

The Impact Of Health Of Agricultural Women Workers On Their Productivity And Efficiency In India.

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ABSTRACT:

Women play very significant role as a productive work force in Indian economy. Women labourers health is a vital component of nations infrastructure and it focuses on the physical, mental and social well being of workers. In India health of women labour needs to be taken care and it needs immediate attention. **Objectives:** The main objective of this study is to knowing the relationship between women health and agriculture and highlighting the measure health issues faced by them which will later hamper their productivity and efficiency in India. **Methods:** An exclusive literature review and data search is done through online sources, reviewed some articles of related topics and the reports if various departments of government of India. **Results:** The result reveals that the health status of women labourers has a direct impact on their productivity and efficiency which will hamper the overall agricultural production. **Conclusion:** Implementation of some social security and welfare measure by the government can enhance the agricultural women labourers.

Keywords: Agricultural women labour, Health, productivity, efficiency.

INTRODUCTION:

Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development. The extent of female involvement in agriculture differs greatly from place to place, but regardless of these variations' women are actively involved in various agricultural activities. According to Census 2011, out of total female workers 55% were agricultural labourers and only 24% were cultivators. However only 12.8% of the operational holdings were owned by women

which reflect the gender disparity in ownership of land holdings in Agriculture. The dream of socio- economic empowerment of women will not be completed without empowering who are living at India's last periphery. When women work in agriculture is always an addition to her role as a daughter, wife , daughter in law, and as a mother.

Though women are engaged in many big farming works still their contribution remains unrecognised and they are not considered as farmers yet. Hence, they are denied by banks, insurance schemes, and other governmental departments. So, voice of agricultural women needs to be heard at both policy and implementation level if we want to see the progressive India.

Agricultural women labourers are those who works on others land for wage. The work is not on regular basis, no work security and constant Income. as per national commission on self employed women in informal sector said that women labourers especially on agricultural land go through various problems such as problems of contact with heavy materials, continuous work, lack of rest and lack of safety measures and highly deplorable work atmosphere. when we highlight their health issues, they usually suffer from body ache, cough, respiratory allergies, injuries, stress and other related problems which will directly affects their capacity to work that is their productivity and efficiency which hinders the agricultural production and economic growth,

REVIEW METHODOLOGY:

An extensive literature and data search were undertaken using online search engines. Data were obtained from the Government of India, reports including the ministry of agriculture and farmers welfare. The author reviewed peer- reviewed articles published in reputed journals relating to the subject of health of agricultural women labourer and productivity.

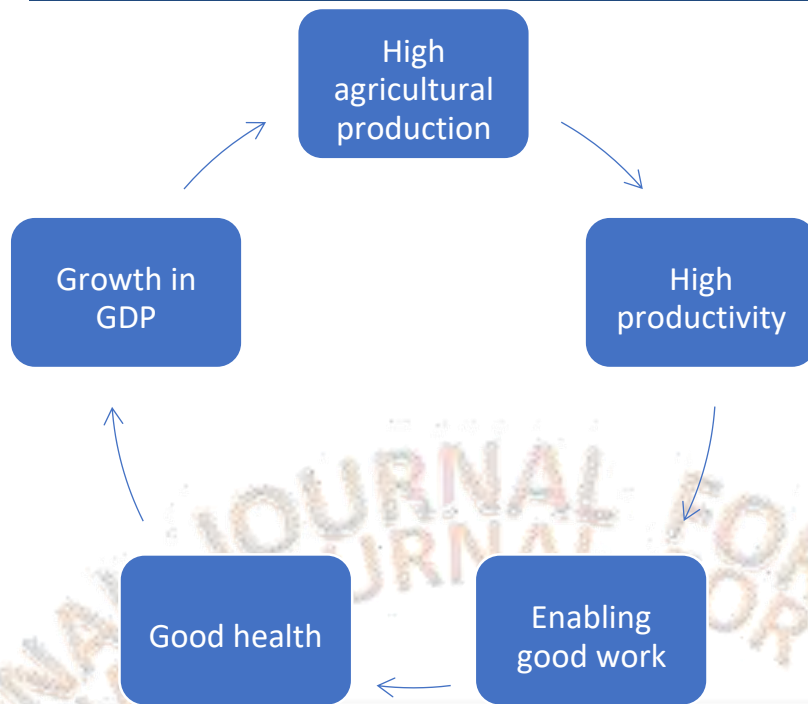
THE IMPACT OF HEALTH OF AGRICULTURAL WOMEN WORKERS ON THEIR PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY IN INDIA

When we say that India is developing country women are included in this development, because development is gender neutral. When we observe some of the development indicators viz physical quality of life index (PQLI), Human development index (HDI), Minimum needs approach. Etc have important component that is Health, In recent years attention has focused on inequalities in allocation of resources at the household level as seen in the higher share of education, health and food expenditure boys receive in comparison with girls , in equalities in the allocation of household resources matter because education , health and nutrition are strongly linked to well being , economic efficiency and growth. Low level of education and poor health and nutrition aggravate poor living conditions and reduce an individuals capacity to work productively such economic inefficiency represents a significant loss to society and hampers future economic growth.

India has a dream of becoming one of the economic superpowers but India's performance is not that impressive when we look from women health perspective. Though there are many improvements in health indicators but all the affordable services have not yet reached poor people. The problem is still worse when we judge from gender perspective.

HEALTH IMPACT ON WOMEN LABOUR AND PRODUCTIVITY:

There is a circular relationship between good health of one generation and another the knowledge of which must never be lost during HRD programmes in any sector, agricultural women productivity is closely associated with her health.



When we talk about health of a agricultural women labour good health comes from nutritious food and some rest but because of unlimited and continuous work will make her body weak. She needs to handle both household chores as well as farm activities like weeding, Harvesting, cultivation etc, that is without rest which will directly hamper her health and productivity because of low productivity and efficiently on farm land will decrease the agricultural output hence less economic growth. Women in India spend about 32% of their time on agricultural activities such as transplanting, weeding, harvesting, and multiple roles. They spend an average of 300 minutes per day in unpaid work at home in cooking and other domestic activities including caring for children and family.

We show with the evidence that women contribute a lot to agriculture as farm labourers, farm managers in various activities spreads across seasons we must recognise women`s participation in agriculture and recognise that it may have negative consequences of their burden increases any further.

“labour saving technologies a home reduce the unpaid time burdens, health hazards and workload which supports women to have more time for productive work or leisure which helps to improve their decision-making roles at the household level” Rengalakshmi told Mongabay – India.

Women form a significant portion of the productive workforce in Indian economy. The bad health condition of most of women labourers will directly affect their productivity and the women workers health is the baseline for agricultural production. The social security measures and some important government will play a predominant role in enhancing health in the agricultural sector. some agricultural hazards rise due to farm machinery, climate changes, chemical agents, agricultural tools, animal/ snake bite, dust, solar radiation and psychological stress. Hence these all are some important factors which cause low productivity and agricultural production.

Technology in agriculture has both negative as well as positive effects, though we say women will be benefitted out of this technology most of the agricultural tools and equipment are designed for the usage of men. Adopting wrong working tools may cause some spine and musculoskeletal problems, some accidents and physical injuries. Hence it`s a measure requirement to invent some beneficial tools which can be used by both men and women.

To analyse women`s agricultural productivity, main thing that is widely used is to consider the household farm enterprise as the production unit and to compare the productivity of different households. Dividing between male and female headed households. This approach has ignored the contribution that women make to farms in households headed by men. This kind of disparity will also cause the Negative impacts of health of women because it has been ignored by. When women suffer from any disease or illness and for sake of not to miss the wage she

works in farm land and now we have to think about her productivity. it will straight away hamper her contribution in agricultural production.

Women make important contributions to the agricultural and rural economies of all regions of the world. However, the exact contribution both in terms of magnitude and of its nature is often difficult to assess and shows a high degree of variation across countries and regions. Productivity reflects a relationship between inputs and outputs. The most widely used measures are partial productivity measures output per unit of a single input.

When we look at the agricultural land in many parts of India lack of proper toilet facility, clean drinking water etc hence women use field side or river side for these all purposes. lack of facilities like first aid, lack of Transportation facilities, unhygienic workplace leads to health issues. The health, productivity, and wages are also linked directly hence women are suffering with lack of control on certain things and decision making capacity, stress, overburden of work, less payment, poor eating habits etc. lead to both physical and mental health issue.

The national institute for occupational safety and Health (NIOSH) lists many women safety and health related issues in agriculture, which includes pesticide exposures, chronic bronchitis, pregnancy-related risks, work-related risks and injuries, exposure to inhaled substances, livestock-related injuries, fatigue, cancer risks, depression and risk factors for infertility. The combination of these risks and living in a rural location means farm women are experiencing health disparities when its compared with the population as a whole.

“In general women who live in rural health areas have poorer health condition and have less access to care than urban women”- Rose -Davison says.

Occupational hazards	Occupational health problems
Physical hazards: Heat and humidity, solar rays, cold, noise, vibration, poor illumination, long hours of continuous work, repetitive motion for work, forceful motions, postural changes, bending posture, immersion of hands and feet continuously in water, slips and falls due to wet fields, continuous movement, carrying heavy load of materials, contact with soil, mud, dust, water and manure, contact with insects, contact with scorpions, snakes and other poisonous animals, contact with wild mammals, felling of trees	Physical health: Back pain, joint pain, leg pain, head ache, dust allergy, swellings in joints, fever, cold and cough, general malaise, chest pain, pain in shoulders, eye problem, hearing problem, respiratory problem, throat infection, skin irritation, nervous problem, abdominal pain, constipation, urinal infection, mouth infection, cuts and wounds, musculoskeletal disorders
Chemical hazards: Insecticide, herbicide, rodenticides, bactericides, fungicides, larvicides, using chemicals for treating land	Gynecological and menstrual health: Problem in childbirth, frequent abortion, vaginal discharge, burning sensation during urination, frequent and urgent need to urinate, severe pain in the pelvis, sores/lumps in the genital area, severe bleeding, bleeding between periods, irregular periods, painful cramps
Mechanical hazards: Poorly maintained tools and equipment - spade and sickle, axe, the noise of vehicles - tractors, vibration and noise of farm equipment, felling from the tractor, electric water pumps, electric shock	Psychological health: Disturbance in sleep, anemic, the problem with spouse, problem with children, behavioral problems, burn out syndrome, betel leaves/ other chewing products, alcoholism, social insecurity, alienation, no entertainment
Biological hazards: Infections due to bacteria, virus, parasite, fungus and working with cattle	Communicable disease: Malaria, typhoid, hepatitis, jaundice, leptospirosis, diarrhoeal diseases, cholera, hookworm infection, influenza, filariasis, tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, polio, rabies
Psychosocial hazards: Occupational stress, lack of job satisfaction, insecurity feeling, the problem in the relationship, emotional tension, unemployment, lack of an alternative job, low payment for work, poverty, etc.	Noncommunicable disease: Rheumatism, blood pressure, cardiac diseases, cancer, wheezing, asthma, kidney disease, lung disease, cataract

Source : Developed from^[9-15,18-20]

POLICY PROVISIONS:

Though there are many laws and schemes for the betterment of workers, no important health related schemes for women labourers on agricultural land. who works on fields they do not have any solid social security policies, which makes the situation still worse. They always have a question about their old age and time of illness. Significant reforms required in India's occupational health and safety infrastructure and the regulatory reforms are needed to ensure that occupational health laws cover all workers, including those in the informal sector, as well as those engaged in agriculture.

Unorganized workers social security act, 2008 states that unorganized worker means a homebased worker, self-employed worker or a wage worker in unorganized sector but it has not clearly mentioned about the inclusion of agricultural worker. Indian constitution talks about the dignity of human labour and protecting and safeguarding the interest of labour, but the review of various government social security and welfare schemes depicts the lack of exclusive scheme for the women workers addressing Occupational Health. This exposes that the women's agricultural workers are not protected under any legal framework and there is an absence of strong association for them. Occupational health issues of women could be addressed with the provision of work site inspection and preventing work risk factors due to hazards and unhygienic living and work conditions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Health education and awareness regarding working conditions would make things even better.
- Measures should be taken to train doctors, social workers, and counsellors etc regarding the health of women labourers.
- Measures should be taken to manufacture the agricultural tools and equipment which are usable by both male and female without any problem.
- The health related issues have to be discussed in National level which will help in the framing policies and there will be a kind of clarity regarding women health issues.
- Government should bring some strict rules regarding some safety measures such as gloves, masks, footwear so that we can gradually reduce the risk factors and through which we can enhance their productivity.
- It would be better if government will provide wage related security so that women can take some rest and never underestimate their health issues.
- National level committee must be appointed to study the health regarding situations of many women who are working on agricultural land and try to provide proper solutions for it.
- Agricultural women labourers are considered as one of the neglected part of this economy hence good amount of investment must be done in order to prove it wrong.
- Some kind of wage security must be provided especially to women labourers who are facing any health related issues.
- Fixing the working time per day would be helpful to manage both household chores and farm land works.

CONCLUSION:

Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development. The extent of female involvement in agriculture differs greatly from place to place, but regardless of these variations women are actively involved in various agricultural activities. As per national commission on self employed women in informal sector said that women labourers especially on agricultural land go through various problems such as problems of contact with heavy materials, continuous work, lack of rest and lack of safety measures and highly deplorable work atmosphere. India has a dream of becoming one of the economic superpowers but India's performance is not that impressive when we look from women health perspective. The bad health condition of most of women labourers will directly affect their productivity and the women workers health is the baseline for agricultural production. Hence with the help of some awareness and strong government policies we can make the things better and impressive.

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