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Analysis of status and Socioeconomic of Female Agricultural workers in the Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract: The agricultural labour and the Indian economy rely heavily on women. The physical result is produced efficiently and with high quality by women who offer the work. A large portion of the agricultural labour consists of rural women, sometimes referred to as "agriculture women," who are essential to the industry. The data required by policymakers & government to raise agriculture women's economic & social status is provided. This investigation to examine agricultural women's status and socioeconomic contribution in the study area. The researcher will select the Himachal Pradesh districts of Kangra and Una at spontaneously. The present study makes use of both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data will acquire from sources including books, journals, reports, and records kept by the Agricultural Departments at the State, District, Division, and Block levels will use to analyze the current state of agriculture's workers. Secondary data will gather from relevant sources with the goals in mind. The researcher will conduct an extensive interview schedule to acquire primary data from the sample of 500 respondents.

Keywords: Agriculture, Socioeconomic, Status, Female, Himachal Pradesh, Labour

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INTRODUCTION

India's agricultural sector, which comprises the country's largest private businesses, has been and will remain the engine of growth for the country's economy. Consequently, the fact that agriculture's once dominant role in the economy has been steadily dwindling is cause for concern. As of 2013 about half of India's worker force was engaged in agriculture. To improve people's capabilities through things like better education, healthcare, and social services, a country must first experience robust economic growth. This improves people's chances of making money in the future. Yet not everyone in society has shared equally in the benefits of economic expansion. Without a progressive political drive to guarantee that all people, irrespective of their social rank, gender, or caste, gain equally, the benefits of economic expansion will only reach a tiny fraction of the population. For agricultural expansion to be sustainable, it must contribute to overall economic growth. Based on data collected in South Asia, "developing countries which have achieved sustained economic growth typically involve the countries in which the rate of agricultural growth exceeds population growth" (HDR in 2002). Even though more individuals of color are entering the agricultural workforce, they are still unable to improve their living conditions due to low wages and long hours spent working in the fields. Modern agricultural laborers face a number of challenges. In order to improve their living conditions, it is imperative to tackle this problem.

CONTRIBUTION OF AGRICULTURE IN COUNTRY'S GDP & IMPORTANCE IN ECONOMY

Agriculture, industry, and services have traditionally been the three pillars around which India's economy & GDP have been built. At now, the country's economy is rated seventh in terms of size and third in terms of purchasing power, and it has become one of the world's fastest-growing economies. However, agriculture's importance is indisputable. With the net cropped area, India jumped to the top spot, with the United States & China following closely behind. It should be mentioned, nevertheless, that when compared to other larger nations, none can match India's proportion of arable land to total area, which stands at approximately 42% (FAO, 2018). Nearly 60% of India's farmland is irrigated by the monsoon rains, despite the fact that the country ranks high among the world's leading agricultural producers. With 394.6 million acres (159.7 million hectares) of land irrigated, India is second only to the United States in terms of total land area. With a total of 215.6 million acres (82.6 million hectares), it boasts the largest irrigated agriculture area on the planet. One good thing about our country's climate is that it's warm enough all year round to cultivate a variety of crops.

According to the World Trade Statistical Review (2020), India ranked sixth in agricultural product exports in 2020. Roughly 60% of India's population worked in agriculture, with the rest split nearly evenly between the service and industrial sectors. Mineral & energy resources in India are substantial, but not abundant, when one considers the country's territory and population number. Fig. 1 shows that India's Gross Domestic Product is still nearly 17.6 percent attributable to agriculture and related industries like forestry and fisheries, even though this share has decreased in the past decade. Additionally, these sectors account for approximately 11% of India's exports and provide livelihoods for 50% of the population. It is also a source of raw material for a huge number of industries. Agriculture growth rate enhancement is crucial for various types of reasons such as maintaining food stability, achieving an overall growth of the economy, and improving rural employment and income, which is currently abysmally poor. Regardless of the relative contribution, in the last five years until 2019-20, the average growth rate in the agriculture sector was 4.1 percent (FICCI, 2020).

At the global level, Indian agriculture has established its presence after the Green Revolution. India is the biggest producer of pulses and milk all over the world and comes in second place in the production of wheat, rice, vegetables, sugarcane and fruits. During the year 2019-20, India's food grain production surpassed 297.5 million tonnes. The production of rice exceeded 118. 87 million tonnes and the production of wheat exceeded 107.86 million tonnes (Agriculture Statics, Department of Economics & Statics, 2020). Agriculture not only provides work to adult males of a household but also to the females of the household. Females work extensively in the cultivation of major grains and millets by involving themselves in the preparation of land, collection and production of seeds, sowing, transplantation, application of manure/fertilisers, weeding, threshing, winnowing, harvesting and storage of products.

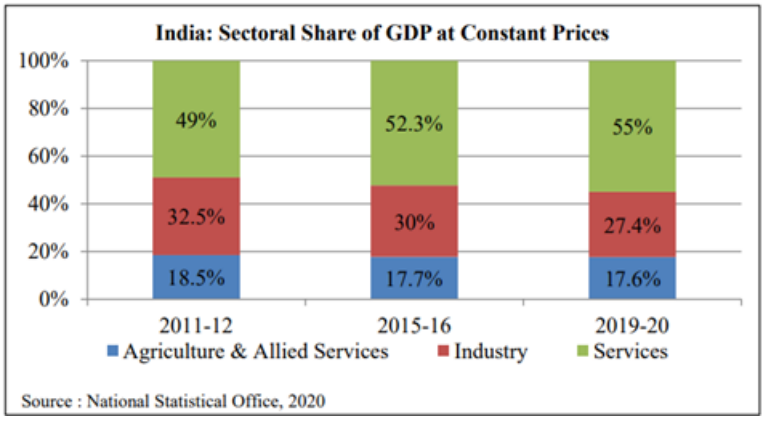

Figure 1: Sectoral share of GDP at Constant Prices

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the status of women in agriculture in Kangra and Una district in Himachal Pradesh.
2. To study the socioeconomic situations that women working in agriculture in the Kangra and Una district.

METHODOLOGY

The study of how researchers in a particular discipline conduct their investigations is known as "methodology," and it involves both theoretical and empirical examination. The agricultural sector is crucial to national and international economic growth. Consequently, the nation continues to place a premium on encouraging fast, sustained, and widespread expansion in the agricultural sector. This study aims to investigate the work & earnings habits, socioeconomic contributions to household income, and spending and saving behaviors of agricultural women in the study area.

Selection of the Study Area

The researcher will study the previous work devote to the topic of agricultural women workers and the challenges faced by these individuals. After performing a preliminary study at the state level, the investigator will settle on using the statistical archives of the Himachal Pradesh government as the focus of the current study.

- **Collection of data**

The present study makes use of both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data will acquire from sources including books, journals, reports, and records kept by the Agricultural Departments at the State, District, Division, and Block levels will use to analyze the current state of agriculture's workers. Secondary data will gather from relevant sources with the goals in mind. The researcher will conduct an extensive interview schedule to acquire primary data from the sample of 500 respondents.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Women's Agricultural Labourers Categorised by Land Area

There are three categories into which the 500 women who worked in agriculture were sorted: group I from the Kangra district. The Landless Women Agricultural Labourers from the group 2 Una district, Himachal Pradesh. Agricultural producers in Group II have 1-30 centimetres of land, and those in Group III have 31-50 centimetres of mutual land area. In addition to being naturally dry, the lands are only farmed when it rains.

Table 1: Classifying Wise Women Agricultural Labourers by Land Size

Types	No. of Respondents	%
Group I	335	67
Group II	92	18.4
Group III	73	14.6
Total	500	100.00

Out of 500 respondents, 335 fall into the "Group I" group, meaning they do not own any land, as shown in the table above. Group II has 92 respondents with 1-30 centimetres of land, while Group III includes 73 respondents with 31-50 centimetres of land, all of which are land that is dry. It was observed that 67% of the participants chosen for the research were female farm labourers without access to land.

Using Respondent Groups for Community-Based Categorization

Table 2 displays the categorization of the chosen female agricultural labourers in the research region according to their community during the research period. The data shows that Schedule Community women make up the bulk of the sample of agricultural labourers. The agricultural labour is their sole source of income.

Table 2: Respondent Communal Groups Categorised by Community

Size	Group I	Group II	Group III	Total
Backward Community	20 (5.97)	09 (9.7)	07 (9.5)	**36 (7.2)**
Most Backward Community	86 (25.67)	23 (25)	16 (21.9)	**125 (25)**
Scheduled Community	229 (68.35)	60 (65.21)	50 (68.4)	**339 (67.8)**
	335	**92**	**73**	**500**

Total	**(100.0)**	**(100.0)**	**(100.00)**	**(100.0)**
χ^2	***6.05***	4 d.f (9.48)	**Not Significant**	

According to the data presented in the table above, out of 500 women who worked as agricultural labourers, 339 (60.8%) are members of the Scheduled Community, 125 (2.5%) are members of the Most Backward Community, and 36 (7.2%) are members of the Backward Caste. Residents of this area's backward communities are sometimes quite well-off financially, and many of them own huge plots of land on which they cultivate food. In Group I, out of 335 women agricultural labourers that were selected, 68.35% (229 people) are members of the Scheduled Community, 25.67% (86 people) are members of the Most Backward Community, and 5.97% (20 people) are members of the Backward Community. The second group consists of 92 female agricultural labourers; of them, 65.21 percent (60) are members of the Scheduled Caste, 25 percent (23), the Most Backward Caste, and 9.7 percent (09) are considered to be members of the Backward Caste. Group III has 73 female agricultural labourers; of these, 68.4% (50) are members of the Scheduled Community, 21.9% (16) are members of the Most Backward Community, and 9.5% (07) are members of the Backward Community. The results showed that of the three categories, Scheduled Community had the highest percentage of responders, followed by Most Backward Community and Backward Community. The women who work as farm labourers in the Namakkal district are said to be members of the Scheduled Caste. We can see that the computed value is smaller than the table value (6.05), thus we compare the two. The table value is 9.49. It demonstrates that group & community are unrelated. This is because there is no correlation between community and group size in the research region.

Classification of Respondents by Age Groups

The age distribution of the 500 women farm labourers who were part of the study's three groups is shown in table 3. There were four age groups: young (those under 30), medium (those between 31 and 50), and old (those 50 and older).

Table 3: Analysis of Groups by Age

Age/Category	**Group I**	**Group II**	**Group III**	**Total**
Young	39 (11.7)	05 (5.5)	09 (17.5)	**53** **(10.6)**
Middle	236 (70.4)	68 (73.9)	58 (75.0)	**362** **(72.4)**
Old	60 (17.9)	19 (20.6)	06 (7.5)	**85** **(17)**

Total	335 (100.0)	92 (100.0)	73 (100.00)	**500** **(100.0)**
χ^2	***9.60***	4 d.f.	**Not Significant**	

Based on the data in the table above, it is clear that 72.4% (362) of the 500 research participants are in a middle age, 17.0% (85) are in the elderly, and 10.6% (53), are in the younger age \. Seventy-0.4, or 236%, of the female agricultural labourers in Group I are middle-aged. In terms of age group, 17.9% of respondents are in the older, while 11.7% are in the younger bracket. In Group II, 73.9% of the participants are in the medium age bracket, 20.6% are in the elderly, and 5.5% are in the younger age. Of the people who filled out the survey in Group III, 75 percent are in the middle age bracket, 17.5 percent are in the youth bracket, and 7.5 percent are in the senior citizen. The majority of women agricultural labourers are middle-aged, according to both the overall sample & categories used for selection. Group II had the largest proportion of people in the medium age bracket, Group III had the largest proportion of people in the youth bracket (17.5%), and Group II had the largest proportion of people in the senior bracket (20.6). The youngest age group in Group II had the lowest percentage, at 5.5.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significance the status of women in agriculture in Kangra and Una district in Himachal Pradesh

Categorization of Community Respondents by Age

Table 4 shows the distribution of the 500 female agricultural labourers by age group in each of the communities that were part in the study.

Table 4: Classification of Community Selected Respondents by Age

Age/Category	**Backward**	**Most Backward**	**Scheduled Community**	**Total**
Young	08 (22.2)	26 (20.8)	48 (14.1)	**82** **(16.4)**
Middle	22 (61.1)	61 (48.8)	269 (79.4)	**352** **(70.4)**
Old	06 (16.6)	38 (30.4)	22 (6.4)	**66** **(13.2)**
Total	**36** **(100.0)**	**125** **(100.0)**	**339** **(100.0)**	**500** **(100.0)**

χ^2	***28.66***	4 d.f. (9.57)	**Significant at 5%**

According to the data in the table above, out of the 36 participants from the Backward Community who took part in the study, 61.1% are in the middle age, 16.6% are in the old age bracket, and 22.2% are in the young age. The majority of the women who work as agricultural labourers are in their middle age, making up 48.8 percent of the 125 Most Backward Community. Among the responders, 30.4% are in their twilight years, while 20.8% are in their prime working years. Out of the 339 responses from the Scheduled Community, 79.4 (269) fall into the medium age bracket, 6.4 (22) qualify as old age, and the remaining 48 (14.1) are classified as young age. Agricultural women labourers' ages & communities are not significantly different, according to the chi-square test. It was found that the bulk of the women agricultural labourers are middle-aged, both when looking at the entire population and when looking at them by community. Scheduled people have a higher proportion of people in their middle years (79.4% vs. Backward & Most Backward Communities). Scheduled communities have far lower percentages of young people (14.1%) and older individuals (6.4%) compared to the other two groups. In the research region, a correlation between age & community was found using a chi-square test.

Classification of Female Agricultural Workers by Family Size

When looking at indicators of family income, food expenditure, and educational attainment, the size of the respondents' families plays a significant role. A medium-sized family has five or more members, a large family has six or more, and a tiny family has four. The number of people per household for each of the three categories of respondents is detailed.

Table 5: Women Agricultural Labourers' Group-Wise Family Size

Size	**Group I**	**Group II**	**Group III**	**Total**
Small	176 (52.6)	62 (67.4)	54 (73.9)	**292** **(58.4)**
Medium	97 (28.9)	19 (20.6)	10 (13.7)	**126** **(25.2)**
Large	62 (18.5)	11 (11.9)	9 (12.3)	**82** **(16.4)**
Total	**335** **(100.0)**	**92** **(100.0)**	**73** **(100.00)**	**500** **100.0)**
χ^2	***28.77***	4 d.f.	**Significant at 5%**	

Among the 500 respondents, 58.4% (292) come from small-sized families, 25.2% (126) from medium-sized families, and 16.4% (82) from large-sized families made it into the sample of female farm labourers. This information is derived from the table above. It can be seen from the data in Table 5 that out of the 176 women agricultural labourers in Group I, 52.6% are from small families, 28.9% are from medium families, and 18.5% are from large families. Of the people who participated in Group II's survey, 67.4% (62) come from small families, 20.6% (19) are from medium-sized families, and 11.9% (11) reside in large families. Groups I, II, and III agricultural labourers do not differ significantly with respect to family size, according to the chi-square test. We found that most farmers are part of small-scale families, both when looking at the total number of farmers and when looking at them by type. Compared to the other two categories, Group III has a higher percentage of small size families (73.9 percent). Family size is lower (18.5) compared to the other two categories. According to the results of the chi-square test, the Groups are directly related to the size of the families. Just because the tabular value is lower than the computed value.

Family Size of Women in Agricultural Labour by Community

This study's sample of community members and their family sizes are detailed in Table 6. The joint family structure is almost extinct in Tamil Nadu.

Table 6: Family Size of Women in Agricultural Labour by Community

Size	**Backward**	**Most Backward**	**Scheduled Community**	**Total**
Small	15 (41.7)	44 (35.2)	84 (24.8)	**143** **(28.6)**
Medium	11 (30.5)	16 (12.8)	79 (23.3)	**106** **(21.2)**
Large	10 (27.8)	65 (52)	176 (51.9)	**251** **(50.2)**
Total	**36** **(100.0)**	**125** **(100.0)**	**339** **(100.00)**	**500** **100.0)**
χ^2	***12.34***	4 d.f.	**Significant**	

Based on the data in the table, it was found that out of the 36 women from the Backward Community who participated in the survey, 41.7% (15 people) come from small families, 30.5% (11) from medium families, and 27.8% (10 people) from large families. According to the data in the table, out of the total number of

respondents from the most backward community, 52% (65) of the women agricultural labourers are from large families, 35.32% (44) are from tiny families, and 12.8% (16) are from very large families. Large families are more common than smaller ones in most underdeveloped communities. Out of the total number of responders from the Scheduled Community, 51.9% (176) have huge families, 24.8% (84%) have medium families, and 23.3% (79) have very large families. Family size of agricultural labourers is not significantly different among communities, according to the chi-square test. The majority of farmers are middle-aged, according to both the total sample & category-wise selections. In the 52nd Most Backward Community, the percentage of families with many children is higher. The Most Backward community has a higher percentage of small-size families compared to the other two. The percentage of large-sized families in the Scheduled Community is 51.9 percent, higher than the percentages for the other two sizes.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significance the socioeconomic situations that women working in agriculture in the Kangra and Una district.

CONCLUSION

The agriculture industry employs 80% of economically active women in India, compared to 63% of males. Approximately 1.5 million males work with livestock, whereas 75 million women are involved in dairying & 20 million are involved in other animal activities. Women make up almost 33% of India's rural workforce, according to the latest census. Among rural workers, women make up about 20% of cultivators, 39% of agricultural labourers, 32% of domestic industrial workers, and 15% of other occupations. Among economically active males, just 63% work in agriculture, whilst 78% of working women do the same. Agricultural labourers make up about half of rural women's workforce, while cultivators account for 37%. Male workers represent 24 and 55 percent, respectively. There are three categories into which the 500 women who worked in agriculture were sorted: group I from the Kangra district, 335 fall into the "Group I" group, meaning they do not own any land. Based on the data in the table above, it is clear that 72.4% (362) of the 500 research participants are in a middle age, 17.0% (85) are in the elderly, and 10.6% (53), are in the younger age.

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