

SOCIAL PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS AND THEIR ASSOCIATION WITH SOCIAL STRATA

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ABSTRACT

It was found that Majority of respondents were revealed that No due recognition by the society in the major social problem which rank first followed by low societal status. Most of respondents were indicated their major familial problem as necessary attention is not given towards rearing of children followed by low familial status due to underprivileged job of husband. It was observed that, unavailability of the medical support from employer in case of accident at work as their main health problem followed by health get deteriorated due to excess work. Majority of respondents were focused the problem of unavailability of time to take care of children education as their major problem followed by children are engaged in household work instead of education. Major cultural/religious problems faced by majority of respondents were unable to participate in religious rituals followed by not allowed to participate in social activities. It was shown by the respondents that poor residence facility is the major residential problem followed by lack of necessary amenities in the locality of residence and unavailability of portal water at the residence. All the variables viz., age, education, habit, type of family, size of family, marital status, caste, social participation, social mobility, annual income, indebtedness and awareness about Government aid scheme did not show any significant association with the social problems experienced by the respondents. Only mass media exposure of the respondents showed a positive and significant association at 0.05 level of significance ($r=0.25083^$) with the social problems of respondents.*

INTRODUCTION

Historians believed that it was woman who first demonstrated crop plant and thereby initiated the art and science of farming. Woman is regarded as "the creator of all green things in the world." Intellectual decision making and physical participation of women in agriculture production system is substantial. Indian rural woman have been always an important and prominent partner in agriculture sector.

Nearly 78 per cent of women are actively engaged in agriculture as compared to 68 per cent of men.

34.55 per cent of women cultivators are engaged in agriculture. According to recent studies 50-90 per cent of all the agricultural activities are carried out by women and women produce 44per cent of the world food today (Sarvanan and Rasmy, 2001). Women play indispensable part in Indian agriculture. The women agricultural labourers perform the bulk of the agriculture and other allied activities. As such in-depth study of this indispensable workforce in agriculture was found to be imperative. A study of various social problems faced by the women agricultural labourers would

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be very useful in finding reliable solutions to their problems and prove to be a decisive determinant in raising their standard of living.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was confined under the jurisdiction of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University of North Gujarat and North-west Gujarat predominantly encompassing semi-arid and arid climate. Among all these districts, 26 research stations are carried out the research activities on agricultural and allied subjects to agriculture. Considering the number of research stations and remoteness of the research station from the main campus of Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, three districts viz., Banaskantha, Mehsana and Sabarkantha were choosed for the study. All the 15 research stations working in the above three districts were selected as the study area. The present study was confined to the "Ex-post Facto" research design and the multistage random sampling technique was used for the selection of jurisdiction area, districts, research stations and respondents. There were total 214 women agricultural labourers working in 15 research stations. It has been planned to select 30 per cent women labourers from each research stations using proportionate random sampling technique. Accordingly, 64 labourers were included in the sample. However, 60 respondents

were available at the time of data collection and they were interviewed.

To measure the social problems a teacher made structured schedule was developed. First of all social problems were divided in six sub-groups viz., social problems, familial problems, health problems, educational problems, cultural/religious problems and residential problems. Then five statements for social problems, seven statements for familial problems, four statements for health problems, eight statements for educational problems, three statements for cultural problems and four statement for residential problems were formulated.

To know the response of the respondents regarding the degree of the problem, frequency of degree was arranged on three points continuum. These points were No, Less and More with a score of zero, one and two, respectively.

Total score for each statement under each problem was calculated and statements under each problem were ranked on the basis of mean score.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1 Social problems

The women agricultural labourers as a part of the society are found to face number of social problems. The data regarding the same were collected and presented in Table.1

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to the degree of their social problems experienced by them and rank order of the problems n = 60

Sr. No.	Social problems	Degree of problem			Total score	Average score	Rank
		No (1)	Less (2)	More (3)			
1	Familial restrictions on social participation	25	27	8	103	1.716	IV
2	No due recogonization by the society	11	31	18	127	2.116	I
3	Low societal status	8	37	15	127	2.116	I
4	Inability to accomplish familial responsibilities	17	29	14	117	1.95	III
5	Discrimination on the basis of caste	33	19	8	95	1.58	V

The data from Table 1 reveal that, No due recognition by the society and low societal status are the main social problem experienced by the women agricultural labourers followed by inability to accomplish familial responsibilities due to employment. The remaining social problems were ranked in low degrees.

From this finding, it can be concluded that there was not due reorganization by the society to the women agricultural labourers and they had low

social status among the society.

2 Familial problems

The women agricultural labourers like other women are reported to face number of familial problems. The low socio-economic conditions of the women agricultural labourers make them vulnerable to a considerably large number of familial problems. The information regarding the same was collected and the data are presented in Table.2

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to the degree of their familial problems experienced by them and rank order of the problems n = 60

Sr. No.	Familial problems	Degree of problem			Total score	Average score	Rank
		No (1)	Less (2)	More (3)			
1	Necessary attention is not given towards rearing of children	16	13	31	135	2.25	I
2	Family problems due to excess of family members	28	17	15	107	1.78	VI
3	Never consulted for any important decision in the family	13	26	21	128	2.13	III
4	Low family status because of under privileged job of husband	14	22	24	130	2.16	II
5	Problems at home due to addicted husband	25	16	19	114	1.9	IV
6	Frequent quarrel among wife and husband	28	23	9	101	1.68	VII
7	Difficulties in carrying out family responsibilities without elders and male members	26	20	14	108	1.8	V

The data from Table 2 showed that the major familial problems faced by the women agricultural labourers were necessary attention is not given towards rearing of children which ranked first followed by low familial status due to under privileged job of husband, never consulted for any important decision in the family and problems at home due to addicted husband which ranked second, third and fourth, respectively. The

remaining problems were extended in low level of ranks.

3 Health problems

The women agricultural labourers because of continuous manual work are bound to face a number of health problems. The information regarding the same was collected and presented in Table.3

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to the degree of their health problems experienced by them and rank order of the problems n = 60

Sr. No.	Health problems	Degree of problem			Total score	Average score	Rank
		No	Less	More			
1	Health get deteriorated due to excess work	13	38	9	116	1.93	II
2	Unavailability of local medical help	27	22	11	104	1.73	IV
3	Unavailability of medical support from employer in accident at work	12	14	34	142	2.36	I
4	No suitable care during illness	14	41	5	111	1.85	III

The data represented in Table 3 reveal that unavailability of medical support from employer in case of accident at work as main health problem among the women agricultural labourers followed by health get deteriorated due to excess work while, no suitable care during illness and unavailability of local medical help were sequentially third and fourth ranked health problems faced by the women agricultural labourers.

4 Education problems

The educational condition among the women agricultural labourers and their family and their attitude towards education was studied. Like others, they are also faced some educational problems. The data regarding the same is presented in Table.4

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to the degree of their educational Problems experienced by them and rank order of the problems n = 60

Sr. No.	Educational problems	Degree of problem			Total score	Average score	Rank
		No	Less	More			
1	Educational facilities are not available in locality	32	19	09	97	1.61	V
2	Children education is purposely neglected by family members	34	21	05	91	1.52	VII
3	Unavailability at time to take care of children education	7	14	39	152	2.53	I
4	Unavailability of suitable educational guidance to children	11	26	23	132	2.2	II
5	Less importance is given to education	43	12	05	82	1.36	VIII
6	Children are engaged in household work instead of education	19	32	09	110	1.83	III
7	Children have no interest in education	31	23	06	95	1.58	VI
8.	Boys and girls are discriminated as regards education	24	29	7	103	1.72	IV

The data presented in Table 4 show that major education problems like unavailability of time to take care of children education, unavailability of suitable education guidance to children, children are engaged in household work instead of education and boys and girls are discriminated as regards education were faced by the women agricultural labourers which were ranked first, second, third and fourth respectively. The remaining problems were

ranked in low extent of ranking.

5 Cultural problems

The women agricultural labourers as part of working occupation face lots of problems in carrying out the various cultural and religious aspects. The various problems faced by the women agricultural labourers under this aspect are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents according to the degree of their cultural problems experienced by them and rank order of the problems n = 60

Sr. No.	Cultural problems	Degree of problem			Total score	Average score	Rank
		No	Less	More			
1	Not allowed to participate in social activities	49	11	-	71	1.18	II
2	Unable to execute cultural programme	51	8	1	70	1.16	III
3	Unable to participate in religious rituals	44	9	7	83	1.38	I

The Table 5 reveal that unable to participate in religious rituals is the major cultural problem experienced by the women agricultural labourers, followed by not allowed to participate in social activities and unable to execute cultural programme which were ranked first, second and third, respectively.

6 Residential problems

The women agricultural labourers were also found to face a number of problems related

to their residence accommodation. The data regarding the same was collected and presented in Table 6.

The data from Table 6 show that poor residence facility is first ranked residential problem of women agricultural labourers followed by lack of necessary amenities in the locality of residence, unavailability of portable water at the residence and unavailability of electricity, which were ranked second, third and fourth, respectively.

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents according to the degree of their residential problems experienced by them and rank order of the problems n = 60

Sr. No.	Residential problems	Degree of problem			Total score	Average score	Rank
		No	Less	More			
1	Poor residence facility	14	32	14	120	2	I
2	Unavailability of portable water at the residence	19	35	6	107	1.78	III
3	Lack of necessary amenities in the locality of residence	24	21	15	111	1.85	II
4	Unavailability of electricity	46	-	14	88	1.46	IV

4 Association between selected characteristics of the respondents and social problems experienced by them

The result with regard to association between selected independent variables and social problems of respondents is presented in Table 7.

The data presented in Table 7 clearly show that

all the selected characteristics of the respondents viz., age, education, habits, type of family, size of family, marital status, caste, social participation, social mobility, annual income indebtedness and awareness about government aid schemes except mass media exposure had non-significantly associated with social problems of the respondents.

Table 7: Association between selected independent variables of the respondents and social problems experienced by them n = 60

Sr. No.	Variables	Correlation coefficient 'r' value
1	Age	-0.03223 ^{NS}
2	Education	-0.12485 ^{NS}
3	Habit	0.09077 ^{NS}
4	Type of family	-0.12741 ^{NS}
5	Size of family	0.10596 ^{NS}
6	Marital status	0.04874 ^{NS}
7	Caste	0.06246 ^{NS}
8	Social participation	-0.10390 ^{NS}
9	Social mobility	0.01979 ^{NS}
10	Annual income	-0.01980 ^{NS}
11	Indebtedness	0.11820 ^{NS}
12	Mass media exposure	0.25083*
13	Awareness about Government aid schemes for landless	-0.20218 ^{NS}

Table value at 0.01 level = 0.325

Table value of 0.05 level = 0.250

*, ** Significant at 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance, respectively.

NS = Non-Significant

Only mass media exposure has positive and significant association with social problems at 0.05 level of significance ($r = 0.25083^*$). From this finding, it can be concluded that mass media exposure had impact on social change. The probable reason might be that majority of the respondents used television for getting information.

CONCLUSIONS

It can be concluded that majority of the women agricultural labourers were faced the problems like, no due recognition by the society, low societal status, necessary attention is not given towards rearing of children, low familial status due

to under privileged job of husband, unavailability of the medical support from employer in case of accident at work, unavailability of time to take care of children education, unable to participate in religious rituals, poor residence facility, etc. only mass media exposure of the respondents showed a positive and significant association at 0.05 level of significance ($r = 0.25083^*$) with the social problems of the respondents.

REFERENCE

Sarvanan, R. and Rasmy, C. (2011). Strategies for empowering women cultivators. Agril. Ext. Rev.