

## Problems of women farmers in agriculture

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**ABSTRACT :** The present study entitled “Problems of women in Agriculture” was carried in two districts Hamirpur and Kanpur to assess the problems of women farmers. Thus, selected total 120 respondents and 60 respondents were selected from each district. Out of total respondents 44.2 per cent respondents belonged to 50 years and above age group. 40.8 per cent respondents were educated up to primary level. 85.0 per cent respondents were belonged to Hindu religion, 45.0 per cent belonged to OBC group, 50.8 per cent respondents were doing agriculture. 59.2 per cent respondents have lived in pukka house. 63.3 per cent has nuclear family in which 50.8 per cent respondents have belonged to medium family size. 34.27 per cent respondents belonged to those families whose annual income was between 3 lacks to 4.5 lacks and above, 57.5 per cent respondents having 2.5 to 5 acres (marginal farmers). After studying women have faced many problems higher number of women have faced seasonal problems, women faced dehydration problem in summer season with 3.82 mean value, fungal infection in rainy season with 3.9 mean score value and common cold in winter season with 3.77 mean score value. Women found health hazards by pesticide with 3.89 mean score. Some women have instant allergic reaction with 3.7 mean score. Cutting tools create problem many a time with 2.67 mean score. Women were faced back pain with 3.7 mean score. Women were faced snake and insect bites with 3.44 mean score. Many women faced problem of irritation of the eyes with 3.75 mean score. And many have bacterial infection problem with 3.58 mean score value. And most of the women have being affected by some health problems while working in agriculture with 4.00 mean score value. Further, studying causes of problems, it was found that causes of seasonal problems that high temperature is the most affecting causes of summer with 0.95 mean score, high humidity climate causes of rainy season problem with 1.87 mean score and cold winds cause to of winter season problem with 1.83 mean score. Many women have faced various physical problems due to prolonged mono-static body gesture with 1.76 mean score. And diseases by agrochemicals are very minute molecules and they can enter very easily in respiratory or 2 digestive system through water, food, respiration etc. so those problems of infected water due to agro-chemicals with 1.59 mean score. Biological agents and vector problem also having a vital effect on human health due to insect is high with 2.52 mean score. Improper use of sharp tools and farm machineries causes injuries with 1.65 mean score value. Fumes as largest causes of respiratory system problem with 1.88 mean score and straw and dust as major causes of irritation of the eyes with 1.84 mean score value. And most of the women farmers faced many health problems due to malnutrition with 2.65 mean score value. From the study it was concluded that mostly women farmers faced various problems while working in agriculture.

**KEY WORDS :** Problems, Women farmers, Agriculture

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## INTRODUCTION

Women play an important role in all dimensions of agricultural production-in certain regions, today's women time input equals men's while in other regions traditions restrict their work to the household where they are involved in crop processing and are in charge of household maintenance. In most cases, women's efforts are non-monetized although they make large labour contributions to a range of marketed products such as dried fruits, fuel wood, dairy products and handicrafts ICAR (2010).

The problems of women in agriculture resemble the 'progressive set of problems' that other marginalized communities face in the general population, but in a more acute and distressing manner Desley (2008). These problems relate to land ownership, security of tenure, land quality issues in cases where land ownership is assured and land management issues in terms of agriculture and the support systems it requires. Any changes in land ownership and agricultural pattern affect women for more than men (positive or negative), given the existing gender roles that women are expected to fulfill, mainly related to management of the household in their reproductive roles- fuel wood collection, fodder collection, livestock tending in general, food security needs and so on. Their dependence on agriculture on common lands, on forests and water is that much greater and more acute. The mode of female participation in agricultural production varies with the land owning status of the farm household. Women's roles range from managers to landless labourers. In all farm production, the average contribution of women is estimated at 50 per cent to 60 per cent of total labour, much higher in certain regions. Girls are preferred in cottonseed production because their wages are lower than those of adults. Moreover, they work longer hours and more intensively and are generally easier to administer Joel (2013) and Marc (2013). Gathering of fuel wood is the exclusive responsibility of women and girls. In general, male activities such as land preparation, planting sowing and fertilizer application are one-time jobs, usually accomplished within a stipulated time. Female activities, however, such as weeding, are recurrent daily activities, lasting from the time the seed is planted until it is harvested.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in two district- Kanpur

and Hamirpur during year 2013-2014 and one block selected to each district and two village selected to one block in this study. 60 respondents were selected from each district and total 120 respondents were selected according to dependent and independent variables namely age, caste, education, family income, occupation etc. The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis for which correlation co-efficient were used.

## OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Table 1 reveals that distribution of women respondents according to education, qualification, maximum 20 per cent of women belong to Hamirpur were educated up to primary level whereas 20.8 per cent of respondents from Kanpur educated up to primary level. 13.3 per cent of women from Hamirpur and 10.8 per cent of women from Kanpur were educated up to secondary level education follow by 5.8 per cent of women from Hamirpur and 8.3 per cent of respondents from Kanpur educated up to high school level 8.3 per cent of respondents from Hamirpur and 5.8 per cent of women respondents from Kanpur have no education only 2.5 per cent of women educated intermediate level.

Table 2 indicate the distribution of respondents as main occupation 22.5 per cent respondents from Hamirpur and 28.3 per cent respondents farm Kanpur were doing Agriculture, whereas 13.3 per cent respondents from Hamirpur and 10.8 per cent respondents from Kanpur were doing business and 8.3 per cent of respondents from Hamirpur and 8.3 per cent of respondents from Kanpur were doing service 3.3 per cent respondents of Hamirpur and 0.8 per cent respondent from Kanpur were engaged in Agriculture labour, Only 2.5 per cent respondents from Hamirpur and 1.7 per cent from Kanpur was attached in Agro based enterprises Jatinder *et al.* (2009).

Table 3 shows that 3 per cent women of Hamirpur told that they feel problem working in high temperature, and having a mean score 0.96, that placed it I rank priority problem of summer season. Whereas, 42.5 per cent women of Kanpur also admitted the same and placed it I rank with a mean score 0.93. Low humidity due to high temperature also affects working in field and 61.7 per cent women of Hamirpur and 26.7 per cent women of Kanpur admitted it Fadya *et al.* (2011). This was considered II rank with mean score 0.82 and 0.77 most affecting problem of Hamirpur. Heat waves of north India commonly known as loo hinders the workers as

long time working in sun may affect body and can cause dehydration/water loss, 26.7 per cent women of Hamirpur and 25.0 per cent women of Kanpur admitted this point and placed it II ranked problem of summer. Intense sun light may causes sun burn in long run dermal tissue/ skin in directly affected in intense sun Gupta and Tarique (2013) and Desley (2008).

15.0 per cent women of Hamirpur and 13.3 per cent women of Kanpur admitted it and placed it V rank with mean score 0.65 and 0.63 Loureiro (2009).

Thus, distribution of both combined district, maximum 88.3 per cent women considered high temperature the most affecting problem of summer with mean score 0.95 placed I rank. 58.4 per cent women

**Table 1 : Distribution of women respondents according to education**

Education	Hamirpur		Kanpur		Total	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Illiterate	10	8.3	7	5.8	17	14.2
Upto Primary	24	20.0	25	20.8	49	40.8
Upto Secondary	16	13.3	13	10.8	29	24.2
High School	7	5.8	10	8.3	17	14.2
Intermediate	3	2.5	5	4.2	8	6.7
Total	60		60		120	100.0
t <sup>2</sup>			0.439			P>0.05

**Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to main occupation**

Education	Hamirpur		Kanpur		Total	
	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
Agriculture	27	22.5	34	28.3	61	50.8
Service	10	8.3	10	8.3	20	16.7
Business	16	13.3	13	10.8	29	24.2
Agirulcture labour	4	3.3	1	0.8	5	4.2
Agro-based enterprises	3	2.5	2	1.7	5	4.2
Total	60	2.5	60	50.0	120	100.0
t <sup>2</sup>			2.060			P>0.05

**Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to causes of summer season problems**

Causes	Hamirpur				Kanpur				Total			
	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank
High temperature	45.8	4.2	0.96	I	42.5	7.5	0.93	I	88.3	11.7	1.89	I
Low humidity	31.7	18.3	0.82	II	26.7	23.3	0.77	II	58.4	41.6	1.59	II
Increase heat wave	26.7	23.3	0.77	III	25.0	25.0	0.75	III	51.7	48.3	1.52	III
Direct contact of sun ray with dermal tissue	15.0	35.0	0.65	IV	13.3	36.7	0.63	IV	28.3	71.7	1.28	IV

**Table 4 : Distribution of respondents according to causes of rainy season problems**

Causes	Hamirpur				Kanpur				Total			
	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank	Yes	No	Mean score	Rank
High temperature	45.0	5.0	0.95	I	41.7	8.3	0.92	I	86.7	13.3	1.87	I
Increase population of micro- organism	16.7	33.3	0.67	II	18.3	31.7	0.68	II	35.0	65.0	1.35	II
Increase insect and pest population	38.3	11.7	0.88	III	35.0	15.0	0.85	III	73.3	26.7	1.73	III
Low intensity of sun ray	23.3	26.7	0.73	IV	20.8	29.2	0.71	IV	55.9	55.9	1.44	IV

think that humidity affects working in field with mean score 0.80 it is II rank in list. Problem of working in heat waves stands III rank in the districts as 51.7 per cent women admit it with mean score 0.76. Working in intense sun light and getting dermal loss stands IV rank as 28.3 per cent women of both districts admit it with a mean score of 0.64 Andre (2014).

Table 4 revealed that 45.0 per cent women from Hamirpur and 41.7 per cent of women from Kanpur admitted that working in high humid climate is difficult having a mean score 0.95 and 0.92, respectively they placed it at rank I. Among various rainy reason problems 38.5 per cent Hamirpur women admitted of difficulties due increased insects and pests. 16.7 per cent women from Hamirpur said that they are affected by micro-organism in rainy season having a mean score 0.67, placed it at IV rank. Whereas, 18.3 per cent women of Kanpur admitted the same and with a mean score 0.68 placed it at IV rank.

Increase in number of insects pests and low intensity of sun rays are other factors which affect working in rainy season.

Overall tables shows that maximum 86.7 per cent women from both the districts were agree on the point that they fell uncomfortable and were being affected working in high humid climate having a mean score of 1.87 they placed it at rank I among all rainy season, 73.3 per cent women accepted increased number of insects-pests in the rainy season and their adverse effect on the work with a mean score of 1.73, they placed it at rank II. 41.1 per cent women agreed that low intensity of sun ray affect working as in high humid, low sunray creates more sweaty and dryness and dehydration with mean score 1.44. It was II rank problem of rainy season. Effect of micro-organism on work was comparatively low as only 35.0 per cent women agreed that micro-organism affect working in rainy season with mean score 1.35 it was IV rank problem.

### Conclusion :

It was concluded that mostly women farmers faced various problems while working in agriculture. These are physical, chemical, occupational, seasonal, biological and others etc. cause of these problem in inappropriate uses of tools or machineries has highest frequency and fatality rates of injury, lacking of awareness, Exposure to pesticide and other agrochemical constitutes a major causes of occupational risk which may result in poisoning, death, in certain cases and reproductive impairment.

Exposure to weather, close contact with plants or animals, long and lengthy working posture and hours are hazardous. Disease and accidents causes by agricultural work also conditioned by a range of factors such as climate, harmful plants and insects, population density, living condition, lack of knowledge about tools, lack of education, training, technological development, quality of service etc.

### Recommendation and suggestion :

- Farm women need to be educated about how to operate different equipments.
- Extension facilities should reach each and every village, remote areas so that every worker could know about latest trends.
- Government also implements various plants for betterment of farm women, extension services help workers to know and understand about the plants.
- Workers should wear long boots so that they can be safe from insects and other pests, snakes etc. while working in rainy season and in between herbs, shrubs and watery farm.
- They should know about sustainable agriculture, insect-pest management, organic agriculture and environment protection measure.

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