3. Women should be given special opportunities and encouragement to enter the field of politics.
4. Women should also get equal rights in property, for this, firstly awareness campaigns should be conducted and secondly the laws should be made stricter.
5. To ensure that women get proper respect in the family, they should be empowered and various types of domestic schemes should be started for them.
6. To ensure that women get proper respect at home, a strict law of equal wages should be made and that law should also be properly monitored.

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