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## **Women Empowering Agriculture as Labor Force Contributors in Haryana**

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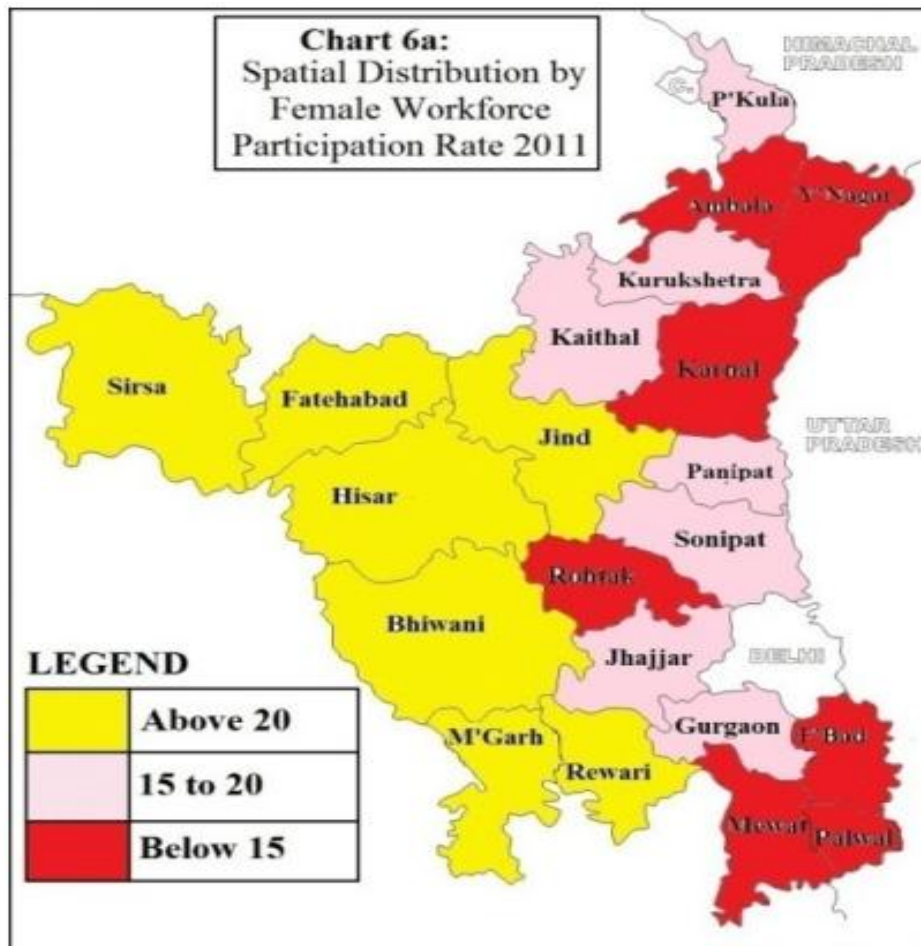
### **Abstract**

The predominant occupation for rural women is around agriculture, with around ninety percent engaging in agricultural and associated activities. Primary and secondary data are used to investigate the role of women in agricultural productivity in Karnal, Haryana, India. The Census of India (2011) and the National Sample Survey were used for the secondary data, while purposive sampling was used to get the main data. There are two primary goals of this study, both of which make use of the percentage approach to clarify important concepts: (i) to learn more about the status of women in the agricultural workforce, and (ii) to analyze the specifics of the labor that these women execute. There are geographical differences in the number of women farmers and the kind of work they do. Women's engagement in agriculture is lower than that of men's, despite the fact that they make important contributions to the industry and sometimes do so at lower pay.

**Keywords:** *Women's Contribution in Agriculture; Labor Force; women laborers; Haryana*

### **Introduction**

As a developing country, India places a high premium on its agricultural industry, which provides a living for 56 percent of the country's rural population (**Behera, & Mohapatra, 2020**). Considering that they make up half of the population, women's contributions as farmers, co-farmers, wage workers, family laborers, and farm managers are crucial to the agricultural industry. Women contribute much to society, yet they only account for one-third of the workforce and receive one-tenth of the income. In Asian nations, specifically, women form a greater percentage of the economically active population involved in agriculture, contributing over 50% to food production (**Unay-Gailhard, & Bojnec, 2021**). Importantly, research shows that women likely initiated agricultural methods and domesticated the first crops. According to recent surveys, women in the agricultural industry often put in long hours—from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m.—with little opportunities for rest or maternity leave. Despite the fact that women are responsible for 60–80% of food production in many developing nations, just one in four workers is female in agriculture in India.



**Fig: Spatial Pattern of Female Workforce Participation Rate in Haryana**

### Study Objectives

1. Investigate the involvement of women workers in the agricultural sector.
2. Examine the nature of tasks undertaken by women laborers in the agricultural domain.

### Research methodology

Data has been gathered through both secondary and primary sources. The initial objective relies on secondary data obtained from diverse sources, including Census reports, analytical studies of Haryana, articles, and various journals. The second objective is addressed through a field survey, utilizing interview schedules as the data collection method. A random sample of 120 female agricultural workers was chosen for the survey.

### Women's Contribution in Agriculture and Allied Sectors

Women, constituting about 50% of the Indian population, play multifaceted roles in our society. In rural areas, their primary engagement is in agriculture and allied fields, influenced by various factors such as socio-economic status, family income, age, education, land ownership, and caste. Presently, women actively participate in nearly all field tasks, showcasing skills even in operating machinery in some regions. However, disparities exist, with some women lacking decision-making rights related to field activities, often burdened by labor-intensive, unmechanized tasks. Beyond agriculture, women also contribute significantly to household responsibilities, collecting wood from fields for use as fuel at home. The demanding rural life for women typically spans from 4 am to 10 pm (Pogoy et al., 2016).



Women's reproductive roles are an important source of economic activity for several reasons. (Satyavathi, Bharadwaj, & Brahmanand, 2010).

There are two main categories of women's work: market work and nonfarm work. Women's work in the market includes both agricultural and non-agricultural tasks. Non-agricultural tasks include things like cooking, cleaning, children and pet care, water collection, and animal husbandry. Women play an integral part in these pursuits. But because male-dominated societies have historically failed to value the contributions of rural women, they have been underrepresented in the development process worldwide. Our culture places a premium on men, therefore the effort of women is often overlooked. The ability to restrict the movement of women is a crucial part of the economic property structure, and its effects may be seen in nearly every society.

Results

Table –1.1: Distribution of workers' percentages (main and marginal) in Haryana in 2011 (Census of India, 2011)

Category	% of workers		
	Total	M	F
laborers working in Farms	17.14	15.30	23.08
Cultivators	27.82	26.28	32.78
Domestic workers	2.944	2.74	3.59
Other workers	52.10	55.68	40.55
Total	100	100	100

Table 1.1 displays the percentage breakdown of Haryana's labor force, broken down by both primary and secondary occupations. The agricultural industry employs 55.86% women. Among the labor force, just 3.59 percent of women are employed in the domestic sector, while 40 percent are working outside the home.

Table-1.2: Distribution of participant women agricultural labor

Task	Participation
Cultivation	32
Sowing seed	80
Inter cultivating activities	86
All farming activities including (Harvesting to storage)	84



According to the data above, the majority of women agricultural labor spend their time between planting and harvesting, then winnowing, drying, cleaning, and storing their goods. Seed washing and planting account for 80% of the labor required in these tasks.

Table-1.3:Periodic Employment

Periods	No. of Days	No. of participants	%
Kharif	40 to 50	93	77.5
Rabi	20 to 30	27	22.5
Zaid	10-30	0	0
Total		120	100

The peak hiring periods broken down by season are shown in Table 1.3. According to 77.5% of survey takers, kharif season is the busiest for finding work. Twenty-five percent of people polled claimed that rabi season was the busiest time for them in terms of finding work. However, not a single responder reported being busiest during zaid season.

Only during the zaid season do respondents find work for more than 15–20 days. The results of the table indicate that the majority of respondents are employed during the kharif season, followed by the rabi season.

Table-4: Work/Day

Work/Day	No. of respondents	Percentage
1 to 4	53	44.16
4 to 8	57	47.50
More than 8	10	8.33
Total	120	100

Table 4 shows that 44.16% of respondents spend between 1 and 4 hours per day out in the field, 47.16% spend between 4 and 8 hours per day, and 8.33% spend more than 8 hours per day. Female agricultural workers put in a full day's worth of hours, as seen in the table below. Women not only labor in the field, but also perform housework.

Women in rural areas of India make significant contributions to agriculture and related industries. They do everything from sowing seeds to weeding to harvesting to storing goods to doing post-harvest tasks and more.

- i. The agricultural industry employs 55.86% women. Only 3.59% female workers are in domestic industries and 40% of female workers are engaged in other jobs.
- ii. Seventy-five percent of respondents claimed they work the most during the Kharif season, whereas just 22.5% worked during the Rabi season.



- iii. Their typical workday consists of four to eight hours on the farm followed by two to four hours of housework.
- iv. Eighty percent of women are involved in seed washing and sowing, eighty four percent in harvesting, reaping, storing, etc., and sixteen percent in other agricultural operations.

### Conclusion

Women play a multifaceted role in the growth and development of our society, constituting an indispensable part of the country. While many engage in family labor, there is a growing preference among women to work independently. Unfortunately, they encounter numerous challenges such as wage and gender discrimination, often resulting in lower-quality work due to prevalent illiteracy. In rural India's male-dominated society, women face difficulties securing employment, yet they persist in contributing to their families' economic well-being. Women's participation in agriculture is influenced by factors like economic status, education, age, marital status, and the type of agricultural activities involved. NSS data indicates an increase in the female work participation rate, with government support playing a vital role. Initiatives such as subsidies on agricultural tools, pesticides, and seeds demonstrate significant steps toward empowering women in the agricultural sector.

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