



Problems of Agriculture Women Labours

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1. Introduction

Agriculture has long been the backbone of rural economies, especially in countries with large agrarian populations like India. In this sector, women play an indispensable role, contributing significantly to the cultivation, processing, and management of various agricultural activities. Despite their contributions, women agricultural laborers often remain marginalized and face an array of challenges that are often overlooked in discussions about rural and agricultural development. Women in agriculture labor are typically involved in arduous tasks that include planting, weeding, harvesting, and post-harvest processing. Yet, they tend to receive lower wages than their male counterparts and are disproportionately impacted by issues of limited job security, lack of social protection, and inadequate access to resources such as land, credit, and education. Socio-cultural barriers further exacerbate their difficulties, as traditional gender roles and lack of empowerment restrict their economic mobility and decision-making power.

In recent years, awareness has grown around the need for gender-sensitive policies in agriculture to address the unique challenges faced by women laborers. This paper explores the multifaceted problems encountered by women agricultural workers, including wage disparities, access to health care, educational deficits, and socio-economic exclusion. The analysis highlights the urgent need for reforms that address these issues to improve the lives of women agricultural laborers and ensure a more equitable agricultural sector.



2. Review of literature

Kaur (2024) Women play a significant but frequently underappreciated role in the country's agricultural productivity. In India, women continue to have severe disadvantages when it comes to compensation, land rights, and representation in local farmer organizations, even though they make up the majority of the labour force. Poverty, marginalization, and gender inequity are common problems for women in farming areas. So the present paper has been planned with the objective to address the issues and challenges of women engaged in agriculture and allied activities. Various research papers pertaining to such issues have been reviewed to attain the set objective. Women have to play a dual role at the farm and at home. Lack of technical knowledge in agriculture, low access to land, finances, credit, and socio-cultural barriers are major challenges faced by them. Wages for women working as agriculture labours are lower. It is necessary to address these issues and is essential to implement gender-specific interventions in order to boost agricultural productivity.

Kumar (2020) Agriculture is the first culture that man learned to practice as a means of livelihood. It is the primary sector of any economy whether it is developed or developing. Agriculture is considered the backbone of Bihar's rural economy and is a family enterprise and an important engine of rural growth and poverty reduction. Bihar's economic security is heavily dependent on agriculture and in terms of employment; it is the most important source, especially for rural women. Women in India are the backbone of society and an important resource in agriculture and the rural economy. They make essential contributions to agricultural development and allied and household activities and pursue multiple livelihood strategies. These activities include producing agricultural crops, cleaning animals, preparing food, working in rural enterprises, engaging in trade and marketing, caring for family members and maintaining their homes. About 63% of all economically active men are engaged in agriculture as compared to 78% of women. Traditionally, women have always played an important role in agriculture as farmers, co-farmers, wage labours, and managers of farms. They have conventionally been producers of food from seed to kitchen. Women carry heavier work burdens in food production, however, due to gender discrimination, get lower returns for their work. The multiple roles of women lead to a significant contribution in real terms to the productive system. But it is unfortunate that her role is not adequately recognized and properly her contribution is not qualified in the male-dominated



Hiremath (2014) The woman is the backbone of the agriculture workforce but worldwide her hard work has mostly been unpaid. She does the most tedious and back-breaking tasks in agriculture animal husbandry and homes women suffer from multiple burdens on their time due to their home making, child and income nearing responsibilities. Recent studies highlight that women in India are major producer of food in terms of value, and a number of hours worked is nearly 63 percent of all economically active. The paper also highlighted the difficulties of agriculture women labour have face lots of problems and women did not know how to face the problem. According to my opinion Government has to take an interest in solving their problems, the government should not only invent the schemes, but they have to see whether the schemes are working successfully or not. By this, the agriculture women labour will come out of these problems and can lead a better life.

Table: 5.1 Likert Scale Responses of Wage related problems

Wage Problems	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
Often paid significantly less than workers in other sectors	29 (9.67)	43 (14.33)	71 (23.67)	67 (22.33)	90 (30.0)
Seasonal work leads to inconsistent and unreliable income	28 (9.33)	42 (14.0)	54 (18.0)	49 (16.33)	127 (42.33)
Lack of Minimum Wage Laws	24 (8.0)	13 (4.33)	66 (22.0)	85 (28.33)	112 (37.33)
Delayed Payments	93 (31.0)	119 (39.67)	25 (8.33)	36 (12.0)	27 (9.0)
Employers not paying the full amount owed or making unfair deductions	168 (56.0)	76 (25.33)	32 (10.67)	11 (3.67)	13 (4.33)
Women earning less than men for the same work	12 (4.0)	29 (9.67)	23 (7.67)	77 (25.67)	159 (53.0)
No extra pay for long hours beyond the standard workday	29 (9.67)	74 (24.67)	62 (20.67)	52 (17.33)	83 (27.67)
Wages given as goods instead of money, reducing financial flexibility	109 (36.33)	49 (16.33)	52 (17.33)	66 (22.0)	24 (8.0)
Agricultural laborers often have to repeatedly request their wages	43 (14.33)	32(10.67)	47 (15.67)	81 (27.0)	97 (32.33)
No immediate payment for work	93 (31.0)	119(39.67)	25(8.33)	36(12.0)	27 (9.0)



The above table elaborates the opinions of women agricultural labors on wage related problems, all the responses are collected with the help of likert scale and explained with percentage.

Regarding the issue of being "Often Paid Significantly Less than Workers in Other Sectors," 9.67% of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, while 14.33% disagreed. A larger portion, 23.67%, remained neutral, indicating they neither agreed nor disagreed with the problem. However, 22.33% of the respondents agreed that this was an issue, and 30% strongly agreed, suggesting that a significant number of workers feel that they are indeed paid less compared to workers in other sectors.

When it comes to the problem of "Seasonal Work Leading to Inconsistent and Unreliable Income," 9.33% of workers strongly disagreed, and 14% disagreed, indicating that they do not see this as a significant problem. However, 18% of the respondents chose to remain neutral on the issue. On the other hand, 16.33% agreed, and a notable 42.33% strongly agreed, reflecting a widespread concern among workers about the instability of their income due to the seasonal nature of their work. For the issue of "Lack of Minimum Wage Laws," 8% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 4.33% disagreed, showing that a small percentage do not view this as a problem. Meanwhile, 22% of the workers remained neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. A significant portion, 28.33%, agreed, and 37.33% strongly agreed, indicating that the lack of minimum wage laws is a major concern for many workers. Regarding "Delayed Payments," 31% of respondents strongly disagreed that this is not a problem, and 39.67% disagreed. A smaller group, 8.33%, remained neutral. However, 12% agreed, and 9% strongly agreed, pointing out that payment delays are seen as an issue by a minority, but still noteworthy. In the case of "Employers Not Paying the Full Amount Owed or Making Unfair Deductions," a significant 56% of respondents strongly agreed that this is a major issue.

Another 25.33% agreed, while 10.67% remained neutral. Only 3.67% disagreed, and 4.33% strongly disagreed, indicating that most workers are concerned about not being paid fully or fairly.

For "Women Earning Less than Men for the Same Work," 4% of respondents strongly disagreed with this issue, and 9.67% disagreed. A few, 7.67%, remained neutral, but 25.67% agreed, and a significant 53% strongly agreed, highlighting a strong consensus on the gender wage gap problem.

Regarding "No Extra Pay for Long Hours Beyond the Standard Workday," 9.67% strongly disagreed, and 24.67% disagreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 20.67% of workers remained



neutral, but 17.33% agreed, and 27.67% strongly agreed, showing that extra work without extra pay is a concern for many. For the issue of "Wages Given as Goods Instead of Money, Reducing Financial Flexibility," 36.33% strongly agreed that this is a problem, and 16.33% agreed. However, 17.33% were neutral, and smaller percentages of 8% and 22% either disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting that while this is a significant issue for many, some workers may not be as affected. Regarding "Agricultural Laborers Often Having to Repeatedly Request Their Wages," 14.33% strongly disagreed, and 10.67% disagreed, showing some workers do not see this as a problem. However, 15.67% remained neutral, while 27% agreed, and 32.33% strongly agreed, indicating that repeated requests for wages are a notable issue for many. Finally, concerning "No Immediate Payment for Work," 31% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 39.67% disagreed with the problem being irrelevant. A small group, 8.33%, remained neutral, while 12% agreed, and 9% strongly agreed, suggesting that immediate payment is an issue but not as pressing as others.

Table: 5.2 Descriptive statistics of wage related problems of women agriculture laborers

Wage Related Problems	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Often paid significantly less than workers in other sectors	300	1	5	3.49	1.31
Seasonal work leads to inconsistent and unreliable income	300	1	5	3.68	1.38
Lack of Minimum Wage Laws	300	1	5	3.83	1.21
Delayed Payments	300	1	5	2.28	1.27
Employers not paying the full amount owed or making unfair deductions	300	1	5	1.75	1.07
Women earn less than men for the same work	300	1	5	4.14	1.15
No extra pay for long hours beyond the standard workday	300	1	5	3.29	1.35
Wages are given as goods instead of money, reducing financial flexibility	300	1	5	2.49	1.38
Agricultural laborers often have to repeatedly request their wages	300	1	5	3.52	1.40
No immediate payment for work	300	1	5	2.28	1.27

Source: Compiled from primary data



The table presents the descriptive statistics of wage-related problems faced by women agricultural laborers, providing insights into the intensity and variability of these issues. The problem of "Women earning less than men for the same work" stands out with the highest mean score of 4.14 and a standard deviation of 1.15. This indicates that a large majority of the respondents strongly agree that women are paid less than men for the same work, and there is a relatively consistent perception of this issue among the workers. Following this, "Lack of Minimum Wage Laws" has a mean score of 3.83 and a standard deviation of 1.21, reflecting a significant concern among workers regarding the absence of legal wage protections. The consistency in responses suggests that this is a widely recognized problem.

The issue of "Seasonal work leads to inconsistent and unreliable income" has a mean score of 3.68 and a standard deviation of 1.38, indicating that many workers experience income instability due to the seasonal nature of agricultural work. However, there is some variation in how strongly this problem is felt. "Agricultural laborers often have to repeatedly request their wages" also emerges as a notable concern, with a mean score of 3.52 and a standard deviation of 1.40. This suggests that a significant number of workers frequently face delays in receiving their wages, though the intensity of this issue varies among respondents. The problem of "Often paid significantly less than workers in other sectors" has a mean score of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 1.31, indicating that many workers feel they are underpaid compared to other sectors. This issue is moderately recognized, with some variability in responses. In contrast, "No extra pay for long hours beyond the standard workday" has a mean score of 3.29 and a standard deviation of 1.35, showing that while many workers feel they are not adequately compensated for extra hours, opinions on this issue vary. The issue of "Wages given as goods instead of money, reducing financial flexibility" has a mean score of 2.49 and a standard deviation of 1.38, indicating that some workers face challenges with being paid in goods rather than money, which affects their financial flexibility. "Delayed Payments" and "No immediate payment for work" both have a mean score of 2.28 and a standard deviation of 1.27, suggesting that while these are recognized problems, they are less prevalent or intensely felt compared to other issues. Lastly, "Employers not paying the full amount owed or making unfair deductions" has the lowest mean score of 1.75 and a standard deviation of 1.07, indicating that although some workers experience this issue, it is not as widely acknowledged or intensely felt as



other wage-related problems. Overall, the statistics reflect a range of wage-related challenges faced by women agricultural laborers, with certain issues being more universally recognized and others varying in intensity among the respondents.

Problems of Work Environment

Women agriculture laborers’ problems are categorised into different categorised one of them is work environment related problems the problems like work environment is not pleasant, employers are not cooperative, work is very hard, working hours are more than standard hours, workers are friendly and cooperative, employers offers food several times and others.

Table: 5.3 Likert scale responses of women laborers on work environment problems

Work Environment Problems	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
Work environment is not pleasant	95 (31.67%)	117 (39.0%)	22 (7.33%)	39 (13.0%)	27 (9.0%)
Employers are not cooperative	158 (52.67%)	86 (28.67%)	30 (10.0%)	13 (4.33%)	13 (4.33%)
Work is Very hard	33 (11.0%)	32 (10.67%)	57 (19.0%)	87 (29.0%)	91 (30.33%)
Working More hours than Standard hours	64 (21.33%)	72 (24.0%)	63 (21.0%)	49 (16.33%)	52 (17.33%)
Workers are not friendly and Cooperative	108 (36.0%)	98 (32.67%)	48 (16.0%)	24 (8.0%)	22 (7.33%)
Employers not offers food several times	112 (38.36%)	54 (18.49%)	42 (14.38%)	33 (11.3%)	51 (17.47%)
Often forced to do more work for less pay	131 (43.67%)	81 (27.0%)	31 (10.33%)	35 (11.67%)	22 (7.33%)
Need to walk longer distances to reach their work	88 (29.33%)	88 (29.33%)	48 (16.0%)	34 (11.33%)	42 (14.0%)

Source: Compiled from primary data



The above table elaborates the opinions of women agricultural labors on work environmental problems all the responses are collected with the help of likert scale and explained with percentage. Regarding the problem of the "Work environment is not pleasant," 31.67% of respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, while 39% disagreed. A smaller portion, 7.33%, remained neutral. However, 13% agreed that the work environment is not pleasant, and 9% strongly agreed.

For the issue of "Employers are not cooperative," 52.67% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 28.67% disagreed. Meanwhile, 10% remained neutral. A smaller percentage, 4.33%, agreed, and another 4.33% strongly agreed that employers are not cooperative. When it comes to the problem of "Work is very hard," 11% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 10.67% disagreed with this statement. However, 19% remained neutral. On the other hand, 29% agreed that the work is hard, and 30.33% strongly agreed, indicating a considerable portion of the workers find their work very challenging.

For the issue of "Working more hours than standard hours," 21.33% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 24% disagreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 21% remained neutral. A further 16.33% agreed, and 17.33% strongly agreed, suggesting that a notable number of workers feel they work longer than standard hours. Regarding "Workers are not friendly and cooperative," 36% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 32.67% disagreed. Another 16% remained neutral. However, 8% agreed, and 7.33% strongly agreed, indicating that most workers find their colleagues to be friendly and cooperative. For the statement "Employers do not offer food several times," 38.36% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 18.49% disagreed. Meanwhile, 14.38% remained neutral. On the other hand, 11.3% agreed, and 17.47% strongly agreed, showing some concerns about the lack of food provisions. When considering "Often forced to do more work for less pay," 43.67% of respondents strongly disagreed, and 27% disagreed. Meanwhile, 10.33% remained neutral. However, 11.67% agreed, and 7.33% strongly agreed, indicating a significant concern among a minority about being underpaid for extra work.

Finally, regarding the issue of "Need to walk longer distances to reach their work," 29.33% of respondents strongly disagreed, and another 29.33% disagreed. Meanwhile, 16% remained neutral. On the other hand, 11.33% agreed, and 14% strongly agreed, reflecting that while some workers do face long commutes, many do not see it as a significant problem. Further inferential statistics mean



and standard deviation are applied to know which problem is facing more by the women agricultural labors.

Table: 5.4 Descriptive Statistics of work environment-related problems

Work Environment Problems	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work environment is not pleasant	300	1	5	2.29	1.28
Employers are not cooperative	300	1	5	1.79	1.07
Work is Very hard	300	1	5	3.57	1.31
Working More hours than Standard hours	300	1	5	2.84	1.39
Workers are not friendly and Cooperative	300	1	5	2.18	1.21
Employers not offers food several times	300	1	5	2.51	1.51
Often forced to do more work for less pay	300	1	5	2.12	1.29
Need to walk longer distances to reach their work	300	1	5	2.51	1.38
Valid N (list wise)	300				

Source: Compiled from primary data

The table summarizing the descriptive statistics of work environment-related problems reveals that workers face different challenges, with varying degrees of intensity. Among these challenges, the issue of "Work is Very hard" emerges as the most significant, with a mean score of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 1.31. This indicates that many workers find their work particularly strenuous, and there is relatively consistent agreement on this issue.

The problem of "Working More hours than Standard hours" follows, with a mean score of 2.84 and a standard deviation of 1.39. This suggests that many workers feel they are working longer hours than standard, although opinions on this issue show a bit more variation. The concern regarding "Employers not offering food several times" has a mean score of 2.51 and a standard deviation of



1.51, highlighting that inadequate food provision is a notable issue for some workers, though the intensity of this concern varies among respondents. Similarly, the issue of "Need to walk longer distances to reach their work" has a mean score of 2.51 and a standard deviation of 1.38, indicating that while some workers find the distance to their workplace challenging, there is moderate variation in how strongly this issue is felt. On the other hand, "Employers are not cooperative" has a lower mean score of 1.79 and a standard deviation of 1.07, suggesting that although some workers experience a lack of cooperation from employers, this issue is less prominent compared to others. The issue of "Often forced to do more work for less pay" has a mean score of 2.12 and a standard deviation of 1.29, indicating that while this problem is recognized, it is not as widely or intensely felt as some other challenges. Finally, "Workers are not friendly and Cooperative" has a mean score of 2.18 and a standard deviation of 1.21, suggesting that some workers experience issues with the cooperation among colleagues, though there is a moderate level of variability in how this problem is perceived. Overall, the statistics reflect the range of challenges workers face in their work environment, with some problems being more consistently recognized across the workforce, while others are perceived with varying levels of intensity.

Table: 5.5 Likert Scale Responses of Women Agriculture Laborers on Work-Life, Health, and Socioeconomic Challenges at Home

Domain	Statement	SDA	DA	N	A	SA
Work-Life Balance	I often feel overwhelmed by balancing both work in the fields and household chores.	16 (5.33%)	77 (25.67%)	119 (39.67%)	68 (22.67%)	20 (6.67%)
Work-Life Balance	I do not receive enough support from my family to manage household responsibilities.	42 (14.0%)	111 (37.0%)	105 (35.0%)	35 (11.67%)	7 (2.33%)
Health Issues	My work leaves me physically exhausted and negatively impacts my health.	4 (1.33%)	37 (12.33%)	104 (34.67%)	96 (32.0%)	59 (19.67%)
Health Issues	I do not have access to enough nutritious food to stay healthy.	28 (9.33%)	69 (23.0%)	122 (40.67%)	65 (21.67%)	16 (5.33%)



Domestic Violence	I do not feel safe at home and sometimes experience abuse.	31 (10.33%)	85 (28.33%)	115 (38.33%)	55 (18.33%)	14 (4.67%)
Domestic Violence	If I faced violence at home, I would not have access to help and support services.	21 (7.0%)	75 (25.0%)	119 (39.67%)	66 (22.0%)	19 (6.33%)
Economic Dependence	I do not have a say in how the money I earn is spent in my household.	16 (5.33%)	51 (17.0%)	125 (41.67%)	86 (28.67%)	22 (7.33%)
Economic Dependence	I cannot easily access financial resources like loans or land ownership if needed.	62 (20.67%)	101 (33.67%)	98 (32.67%)	37 (12.33%)	2 (0.67%)
Educational Barriers	I do not have enough time to help my children with their schoolwork.	38 (12.67%)	92 (30.67%)	119 (39.67%)	43 (14.33%)	8 (2.67%)
Educational Barriers	In my family, boys have more chances to go to school than girls.	41 (13.67%)	115 (38.33%)	96 (32.0%)	43 (14.33%)	5 (1.67%)
Social and Cultural Constraints	I do not feel free to challenge traditional gender roles in my community.	28 (9.33%)	73 (24.33%)	106 (35.33%)	75 (25.0%)	18 (6.0%)
Social and Cultural Constraints	I am not free to travel and access opportunities outside my home.	37 (12.33%)	83 (27.67%)	104 (34.67%)	56 (18.67%)	20 (6.67%)
Psychological Stress	I often feel stressed or anxious due to my responsibilities at work and home.	13 (4.33%)	57 (19.0%)	112 (37.33%)	96 (32.0%)	22 (7.33%)
Psychological Stress	I do not feel connected to a supportive community and social network.	40 (13.33%)	100 (33.33%)	107 (35.67%)	46 (15.33%)	7 (2.33%)

Source: Compiled from primary data



The above table elaborates the problems faced by the women laborers at home with their family members and in the society. The responses are collected with the help of likert scale and explained with the help of percentage method. Here the explanation

Work-Life Balance:

Regarding feeling overwhelmed by balancing both work in the fields and household chores, 5.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 25.67% disagreed, 39.67% remained neutral, 22.67% agreed, and 6.67% strongly agreed. In terms of not receiving enough support from their family to manage household responsibilities, 14% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 37% disagreed, 35% remained neutral, 11.67% agreed, and 2.33% strongly agreed.

Health Issues:

On the matter of work leaving them physically exhausted and negatively impacting their health, 1.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 12.33% disagreed, 34.67% remained neutral, 32% agreed, and 19.67% strongly agreed. For the issue of not having access to enough nutritious food to stay healthy, 9.33% strongly disagreed, 23% disagreed, 40.67% remained neutral, 21.67% agreed, and 5.33% strongly agreed.

Domestic Violence:

Regarding the feeling of not being safe at home and sometimes experiencing abuse, 10.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 28.33% disagreed, 38.33% remained neutral, 18.33% agreed, and 4.67% strongly agreed.

When asked if they would not have access to help and support services if faced with violence at home, 7% strongly disagreed, 25% disagreed, 39.67% remained neutral, 22% agreed, and 6.33% strongly agreed.

Economic Dependence:

On the issue of not having a say in how the money they earn is spent in their household, 5.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 17% disagreed, 41.67% remained neutral, 28.67% agreed, and



7.33% strongly agreed. Concerning the inability to easily access financial resources like loans or land ownership, 20.67% strongly disagreed, 33.67% disagreed, 32.67% remained neutral, 12.33% agreed, and 0.67% strongly agreed.

Educational Barriers:

Regarding not having enough time to help their children with schoolwork, 12.67% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 30.67% disagreed, 39.67% remained neutral, 14.33% agreed, and 2.67% strongly agreed. On the belief that boys have more chances to go to school than girls in their family, 13.67% strongly disagreed, 38.33% disagreed, 32% remained neutral, 14.33% agreed, and 1.67% strongly agreed.

Social and Cultural Constraints:

Regarding not feeling free to challenge traditional gender roles in their community, 9.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 24.33% disagreed, 35.33% remained neutral, 25% agreed, and 6% strongly agreed. On the issue of not being free to travel and access opportunities outside the home, 12.33% strongly disagreed, 27.67% disagreed, 34.67% remained neutral, 18.67% agreed, and 6.67% strongly agreed.

Psychological Stress:

Regarding often feeling stressed or anxious due to responsibilities at work and home, 4.33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 19% disagreed, 37.33% remained neutral, 32% agreed, and 7.33% strongly agreed. On the feeling of not being connected to a supportive community and social network, 13.33% strongly disagreed, 33.33% disagreed, 35.67% remained neutral, 15.33% agreed, and 2.33% strongly agreed.

Conclusion

analysis of the significant challenges faced by women agricultural laborers, categorized into key areas such as wage-related problems, work environment issues, work-life balance, health issues, domestic violence, economic dependence, educational barriers, social and cultural constraints, and psychological stress. The findings reveal that wage-related challenges are particularly prevalent, with women often being paid less than their male counterparts, facing inconsistent income due to the seasonal nature of agricultural work, and dealing with delays in payment. Notably, the issue of



the gender wage gap stands out, with a high mean score indicating widespread concern among respondents. Work environment problems also emerge as a critical concern, with many workers describing their work as physically demanding and unpleasant. The strenuous nature of the work is highlighted as the most significant issue, as reflected in the mean scores. Additionally, the analysis shows that balancing work and household responsibilities is a common challenge, with respondents expressing moderate concerns about physical exhaustion and a lack of nutritious food. Psychological stress is another area of concern, with many women feeling overwhelmed by their dual responsibilities at work and home.

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