



PARTICIPATION OF TRIBAL WOMEN IN DIFFERENT FARM ACTIVITIES IN KISHANGANJ DISTRICT OF BIHAR

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Abstract: The present study was conducted in Kishanganj District of Bihar to find out the participation of tribal women in various farm activities. A total of 124 respondents were selected randomly for the present study. The data were collected through a pre-structured interview schedule and later appropriate statistical analysis was done to find out the meaningful result. The results showed that the tribal women were engaged in almost all the farming activities like preparation of field, sowing of seeds, transplantation, weeding, manureing, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, storage of grains ,marketing, disposal of farm produce etc. however, they were actively participating in farm activities like, transplantation, weeding, raising of nurseries, preparation of field, storage of grains , cleaning and grading etc but they were having less participation in farm activities like, threshing, plant protection measures, fertilizer and pesticide application, marketing etc. The maximum extent of their participation found in transplanting having mean score 2.88 (rank I), followed by harvesting having mean score 2.87 (rank II).

Keyword: Participation, tribal women, farm activities

Introduction

Agriculture in India is the backbone of the country and it plays an important role in the economy, is regarded as the largest sector of the country's economic activity. Above 80 % of the Indian population, either directly or indirectly depends on agriculture. Agriculture is the prime driving force for food security, rural economy and sustainable socio- economic development of farmers.



Agriculture, as a productive sector provides a pathway out of poverty and has an important macro-economic role upon which diverse economies are built. Women participate in all agricultural operations except ploughing and sowing of paddy, contributing between 70 to 80 % of the total labour. In spite of this, tribal regions perform poorly in terms of infrastructure, returns from agriculture and almost all human development indicators (**Nisha 2008**).

Farmwomen are the backbone of Indian agriculture. Growing food has been an interminable saga of her life. It is a well recognized fact that more than 60 % of agricultural operations have been traditionally handled by women. Even cultural anthropological literature suggests that agriculture is invention of women. Rural woman are extensively involved in agricultural activities. The nature and extent of their involvement differs with the variations in agro-production systems. The mode of female participation in agricultural production varies with the land-owning status of farm household. Their roles range from managers to landless laborers (**Kumar *et al*, 1985**). Women are doing almost all the agricultural work starting from sowing of seeds to harvesting and processing the agricultural produce. Despite their dominance of the labor force, women in India still face extreme disadvantage in terms of pay, land rights, and representation in local farmers organizations. Furthermore their lack of empowerment often results in negative externalities such as lower educational attainment for their children and poor familial health (**Chauhan 2011**).

Looking at the significant role of tribal women in agriculture, the study on participation of tribal women in different farm activities was conducted keeping in view of increasing importance of involvement of tribal women in agricultural production programmes. Studies in this field so far had exhibited a little concern on tribal women's role in Bihar state. Hence, this study was conducted with an objective of ascertaining the extent of involvement of tribal women in various farm activities in Kishanganj District of Bihar.

Research Methodology

The present study was conducted in the Kishanganj district of the Bihar state, which is one of the tribal districts of the state as population of Schedule Tribe (ST) is 3.8% of total population. They prominently and actively participate in various farming activities and contribute in their household economy. There are 7 blocks in the selected district out of that Kishanganj block was selected purposively as per the existence of maximum tribal population. From the district 7 villages namely, Balubadi, Lambabasti, Tupamari, Bhediadangi, Khadibasti, Simalbadi,



Bastakhola were selected randomly for the study. From total selected 7 tribal dominated villages, 124 respondents were selected randomly. The structured interview schedule was prepared for data collection. Descriptive research design was used for this study. The statistical tools such as frequency, percent and chi-square test were used to interpret the data and for drawing logical conclusion.

Results and Discussion

The women are back bone of agricultural work force, but worldwide their hard work has mostly been unpaid. They do the most tedious back-breaking tasks in agriculture and homes. Women are extensively involved in agricultural activities. However the nature and extent of their involvement differs with the variations in agro production systems. Women are carrying out a number of activities inside and outside the home. Tribal women plays a significant role in agricultural activities such as- seeding, transplanting, weeding, plant protection storage etc. The tribal women of Kishanganj district involve in almost all farm activities starting from seed sowing, nursery raising, transplanting to harvesting, marketing etc

Table 1. Socio-economic profile of the respondents

n = 124

S.No	Independent variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age	Young (20-35)	62	50.00
		Middle (36-55)	46	37.10
		Old (above 55)	16	12.90
2.	Education	Illiterate	74	59.67
		Primary School	22	17.74
		Junior High	12	9.67



		High School	10	8.06
		Higher Secondary	06	4.86
3.	Land holding	Below 1 acre	62	50.00
		1-2 acre	48	38.70
		2-3 acre	08	6.50
		Above 3 acre	06	4.80
4.	Annual income	Upto 50,000	30	24.20
		50,001- 1lakh	84	67.74
		Above 1 lakh	10	8.06
5.	Family size	Upto 5	64	51.62
		More than 5	60	48.38
6.	Family type	Nuclear	96	74.42
		Joint	28	22.58
7.	Social participation	No participation	11	8.87
		Low	64	51.61
		Medium	31	25.00
		High	18	14.52

From the table 1, it is evident that 50.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to the age group of 20 - 35 years i.e young age, majority of the respondents i.e. 59.67 per cent of the respondents were Illiterate. In terms of land holding, 50.00 per cent of the respondents had land holding of below one acre and 67.74 per cent of the respondents have an annual income of 50,001- 1,00,000 (**Pramila 2014**). Majority of the respondents have family size up to 5 members and maximum



number of respondents (77.42 %) of the respondents had nuclear family whereas, 51.61 per cent of the respondents had low level of social participation (**Warkade 2010**).

Table 2. Participation of respondents in various farm activities

S.No	Farm activity	Fully participate		Partially participate		Not participate		Mean score	Rank order
		F	P	F	P	F	P		
1	Land preparation	20	16.14	98	74.20	6	4.83	2.11	X
2	Selection of seed	30	24.20	50	40.32	44	35.48	1.89	XIII
3	Seed treatment	70	56.45	22	17.75	32	25.80	2.30	VII I
4	Transplanting	110	88.71	14	11.29	0	0	2.88	I
5	Raising of nurseries	106	85.50	12	9.7	6	4.83	2.80	III
6	Irrigation	18	14.5	14	11.30	92	74.20	1.40	XVI
7	Weeding	100	80.64	14	11.30	10	8.06	2.72	IV
8	Pesticide application	6	4.80	24	19.35	94	75.85	1.29	XVIII
9	Fertilizer application	8	6.45	24	19.35	92	74.20	1.32	XVII
10	Plant protection	56	45.20	24	19.35	44	35.50	2.09	XI
11	Harvesting	110	88.70	12	9.7	2	1.6	2.87	II
12	Threshing	12	9.6	32	25.84	80	64.56	1.45	XV
13	Winnowing	70	56.50	14	11.3	40	32.2	2.24	IX
14	Packaging	94	75.80	22	17.75	8	6.46	2.69	V
15	Storage of grains	72	58.07	52	41.93	0	0	2.58	VI
16	Transportation	10	8.1	40	32.25	74	59.65	1.48	XIV
17	Marketing	15	12.09	88	70.96	21	16.95	1.95	XII
18	Disposal of farm produce	84	67.76	20	16.12	20	16.12	2.51	VII



From the table 2. it is revealed that maximum farm women are involved in transplanting which got rank 1 with mean score 2.88 followed by harvesting, raising of nurseries, weeding, packaging, storage of grains having rank II, III, IV, V, VI respectively, and likewise tribal women have less involvement in threshing, irrigation, fertilizer application having rank XV, XVI, XVII respectively and they are rarely involve in pesticide application in field having mean score 1.32 and rank XVIII. Similar result were reported by (Dhruw 2020) and (Mohanta2017). From this figure it is depicted that farm women are doing almost all work related to agriculture. About 70% of work done by women only (Metha *et al.* 2019).

Table 3. Association between selected independent variables with Participation

S.No.	Variables	calculated value
1.	Age	12.582*
2.	Education	3.664 NS
3.	Land holding	5.561 NS
4.	Annual income	0.362 NS
5.	Family size	4.624 NS
6.	Family type	4.138 NS
7.	Social participation	4.270 NS

* = Significant at 0.05 level NS = Non significant

The findings presented in the table 3. reveals that age of the tribal women is significantly associated with their extent of participation, the probable reason might be because majority of the respondents were young to middle age group. Similar results were found by (Motesing 2018), whereas, education, land holding, income, family size, family type and social participation, are insignificantly associated with extent of participation of farm women in different farm activities due to their poor socioeconomic background.



Conclusion

It was concluded from the present study that majority of the respondents were young to middle age group, illiterate having 1-2 acres of land holding, belonged to nuclear family with low social participation. It was observed that maximum participation of the respondents in various farm activities were transplantation, harvesting, raising the nurseries, weeding, packaging and post-harvest activities. Age was found positively associated with the participation in different farm activities whereas; education, landholding, annual income, family type, family size and social participation have no association with the participation in farm activities. Government should provide proper training, demonstrations and suitable extension strategies to be followed to enhance the participation of tribal women in different farm activities which will lead to all round development of the rural area.

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