



## EXPOSURE OF WOMEN THROUGH AGRICULTURE

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### ABSTRACT

Agriculture workers generally fail to find jobs in the salaried sector due to their inadequate educational and skill requirements. This paper attempts to explain the position of women in agriculture, where the positive aspects of females going into agriculture work are highlighted, including the exposure of women and economic benefits. The researchers used percentage analysis and factor analysis to interpret the results. The target population group for this study is the rural-based low-income group, which is very experienced but somehow satisfied with their work. The study discloses the gains to be gained by women attending agricultural work, including empowerment, freedom, and choice. It is thought that having the right legal protection, such as social security and pension, will improve their living standards.

**Keywords: Agriculture, Impact, Independence, Empowerment, and Exposure**

### Introduction

The primary branch in our progress towards a more balanced economy, poverty reduction, and equitable development is gender. Additionally, the life-sustaining activities of men were different from those of women. The primary reason for the

modern-day lifestyle is that most men are drawn to out-migration and non-farm employment, such as wage and salaried jobs for women. Empowerment, education, training, access to credit, and enhanced connectivity through rural agriculture and market centres are vital in strengthening

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human capital. This, in turn, fosters economic growth by encouraging rural men and women to transition from traditional subsistence activities to more productive ones. Rural women in both developed and developing economies are making significant strides. In developing countries, they are predominantly engaged in crop cultivation and animal husbandry to sustain their families and contribute to the household's food security. To understand the position of rural women, one needs to assess all their orientations in transforming agriculture.

### **Research Methods**

The validity of any research is based on the systematic method of data collection and analysis of the data collected. The data is collected through primary data as well as secondary data. Simple random techniques are used to select the respondent from the available database. Accordingly, the researchers selected 155 female respondents in the study area. The statistical tools applied are percentage analysis and factor analysis.

### **Reviews of literature**

**Women Agricultural Workers and the Right to Adequate Food and Nutrition, (2014)**, Women agricultural workers' lack of participation in decision-making, in unions, and collective bargaining teams, as well as the

discrimination and criminalization of women agricultural workers who are all trying to become an engaged person in the processes and it, affect the realization of rights of women to get adequate food and nutrition as well as their families and communities. Without the involvement of women in higher-level processes, the discrimination they face at the workplace and the specific issues that are of the greatest importance to women workers will not be systematically addressed. As a result, women will continue to face violations of their rights to stable access to adequate income to sustain and feed their families. Addressing discrimination at the workplace on a case-by-case basis has its place. Systematically dealing with the structures that entrench discrimination against women would have a wider effect that is crucial for the overall defence of women's right to adequate food and nutrition.

**Somasundaram,**

**Thiruchenduran et al. (2016)**

“Empowerment of Women Farmers for Agricultural Development” Women constitute almost half of the workforce engaged in agriculture. They play a key role in the food system, from selecting seeds to sowing, manuring, drying, storing, and feeding the family from the harvested product. Even though women



contribute 60 to 80 % of the labour in agriculture and animal husbandry, their involvement in selecting suitable crops and adopting innovative and good management practices is very low. The major reasons may be a lack of authority in decision-making in agriculture and production, gender discrimination, lack of awareness about the new agricultural technologies, and consultation about their farmlands. Women's Empowerment in developing India will lead the nation to a breaking issue of human thinking for globalization.

**Dirro et al. (2018)**, "Women's Empowerment in Agriculture and Agricultural Productivity: Evidence from Rural Maize Farmer Households in Western Kenya," Their study points towards women's empowerment having a positive effect on maize yield. The cross-sectional nature of our data does not support an examination of the dynamic impacts

associated with women's empowerment and maize yield. Their data are not nationally representative; hence, it does not reflect women's empowerment across Kenya. This research understood the relationship between women's empowerment and their maize yield.

### Discussion

The present study aims to determine the "Predicament of women in Agriculture." For that purpose, the collection of data plays a most significant role. Hence, the investigator collected the primary data using a structured questionnaire with information relevant to the present study. One hundred fifty-five respondents from agriculture workers working in the Tuticorin District were selected for the research. The collected data were arranged properly, analyzed systematically, and interpreted precisely. It is explained in this chapter in tabular format.

**Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Category	Frequency (Agriculture Workers)	Percent	Cumulative
<b>Residential Status</b>			
Rural	84	46.7	46.7
Urban	33	27.4	74.2
Semi-Urban	38	25.8	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Age</b>			

Less than 20	22	8.38	8.38
21-30	32	23.5	31.9
31-40	40	30.6	62.5
Above 40	61	37.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Married	29	42.3	42.3
Unmarried	39	15.2	57.5
Widow	49	29.0	86.5
Divorced/Separated	38	13.5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Educational Qualification</b>			
Illiterate	32	46.5	46.5
Primary	68	29.7	76.2
Middle	45	15.5	91.7
SSLC	10	8.3	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>No. of Family Members</b>			
2-4	63	35.5	35.5
5-6	92	57.7	93.2
More than 6	-	6.8	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Source: Primary data*

Based on the demographic profile in Table 1, the data reveals the diverse backgrounds of agriculture workers. A significant portion, 46.7%, of the respondents reside in rural areas, highlighting the strong connection between agriculture work and rural living. The age distribution shows a considerable segment, 23.5%, falling within the 21-30 age group, indicating a relatively young workforce in the agricultural sector.

Marital status among respondents is varied, with the largest group, 42.3%, being married, followed closely by widows at 29%, reflecting the diverse life stages of agricultural workers. A notable finding is that 46.5% of the respondents are illiterate, suggesting that a



significant portion of the agricultural workforce lacks formal education, which may impact their access to information and opportunities for advancement.

Regarding family size, a majority, 57.7%, have between 5 and 6 members in their household, indicating that many agriculture workers come from moderately large families. This demographic information provides valuable insights into the characteristics of the agricultural workforce, shedding light on their living conditions, educational background, and family dynamics.

**Table 2 Economic exposure of women agriculture workers**

Category	Frequency (Agriculture Workers)	Per cent	Cumulative
<b>Monthly Family Income</b>			
Below 5000	1	17.7	17.7
5001-7000	33	24.2	41.9
7001-9000	91	48.4	90.3
Above 9000	30	9.7	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>No. of Earning family members</b>			
1	17	8.1	8.1
2	83	61.3	69.4
3	45	27.4	96.8
5	10	3.2	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>House type</b>			
Thatched	93	59.0	59
Tiled	39	24.5	83.5
Terraced	23	16.5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>House Ownership</b>			
Owned	96	47.7	47.7
Rented	59	52.3	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	

<b>Availability of income to run the family</b>			
Fully	8	5.2	5.2
Partially	104	56.5	61.7
Not	43	38.3	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Source: Primary data*

The above table reveals that among the surveyed women agricultural workers, 59% reside in thatched houses. Nearly half, or 47.7%, own their homes, while 52.3% live in rented accommodations. Regarding managing household finances, 56.5% of respondents reported having only partial income sufficiency for their family's needs. The income distribution indicates that the largest group, 48.4%, earns between 7001 and 9000 monthly, and a majority, 61.3%, have two income earners within their family. This data underscores the economic conditions and living standards of women agricultural workers.

**Table 3 Women's Exposure to Employment**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency (Agriculture Workers)</b>	<b>Per cent</b>	<b>Cumulative</b>
<b>Experience in the Primary sector</b>			
Less than two years	14	20	20
2-4 years	58	23.9	43.9
More than four years	83	56.1	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Involvement in the primary sector</b>			
Part-Time	95	51.6	51.6
Full Time	60	43.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Decision maker in the family</b>			
Women	47	37.4	37.4
Men	35	28.1	65.5
All	73	34.5	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Types of Work in Agriculture</b>			



Weeding	24	15.5	15.5
Harvesting	21	13.5	29.0
Planting	22	14.2	43.2
Sowing	23	14.8	58.1
Post harvesting	33	21.9	79.4
Land preparation	15	9.7	89.0
Loading & unloading	17	11.0	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>	

*Source: Primary data*

The data presented in Table 3 focuses on women's employment experiences in the agriculture sector. It provides insights into their duration of involvement in the primary sector, their employment, their roles in family decision-making, and their specific agricultural work.

Regarding their experience in the primary sector, a majority, 56.1%, have worked for more than four years, indicating significant expertise and long-term commitment to agriculture. This group is followed by 23.9% with 2-4 years of experience and 20% with less than two years, showcasing a wide range of experience levels among the participants.

Employment statistics reveal that 51.6% of the women work part-time, while 43.4% are employed full-time in agriculture. This highlights women's diverse employment conditions in this sector, with a slight majority favouring part-time work.

Decision-making within families shows that women are the primary decision-makers in 37.4% of cases, while men lead in 28.1% of families. In 34.5% of families, decisions are made collectively by all members, indicating a varied distribution of decision-making power.

The types of work performed by women in agriculture include post-harvesting (21.9%), weeding (15.5%), sowing (14.8%), planting (14.2%), harvesting (13.5%), loading and unloading (11%), and land preparation (9.7%). This distribution shows that women engage in a broad spectrum of agricultural activities, with post-harvesting being the most common task.

**Table 4 Reliability statistics for women going to agriculture work**

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.888	26

Keywords: Agriculture, Impact, Independence, Empowerment, and Exposure

The reliability statistics for women in agriculture work are tested through the Cronbach Alpha test. It is noted from the analysis that the overall value of Cronbach's Alpha is .888, and the individual value of Cronbach's alpha is more than .70, which is a good measure of reliability, so it can be considered that all 26 statements taken for the study are reliable and further tests can be conducted.

**Table 5 Factor analysis for Benefits of women in the agriculture**

<b>Rotated Component Matrix</b>			
<b>Statements</b>	<b>Components</b>		
	<b>Freedom</b>	<b>Empowerment</b>	<b>Decision Making</b>
Gender equality	.909		
Economic independence	.896		
Bargaining power	.855		
Freedom of purchasing ornaments	.852		
Economic development	.828		
Freedom of purchase in household things	.775		
Own decision making	.714		
Society development	.686		
Freedom of expenditure for own	.601		
Sustainable development	.541		
Mobility outside the home	.362		
Enhancing their ability		.920	
Decision building		.884	
Self-empowered		.878	
Awareness building		.848	
Knowledge about inheritance law		.772	
Poverty eradication		.719	
Social & economic development		.593	
Risk-taking ability		.372	
Opinion on children's admission to school		.239	





Treatment autonomy for children			.797
Opinion on family planning			.795
Administering equality			.696
Women's agency			.685
Capacity building			.659
Access to formal government programs			.561
<b>% of Variance</b>	<b>26.27</b>	<b>22.40</b>	<b>15.47</b>
<b>Cumulative Variance</b>	<b>26.27</b>	<b>48.67</b>	<b>64.14</b>
<b>% to total</b>	40.96	34.92	24.12
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.			
a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.			

**Source: Primary Survey**

**Freedom:** The Eleven components filtered under this factor are Gender equality (.909), Economic independence (.896), Bargaining power (.855), Freedom of purchasing ornaments(.852), Economic Development (.828), Freedom of purchase in household things (.775), Own decision making (.714), society development (.686), Freedom of expenditure for own (.601), Sustainable development (.541), mobility outside the home (.362). This factor has a variance of 26.27 per cent and forms 40.96 per cent out of the total.

**Empowerment:** The Nine components filtered under this factor are Enhancing their ability (.920), Decision building (.884), Self-empowered (.878), Awareness building (.848), Knowledge about inheritance law (.772), Poverty

eradication (.719), Social & economic development (.593), Risk-taking ability (.372), opinion for children admission in school (.239) This factor has a variance of 22.40 per cent and form 34.92 per cent out of total.

**Decision Making:** The six components filtered under this factor are Treatment autonomy for children (.797), opinion for family planning (.795), Administering equality (.696), women agency (.685), capacity building (.659), Access to formal government programs (.561). This factor has a variance of 15.47 per cent and forms 24.12 per cent out of the total.

**Suggestions**

- The expectations of women workers from the government should be fulfilled by providing various

schemes and creating proper awareness about that scheme's special features.

- Basic education should be given to women workers so they know the society in which they work. Educated women may manage stress in the workplace and at home.
- Various facilities should be given to women workers to help them handle their work and personal lives. Facilities like EPF, ESI, bonuses and incentives, leave facilities, and medical and maternity leave will enhance women's economic empowerment.
- All types of informal sector workers need prominent support from the government to carry out their work and handle their personal lives. Hence, importance should be given to their expectations, and our government should try to fulfil them.
- The establishment of micro-credit institutions and banks has made no real changes in the borrowing pattern of the respondents. The intermediaries and money lenders still exploit them.
- It is suggested that government, trade unions, and non-voluntary organisations should organise

awareness programs relating to health, nutrition, and sanitation and disseminate information to workers about their rights and responsibilities. To prevent the exploitation of workers, it is also suggested that the trade unions extend their assistance regarding access to legal aid during legal proceedings.

### **Conclusion**

Rural women are the key drivers of developed and developing countries. They play this crucial role in shaping their families and societies and are actively involved in agricultural activities such as on-farm and off-farm activities. This type of engagement diversifies their family livelihood, and their efforts largely go upwards with an unappreciated one. Due to the challenges of health care, education, and access to credit, women in agriculture farming are not well-developed. Hence, empowering them is essential for the well-being of individuals and the overall productivity and economic development of every country. This article clearly explained the predicament of women in agriculture in the selected area. Based on the analysis, women are empowered through agriculture work. It has to be rectified to become a developed country because India is an agricultural country



with a higher population of women than men. Hence, agriculture and women's empowerment should be enhanced to become the most developed country in education and economic development.

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