

ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS OF RURAL WOMEN INVOLVED IN AGRICULTURE IN THE PERIPHERAL AREAS OF TALUKA HYDERABAD

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ABSTRACT: *The Present research study was conducted to determine the socio-economic factors and participation of rural women in agricultural activities in 2013-2014. Six union council of taluka Hyderabad (rural) were randomly selected for study purpose. Twenty samples from each union council (a total sample size of 120 respondents) were interrogated. The result indicated that average family size was 13.61 ± 5.51 members from which (60%) of the respondents had joint family system. Majority (61%) of the respondents had small land holdings (below 15 acres), and (45.3%) of the respondents were tenants. Further it was found that (55%) of the respondents had income below 120,000 per annum. The study also revealed that (80%) had agriculture as a primary source of income and (65%) of the women contributing in household's expenditure. Most of the women strongly participated in almost all agricultural activities, from seed sowing to harvesting, thinning, weeding, and hoeing of various crops i.e. vegetables (92%), wheat (85%), cotton (93%), and rice (83%) respectively, and also found engaged in post-harvest activities such as Gurr making (40%), Picking & packaging of fruits (70%), and collection of farm yard manure (88.3%).*

Key words: Women, agriculture, participation.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is an important sector, providing food to the fast-growing population of the Pakistan; this sector currently contributes 24 percent to GDP, generates productive employment opportunities for 47% of the labor force, and renders 60% of the rural population depending upon this sector for its livelihood [1]. It play a vital role in ensuring food security, generating overall economic growth, reducing poverty and transforming towards industrialization [2]. About 70% peoples of the Pakistan work force in agriculture sector comprised of women and their job conditions are really tough, yet their share of toils remained unheeded and unaccounted [3]. Women are the backbone of the development of rural and national economies. They comprise 43% of the world's agricultural labor force, which rises to 70% in some countries [4]. Rural women play a key role in agricultural sector production by working with full passion in production of crops right from the soil preparation till post harvest and food security activities [5]. Rural women in Pakistan play a multi-faceted role both at home and farm level, they are actively involved in farm-related operations [6], besides fulfilling their responsibilities as homemaker, their participation varies with the socio-economic setup and local traditions [7]. Women are extensively involved in production of major crops, cotton and vegetables picking, rice sowing, ridge making, sowing seeds, manual weeding, thinning, collecting sticks, hoeing, Gurr making, post harvesting, livestock management, poultry farming, and home management [8]. Rice and cotton cultivation in Sindh and Punjab jointly account for more than one-third of women's annual agricultural activities [9]. With respect to crops, women's participation is particularly high in cotton, rice, pulses and vegetables [10]. Women constitute about 25% of all family workers in agriculture households and 75%

of part time workers [11]. In spite of their major contribution in this sector, they are always pushed back by the policy makers [12]. The aim of the present study was to analyze socio-economic conditions of rural women involved in agricultural farming activities in peripheral areas of Taluka Hyderabad (Rural), District Hyderabad, Sindh.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The study was conducted in taluka Hyderabad(rural), which consists of eleven union councils, six union councils were randomly selected. Two villages were selected at random from each selected union council and from each village ten women respondents involved in agricultural activities were selected randomly, there by making a sample of 120 respondents. The data were collected with the help of a pre-tested and validated interview schedule. This study was conducted using descriptive method. A questionnaire was designed to know about the reason for not developing since long time and also see the actual position of the women respondents in agriculture. A4 point liker scale was used for analyzing the proper answer of the respondents. Sample size of the respondents was determined by using suggested formula. The population of this study was farm household's women; household women were classified into three age groups in this study. In view of the study needs, the interview schedules were used as a research tool. Study was based socio-economic characters with qualitative mode of variables. The data were collected in the form of complex qualitative information. So the interview schedule turned out to be the best tool for this study. The collected data coded and entered into computer for analysis, analysis was accomplished by employing SPSS software (i.e., 20.0 version of statistical package for social sciences).

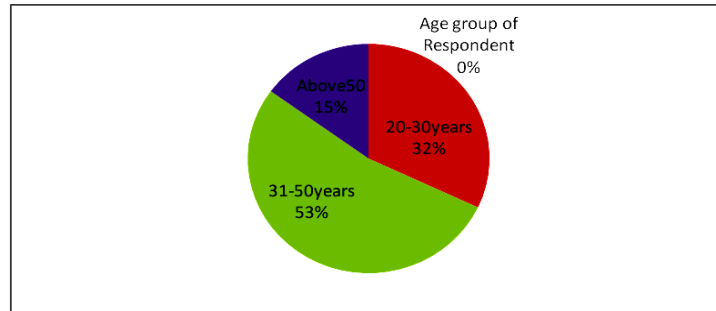


Figure 1. Distribution of respondents by age group.

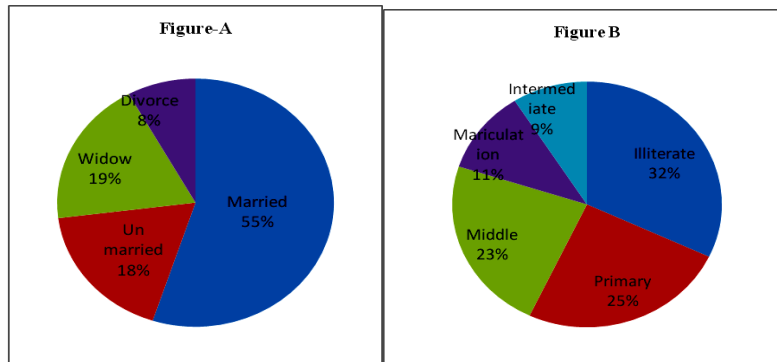


Figure 2. Marital status and Education level of the respondents

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The socioeconomic characteristics of rural women such as age, educational level, marital status, land size, farming experience, play an important role in determining rural women participation in agricultural activities:

Figure 1, reveals that about 32% of respondents were aged up to 30 years, while most of the subjects 53% fell in 31-50 range and just 15% hailed from above 50 years of age group. The age of respondents 43.50 ± 9.35 years were observed. Similar results were obtained by [13] he found that individuals of all age groups were involved in this activity

Figure 2A shows that a majority (55%) of the respondents were married, while (18%) were unmarried followed by (19%) widowed and (8%) women were divorce. Figure 2B depicts that majority of women (32%) were illiterate, followed by (25%) of the respondents with primary education only, whereas (23%) of them were middle passed and (11%) were matriculate level, although only (9%) were intermediate. These socio economic factors were also observed in many international studies as reported by [9].

Note: Kacha house = Made of mud, Pacca house = Made of bricks, Kacha-cum-pacca house = Mix

The figure 3 show that approximately (45%) of the respondents lived in mix conditions on the other hand (35%) and (20%) of the respondents were living in pacca and kacha housing conditions, respectively. These results coincide with those of [8] who found that (45.5%) of the respondents had mix houses, whereas (35%) and (19.5%) had kacha and pacca houses, respectively.

Figure 4 indicates that minimum family size of household consisted of 7 members and maximum consisted of 24 members and average family size was of 12.61 ± 4.53 members, more or less similar results were also observed by [2] and [14].

Figure 5 indicate that (53%) respondent had agriculture as a secondary source income and (80%) had agriculture as a primary source of income. However [15] assessed the participation of rural women in income generating activities in agricultural sector.

Figure 6 show that about half (55%) of the respondents had income below 120,000 and (23%) fell in the category of (120,000-150,000), on the other hand only (22%) of the respondents had annual income more than 150,000 rupees annual

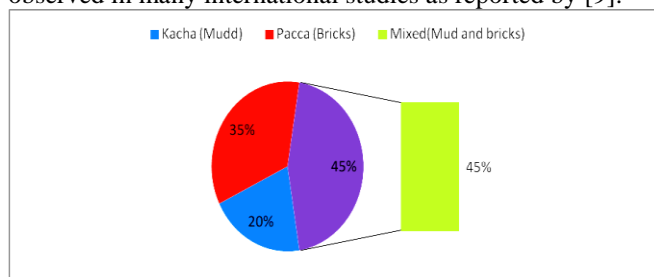


Figure 3. House types of the respondent folks.

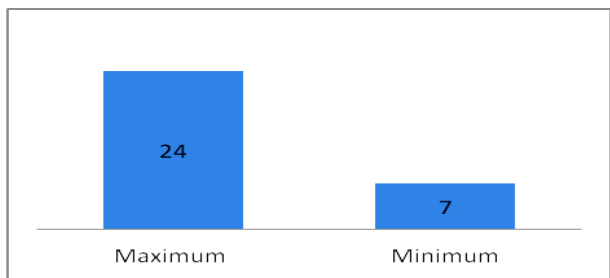


Figure 4. Family Size of rural women working in agricultural activities.

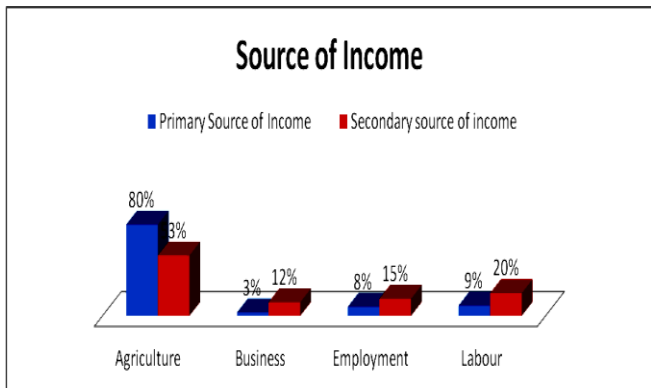


Figure 5. Primary and Secondary Source of income.

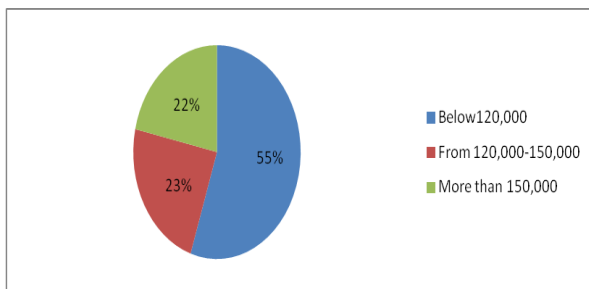


Figure 6. Annual income of respondent's household from agriculture.

The figure 7 reflects that majority (61%) respondents had small land holdings (below 15 acres), whereas (26%) respondents had medium land holdings (15 to 25), on the other hand (15%) respondents had large land holdings (above 25 acres). Results in this particular figure showed that respondents mainly belonged to small farmer's categories. Similar results were found by [16]. He found that a major proportion of the respondents had small size of land holding (below 12.5 acres).

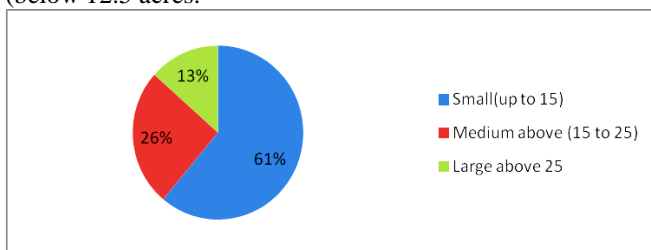
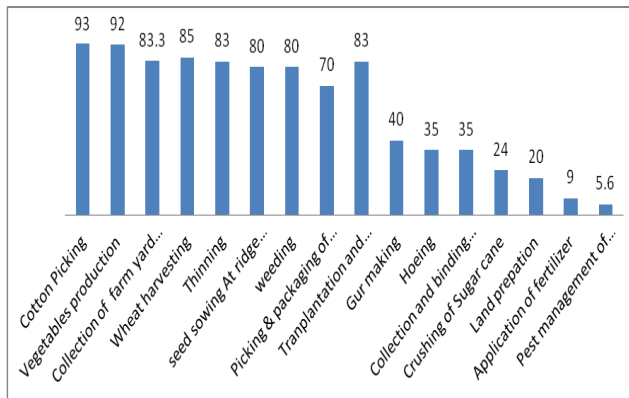


Figure 7. Size of land holding.

Figure 8: Participation of rural women in Agricultural activities.

The figure 8 indicates that the maximum participation of rural women was observed in cotton picking (93%), followed by vegetable production (92%), collection of farm yard manure (88.3%), wheat harvesting (85%), thinning (83%), seed sowing at ridge and nursery (80%), weeding (80%), picking and packing of fruits (70%), transplantation and harvesting of paddy (83%), Gurr making (40%), hoeing (35%), collection and binding of cotton stick (35%), crushing of sugar cane (24%) land preparation (20%) respectively. The Results are in agreement with those of [2] and [17] who observed that in rural areas of Pakistan, women participate in all operations related to crop such as



sowing, transplanting, weeding and harvesting, as well as in postharvest operations such as threshing, drying, and storage. Participation of rural women observed very low in application of fertilizers (9%), pest management activities (5.6%) our findings agree with [4].

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that Agriculture is the primary source of income (~80%) and for house hold expenditure the women are contributing (~65%). There is a strong participation of women mostly in all agriculture activities such as : seed sowing, thinning, weeding, and hoeing of various crops i.e. vegetables, wheat, cotton, and rice, and also found engaged in post- harvest activities such as Gurr making, Picking & packaging of fruits, and collection of farm yard manure. In spite of their major contribution in agriculture sector, they are always pushed back by the policy makers and society. It was also observed that Illiteracy and lack of awareness is the big problem seen in between rural women.

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