

Original Research Article

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Study of the Farm Activities Done by Rural Women and Impact of Drudgery on Women and Children

Sakshi Mishra^{1*}, Ragini Dubey², Pooja Arya¹ and Dipti³

¹Maharana Pratap University of Agriculture and Technology, Udaipur, 313001, India

²Ragini Dubey, Ph. D, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India

³Gobind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, India

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

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Most of the population in India is dependent on agriculture and it is the largest employment sector in the nation. Women play a vital role in agriculture as well as in domestic management in allied activities. Women are considered as the backbone of agriculture in try and hilly areas of rural region. The present study was carried out in two districts of Uttarakhand State. A sample size of 120 respondents was taken for descriptive data using purposive and random sampling. Interview the descriptive data was collected with the help of interview schedule method to study the practices adopted and impact of drudgery on women and children.

Introduction

Women are identified as the main pile of development. Women plays an important role in family resource management by running multiple rows by taking care of the house, perform household and form related activities like transplanting, weed management, harvesting salting winnowing and list of activities accept land preparation and transporting. Women contribute in the survival of their family and are solely

responsible for any money management in low income group. Empowerment of women is a process of gaining self-confident former control over resources and control over existing social attitude and perception top it is essential to achieve gender equality equal rights in the society for better quality of life. Women face many constraints in both areas inside house or outside the house. In rural and hill areas agriculture women workers are unorganized and dispersed. In these areas most of the women are illiterate and have low

level of education. They also have the poor bargaining power. Sometimes due to the seasonal work and in off season they generally have to shift to alternative work for employment. Many of women ended up as bonded labourers because of these situations. Drudgery of women can be reduced by improved or drudgery reducing gender friendly tools. These tools are scientifically or ergonomically designed for farm women. It bridges the communication between the users and design engineers. These tools reduce drudgery, improve efficiency, reduce ill health, reduce stress or fatigue and increase productivity and increase the satisfaction of the women and their health.

Materials and Methods

A descriptive design was chosen to assess the farm activities done by rural women and impact of drudgery on women and children with the help of interview schedule. A sample size of 120 respondent was taken for descriptive data using purposive and random sampling the data was collected personally by using the interview schedule method. A visit was made to the villages of Tarai and hilly areas of Uttarakhand.

Results and Discussion

Farm women perform many farm activities like tillage and seed preparation about 68 percent, followed by sowing and planting, weeding and intercultural operations, harvesting, threshing and grading 69.3 percent, 43.3 percent 18.7 percent respectively (Bhushan *et al.*, 2016) (Fig. 1 and 2).

Tillage and seedbed preparation

Table 1 shows that 12.5 percent female respondents performed this activity in total, 6.67 percent respondents performed this activity in tarai region and 18.34 percent

female respondents performed this activity in hilly region. Tillage and seedbed activity were mainly performed by the male members. Hilly region respondents performed this activity more than tarai region respondents.

Sowing and planting: 78.34 percent female respondents performed this activity. In tarai region, 63.34 percent female and in hill region 93.33 percent female respondents performed this activity. Sowing activity was generally performed manually.

Weeding and intercultural operations

Weeding and intercultural activity was mostly performed by the female respondents. It is clear from the table 1 that 90.84 percent female respondents performed this activity. In the tarai region, 86.67 percent female and in hill region 95 percent female respondents performed this activity. This activity was also done by hand and using traditional *khurpi* for weeding activity.

Harvesting, threshing and grading

Table 1 reveals that majority of the female performed this activity. It was about 84.17 percent female respondents performed these activities. In tarai region, 76.67 percent female respondents and in hill region, 91.67 percent female respondents performed this activity. Harvesting was mainly done by use of sickle; threshing is done by traditional method by beating on wooden plank.

Livestock management

This activity is mostly performed by female. Table 1 shows that 93.34 percent female respondents performed this activity. In tarai region, 90 percent female respondents and in hill region 96.67 percent female respondents performed this activity. Male did not have contribution in livestock management.

Impact of drudgery on women

Table 2.1 shows that about 93.34 percent respondents had heavy physical strain in their body. In the tarai region, 88.34 percent and in hill region 98.34 percent respondents were affected by heavy physical strain. Three fourth of the total respondents had fatigue in their routine due to overburdened with work at home. In tarai region, 75 percent and in hill region 76.65 percent respondents faced the

fatigue problem. Thirty seven percent respondents were malnourished. In tarai region, 30 percent and in hill region, 45 percent respondents faced the malnourishment problem. Ninety three percent had physical stress due to work overload. In the tarai region, 88.34 percent and in hill area 98.34 percent respondents affected by physical stress due to work overload in home, farm and allied activities.

Table.1 Practices being followed by farm women

Practices	Frequency		
	Tarai region	Hill region	Total
Performed Farm operation			
Tillage and seedbed preparation	4 (6.67)	11 (18.34)	15 (12.5)
Sowing and planting	38 (63.34)	56 (93.33)	94 (78.34)
Weeding and intercultural operations	52 (86.67)	57 (95)	109 (90.84)
Harvesting/threshing/grading	46 (76.67)	55 (91.67)	101 (84.17)
Livestock management	54 (90)	58 (96.67)	112 (93.34)
Any tools/machinery at farm			
YES	60 (100)	60 (100)	120 (100)
Any problems in using these tools (traditional tools)			
YES	51 (85)	55 (91.67)	106 (88.34)
NO	9 (15)	5 (8.34)	14 (11.67)
Major problems			
Non-availability of tools	48 (80)	51 (85)	99 (82.5)
Availability of cash/credit related problems	46 (76.67)	49 (81.67)	95 (79.17)
Skill	22 (36.67)	26 (43.34)	48 (40)
Non-availability of information about tools	45 (75)	52 (86.67)	97 (80.84)

Table.2.1 Impact of drudgery on women

Factor	Frequency		
	Tarai region	Hill region	Total
Heavy physical strain	53 (88.34)	59 (98.34)	112 (93.34)
Overwork fatigue	45 (75)	46 (76.65)	91 (75.84)
Malnourishment	18 (30)	27 (45)	45 (37.5)
Physical stress due to work overload	53 (88.34)	59 (98.34)	112 (93.34)
Mental stress due to work overload	47 (78.34)	48 (80)	95 (79.17)
High incidence of miscarriage	6 (10)	9 (15)	15 (12.5)
Disease prone	35 (58.34)	42 (70)	77 (64.17)
Fluctuating lactation ability	21 (35)	32 (53.34)	53 (44.17)

Table.2.2 Impact of drudgery on child

Factors	Frequency		
	Tarai region	Hill region	Total
Deprivation of mother’s attention	48 (80)	51 (85)	99 (82.5)
Low birth weight	32 (53.34)	38 (63.34)	70 (58.34)
High mortality rate	6 (10)	9 (15)	15 (12.5)
Reduced breast feeding	21 (35)	32 (53.34)	53 (44.16)
Neglected child	46 (76.67)	48 (80)	94 (78.34)

Fig.1 Distribution according to impact of drudgery on women

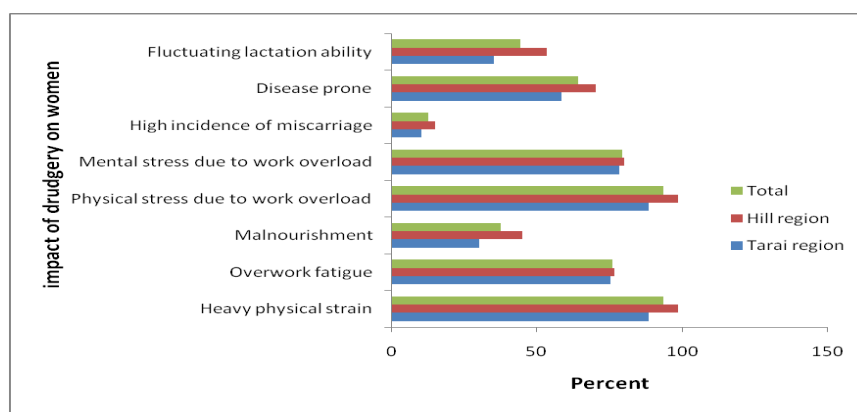
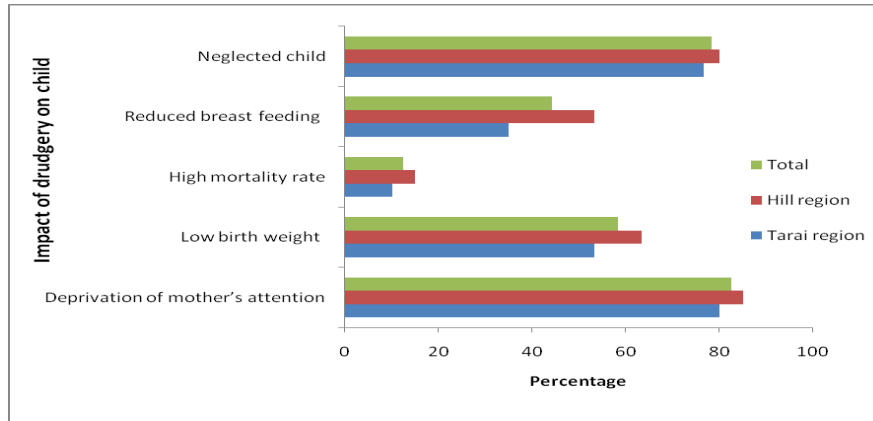


Fig.2 Distribution according to impact of drudgery on child



Seventy nine percent had mental stress due to work. In the tarai region, 78.34 percent and in hill area 80 percent respondents was affected by mental stress due to work. The drudgery had impact on 12.5 percent respondent's high incidence of miscarriage. In tarai region, 10 percent and in hill region, 15 percent respondents had this problem.

Overall, around sixty four percent respondents had the problem of disease prone. In tarai region, 58.34 percent and in hill region 70 percent respondents affected by disease prone especially skin related problem. Forty four percent respondents had the problem of fluctuating lactation ability due to drudgery. In tarai region, 35 percent and in hill region 53.34 percent respondents were affected by fluctuating lactation ability problem.

Impact of drudgery on child

Table 2.2 justifies the impact of drudgery on children. 82.5 percent respondents feel that children are deprived of mother's attention. Most respondents feel that they did not give time to their children. Eighty percent respondents in tarai and 85 percent respondent in hills feel that children were deprived of mother's attention.

More than half of the total respondents feel that their child had low birth weight affecting their growth. In tarai region, 53.34 percent and in hill region 63.34 percent respondent's children faced this problem. About twelve percent respondents faced the problem that due to drudgery their child had high rate of mortality. In the context of tarai region it was 10 percent and in hill region it was observed to be 15 percent.

Due to drudgery about 44.16 percent respondents had the feeling that their breast feeding reduced due to drudgery. In tarai region, 35 percent and in hill region, 53.34 percent respondents faced this problem. Seventy eight percent respondents felt that they did not give time to their child. In tarai region, 76.67 percent and in hill region, 80 percent respondents were of the opinion that their children are neglected due to workload.

In conclusion, the women constitute about 49 % of the population of the world. Women place multiple roles and responsibilities in the society and identified as the main pillar of development and progress for any country. Empowerment of women is a process of gaining self-confident, control over resources and control over existing social attitude and perception. It is essential to achieve gender equality, equal rights in the society for better

quality of life. Empowerment process improves women skills or their access to production resources. It helps to maintain the quality, dignity and work of women in the community. It is only achieved when women condition and position is improved by enlarging social, economic and political freedom and choice. Drudgery is mainly result of the repetitive task, fatigue, physical stress, mental strain or hardship during activity experienced by the people. Generally Indian women feel more work for long time without rest and perform many roles in society and family. This drudgery or fatigue result in feeling tired, sleepiness, physical or mental stress, exhaustion and pain in body parts. So, it can be said that all the farm women suffer from the drudgery while performing various activities.

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