



CONSTRAINTS FACED BY THE WOMEN LABOURS WORKING IN SUGARCANE FARMING

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Abstract:

India is one of the most important sugarcane producing countries in the world. Women working in sugarcane perform the activities manually by adopting traditional methods which are full of drudgery and have adverse effects on their health. The present investigation was carried out to know the participation of women labourers and constraints faced by them while working in sugarcane. The study revealed that female labourers were in the age group of 31-45 years. Majority of them were illiterate. As regards occupation of the farm families was farm labourer. Majority of family type was nuclear. The size of family was medium (5-8). Majority had monthly income between Rs. 7,000/- to 9,000/-. The women were participating in the activities like manure and fertilizer application at first step, preparation of sugarcane sets for sowing, placing these sets into the ridges, irrigation, weeding, harvesting, tying the bundles, carrying sugarcane bundles and loading it in to the vehicle. After harvesting, collection of the remaining to clean the farm was carried out by the female labourers. All these activities were jointly performed with females. Harvesting was done jointly with men. Boils on face due to bite of honey bees, body pain, boils on palm, headache and irritation of the body were major health hazards experienced by the women labourers while working in sugarcane.

Key Words: Constraints, Women Labourers, Sugarcane Farming

Introduction:

The largest number of working women in India is engaged in farming operations either as cultivators or as agricultural labourers. They participate in most of the agricultural operations. Women play a significant and crucial role in agriculture and allied fields including main crop production, livestock, horticulture, post harvest operations etc.

The type of agricultural activities generally expected of women is highly labour intensive. They perform these activities in addition to long and arduous work in household. It is established beyond doubt that women always participate in agricultural activities like sowing, irrigation, harvesting, dairy management, weeding, winnowing application of fertilizers, planting, threshing in addition to their daily household chores.

Women perform the farm activities manually by adopting traditional methods, which are full of drudgery. Most of the drudgery prone tasks in agriculture are performed by women, which have adverse effects on their health, which are cutting/uprooting, transplanting, weeding, sowing & post harvest tasks.

Ray and Chowdhury (1997) stated that rural women in India, besides spending a major part of their daily life in household chores assist their male counterpart in the crop husbandry, animal husbandry, poultry keeping and other related activities.

Partnership is reflected in all the farming activities perhaps because agriculture is a family endeavor. Partnership is also a requirement for sustainable agricultural development. (Bellurkar 2014). Keeping these points in view, the investigation was carried out with following objectives -

Objectives:

- To study the profile of women labour working in sugarcane farming
- To find out the type of participation of the women labour working in sugarcane
- To study the constraints faced by the women labour working in sugarcane

Methodology:

Present investigation was carried out in Parbhani and Hingoli Districts of Marathwada region in Maharashtra State, which are sugarcane growing districts. The data were collected from Parbhani and Basmat talukas of Parbhani and Hingoli district respectively. The selected villages were Asola, Lohgaon, Daithana, Javla Bazaar and Aundha. From these selected villages 100 women labours working in sugarcane were interviewed. The data was collected personally by using the interview schedule.

The findings of the study are discussed under following heads.

Profile of Women Labour Working in Sugarcane:

Table 1 reveals about the background information of the respondents. It is clear from the table 1 that majority of the women 54.00 per cent were middle aged i.e. in the age group of 31-45 years, followed by the younger category (18-30) years 40.00 per cent while 6.00 per cent women were from the old age category (46-60) years. As far as education of the respondents was concerned it was seen that majority of the rural women 70.00 per cent were illiterate, whole 9.00 per cent of them could read & write. It was seen that 10.00 per cent of

the women were educated up to school level where as only 1.00 per cent of the women were educated up to Junior College or Diploma level.

Nuclear type of families were seen to be predominant (74.00 %), followed by joint families (26.00 %). More than half (53.00 %) of the selected families were of medium sized (5-8) members while small size (up to 4 members) families were less 24.00 per cent and 23.00 per cent of the respondents were having large families comprising (8 members). As far as annual income is concerned it was observed that more than half of the respondent (59.00 %) had their annual income between Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000/- while 18.00 per cent had annual income up to Rs. 50,000/-.

Type of Participation of the Women Labour in Sugarcane Farming:

As far as participation of the women labour in sugarcane farming was concerned, it can be noted that in the activity land preparation majority of the women (75.00 %) were participating jointly with female whereas percentage for no participation of the women in this activity was 16.00. Only 9.00 per cent were doing this activity jointly with male. As regards preparation of sugarcane setts, it can be stated from the table, that most of the respondents (87.00%) were participating jointly with female. Percentage for no participation of the women in this activity was 12.00 whereas only 1.00 per cent of them were doing this activity jointly with male. When the respondents were classified according to the participation in preparation of ridges, it was noted that more than three fourth (86.00 %) of them were participating jointly with female whereas 13.00 per cent were doing this activity jointly with male. Percentage for no participation of the women in this activity was only 1.00.

In case of preparation of deepings of setts, it was noted that majority of the respondents (86.00%) were participating jointly with female. Percentage for no participation of the women in this activity was 13.00 whereas only 1.00 per cent of the respondents were doing this activity jointly with male. In the activity manure and fertilizer application, it was observed that more than half (56.00%) of them were doing this activity jointly with male. More than one fourth (28.00%) of the women were participating jointly with female. Percentage for no participation of the women in this activity was 16.00. It can be noted that in the activity land irrigation, majority (67.00 %) of the women were participating jointly with male whereas only 18.00 per cent were not doing this activity. Percentage of the women for land irrigation was only 15.00. In case of weeding, it was noted that more than three fourth of the respondents (88.00 %) were participating jointly with female. Equal percentage (6.00%) was noted for joint participation with male and also for no participation. The respondents participating in the activity harvesting jointly with both female and male were less than half (44.00%) whereas 12.00 per cent of them were not participating in this activity. It can be noted that in the activity cutting of waste material majority (65.00%) of the women were participating jointly with female whereas only 21.00 per cent were doing this activity jointly with male. Percentage for no participation of the women in this activity was only 14.00. In the activity tying bundles, it was observed that more than half (65.00%) of the women were participating jointly with female where as 15.00 per cent were not participating in this activity. Only 14.00 women were doing this activity jointly with male.

In case of Loading, it was noted that more than less than half of the respondent (22.00 %) were no participation of the women in this activity . whereas 17.00 per cent were doing this activity jointly with female and only 15.00 per cent women were doing this activity jointly with male. When the respondents were classified according to their marketing, it was noted that more than half (51.00 %) of them were participating jointly with male .whereas less than half 32.00 per cent were no participation of the women in this activity. Only 17.00 per cent of the women were doing this activity with male.

Health Hazards Stated by the Women Labour:

As regards health hazards stated by the women labour, it was clear from the table that 82 per cent of them were facing the problem of boils on palm while 80 per cent stated that they had fever while working in sugarcane. It can be noted that majority 81.00 per cent of the women were headache. More than half 81.00 per cent of the respondent facing the irritation of the body when they have working in the sugarcane. Majority 83.00 per cent of the women were facing problem of the body pain. In case of body heat, it was noted that more than half of the respondent 74.00 per cent were facing this problem. When the respondents were classified according to their mosquito bite, it was noted that more than half 72.00 per cent of them were facing the mosquito bite. In case of wild pigs, it was noted that more than half of the respondent 70.00 per cent were wild pigs. It can be noted that majority 83.00 per cent of the women were boils on the face due to bite of honey bees. In the wounds occur on the arms and feet, it was observed that more than half 74.00 per cent of the women were facing this problem.

Conclusion:

It was noted that female labours were in the age group of 25-60 years. Majority of them were illiterate. As regards the caste, farm families were from SC (Schedule Caste). Main occupation of the farm families was farm labour. Majority of family type was nuclear. The size of family was medium (5-8). Majority had monthly income between Rs. 7,000/- to 9,000/-. A great majority of rural women were married. The women were participating in the activities like manure and fertilizer application at first step, preparation of sugarcane sets for sowing, placing these sets into the ridges, irrigation, weeding, harvesting, tying the bundles, carrying sugarcane

bundles and loading it in to the vehicle. After harvesting, collection of the remaining to clean the farm was carried out by the female labours. All these activities were jointly performed with females. It was observed that manure and fertilizer application was done for 3-4 times. First weeding was done after 15-20 days of sowing. Totally four times weeding was done. Harvesting was done jointly with men.

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Table 1: Profile of Women Labour Working in Sugarcane

(n=100)

S.No	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age (Yrs.)		
	Young (18-30)	40	40
	Middle (31-45)	54	54
	Old (>46)	6	6
2	Education		
	Illiterate	70	70
	Can read and write	9	9
	Primary	7	7
	Secondary level	10	10
	High school level	3	3
	College level	1	1
3	Type of family		
	Nuclear	74	74
	Joint	26	26
4	Size of family		
	Small (1-4 members)	24	24
	Medium (5-8 members)	53	53
	Large (> 8 members)	23	23
5	Annual income (Rs.)		
	Up to 40,000/-	23	23
	40,000/- to 50,000/-	59	59
	> 50,000/-	18	18

Table 2: Type of participation of the women labour working in sugarcane

(n=100)

S.No	Type of Activity	Jointly with Female		Jointly with Male		No Participation	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Land preparation	75	75	9	9	16	16
2	Preparation of sugarcane setts	87	87	1	1	12	12
3	Preparation of ridges	86	86	13	13	1	1
4	Deeping setts	86	86	1	1	13	13
5	Mannure and fertilizer application	28	28	56	56	16	16
6	Irrigation	15	15	67	67	18	18
7	Weeding	88	88	6	6	6	6
8	Harvesting	44	44	44	44	12	12
9	Cutting of waste material	65	65	21	21	14	14
10	Tying bundles	65	65	14	14	15	15
11	Loading	17	17	15	15	22	22
12	Marketing	17	17	51	51	32	32

Table 3: Health hazards stated by the women labour working in sugarcane

(n=100)

S.No	Health Hazards	Freq	%
1	Boils on palm	82	82
2	Fever	80	80
3	Headache	81	81
4	Irritation of the body	81	81
5	Body pain	83	83
6	Heat	74	74
7	Mosquito bite	72	72
8	Attack of the wild pigs	70	70
9	Boils on face due to bite of Honey bees.	83	83
10	Wounds occur on the arms and feet	74	74

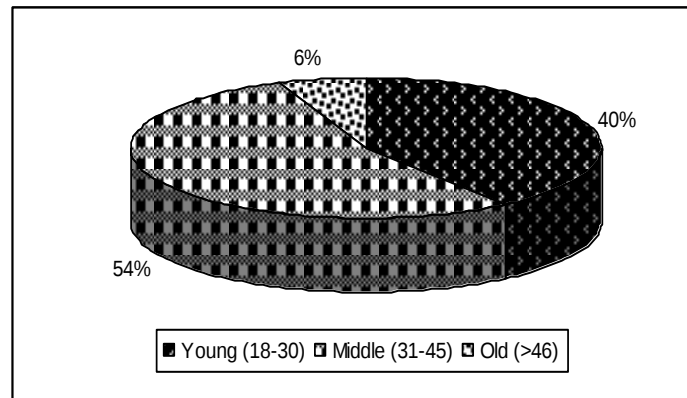


Figure 1: Age of the respondents

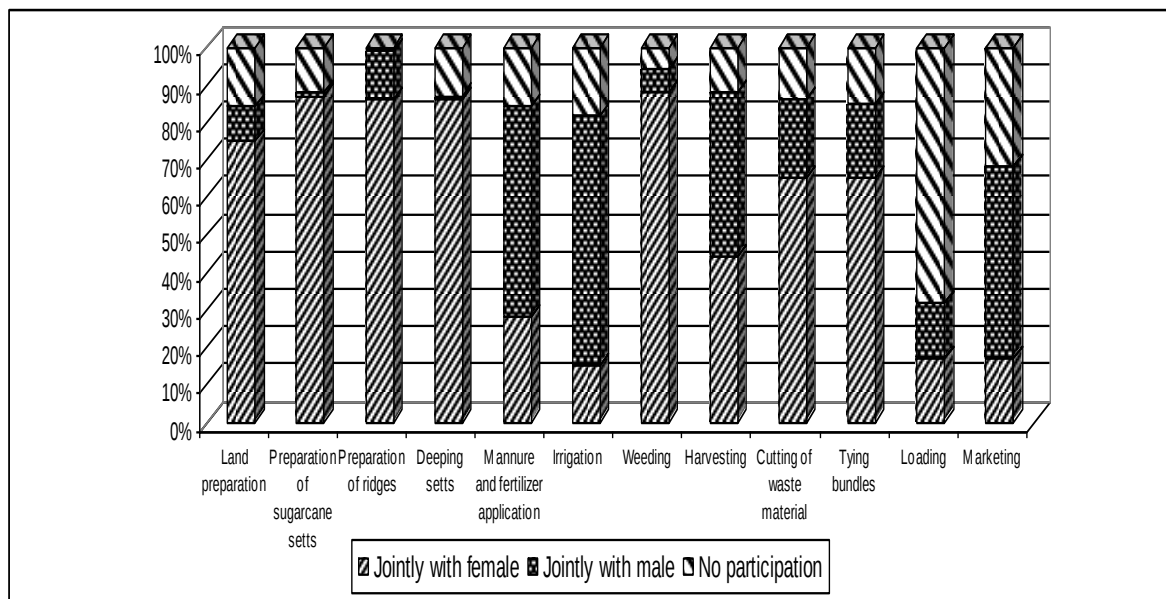


Figure 2: Type of participation of the women labourers working in sugarcane

Activities:

- Land preparation
- Preparation of sugarcane setts
- Preparation of ridges
- Deeping setts
- Mannure and fertilizer application
- Irrigation
- Weeding
- Harvesting

- Cutting of waste material
- Tying bundles
- Loading
- Marketing

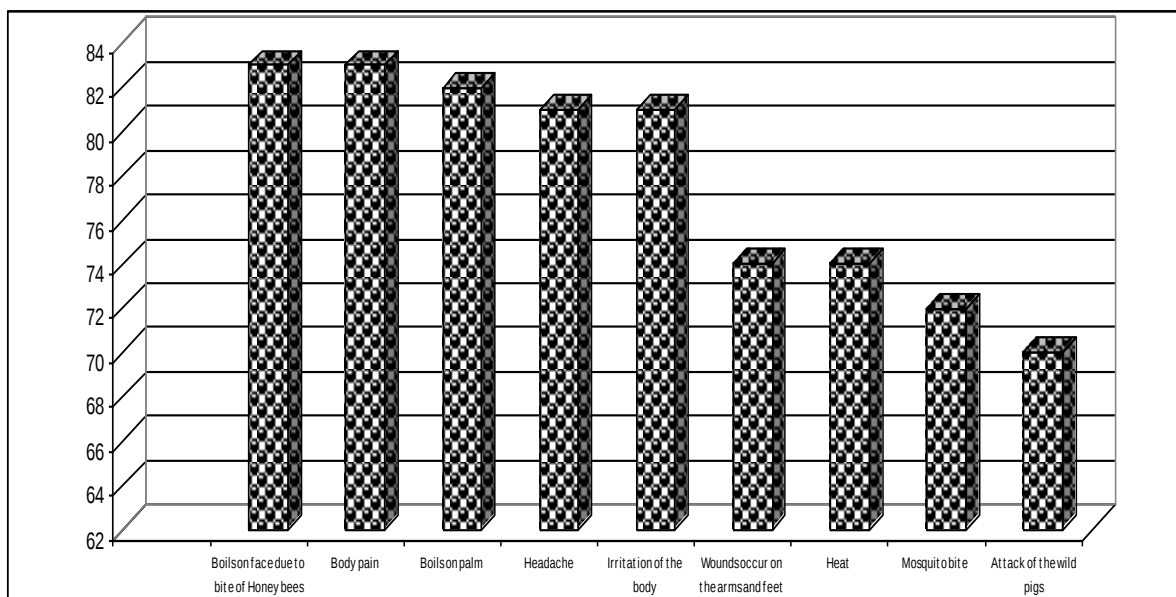


Figure 3: Health hazards stated by the women labourers working in sugarcane