

## Gender Differentials in Performance of Farm and Nonfarm Activities in Ummednagar Village of Jodhpur District

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study was conducted in Ummednagar village of tehsil Mandor of Jodhpur district. The village was selected purposively under the transfer of technology programme supported by CAZRI, Jodhpur. The observations were taken regarding activities related to agricultural production, livestock, and domestic works. In case of agricultural activities it was observed that there is a clear-cut differentiation among some works performed by male and female members individually whereas, overlapping in few activities which they perform jointly. Regarding agricultural activities like field preparation bunding and clearing weeds harvesting and transport harvest majority considered them as working jointly. However in case of weeding (72.22%), threshing (52.78%) and winnowing (77.77%) females were always involved in these operations and involvement of male members was very less (16-33%). In case of live stock activities except heath care (13.88%) and marketing of produce (6.66%) women always involved in all the other activities like fodder collection, drying, feeding, cleaning, milking, processing milk etc. Regarding different household works the contribution of women was very high (91.67-100%) except marketing for household provisions which was primarily done by the male members (58.33%) or jointly (41.66%).*

**Key words:** Bunding; Harvesting; Household; Livestock; Processing;

**G**ender is an important variable in all human interactions. Gender is not just about the women but the various socio-cultural roles imposed on men and woman based on perceived gender characteristics and their mutual dynamics. Women are the pivots around which the family, the society and the whole community moves. Rural women are the important segment of the village society both by their numbers and hours they spent in performing multifarious activities at home, farm and looking after cattle. They lead difficult lives and spend maximum time doing tiring and arduous tasks. Studies also report the fact that women generally perform farm activities which are time and labour intensive, monotonous, and more drudgery prone. Women's participation in various farm and non-farm activities vary widely across the regions according to different farming systems and socio economic status of the families. Farming and animal husbandry are the major work domain except the domestic works where their participation may range as high as 100 %. Since all household, agricultural and livestock activities are

done manually, they cause considerable physical and mental fatigue to the women. Hence, the present study was designed to systemically analyze the men and women differential perceptions and actual roles in various farm and nonfarm activities. The observations were taken regarding activities related to agricultural production, livestock, and domestic works.

### METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Ummednagar village of *tehsil* (administrative unit) Mandore of Jodhpur district which falls in the arid zone of western Rajasthan. Most of the basic community facilities were made available in the village except in some scattered settlements where drinking water supplied by public health engineering department were not connected. The area was, by and large, single cropped with few irrigated wells where *Rabi* (winter season) crops are grown to a limited extent e.g. wheat, Mustard, Cumin and few vegetables like cabbage, onion, garlic and carrot. The village was selected purposively under the transfer of

technology programme supported by CAZRI, Jodhpur. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the 36 farm families representing different caste and land holding category and from different clusters (settlements). Data were collected through a specially designed interview schedule developed for this study as given by Puri (1972) and Acharya and Benett (1982), with some necessary modifications, observations, case studies, participatory rural appraisal etc.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Women as agriculturist tend to look at performing in their totality from the sowing of the crop to its ultimate utilization either as food, feed or raw material or industry. The total intellectual and physical participation of the farm woman in the process of agricultural development is absolutely necessary. Thus, the data was collected and analysed based on three major categories of operations viz. Agricultural, livestock and domestic activities in which participation of women is greatest and results are presented and discussed accordingly as under.

*Agricultural Activities:* The economic census of India estimate state wise number of agricultural and non-agricultural workers in India, which has been further bifurcated in actual number and percentage of males and females engaged in these activities. According to fifth economic census (E.C.) in 2005, the number of persons engaged in agricultural activities in Rajasthan is 4, 41,315 (Mathur Y, 2008). The provisional census data from Directorate of Economics and Statistics for district Jodhpur states that the total number of male and female involved in agricultural works are 39.40 and 69.40 percent, respectively which indicates almost double participation of females in agriculture (*Khinchi NL, 2001*). If we see the data regarding percent participation of males and females as agricultural labour 6.54 % participation for males and 16.53% for females has been reported in the of labourers engaged in provisional census data of jodhpur district which again highlight the higher percent participation of females as agricultural labourers. These reports highlight the higher participation of women in various agricultural activities rather than men.

In case of agricultural activities, a general survey of farm operations was performed. It was observed that there is a clear-cut differentiation among some works performed by male and female members individually whereas, some overlapping in few activities which they perform jointly. Regarding agricultural

activities like field preparation (69.44%), clearing weeds (66.66%), harvesting (58.33%) and transport harvest (63.89 %) majority considered them as jointly performed activities. However in case of weeding (72.22%), threshing (52.78%) and winnowing (77.77%) females were always involved in these operations and involvement of male members was less (16-33%). The data further inferred that operations such as ploughing (100%), sowing (83.33%), fertilizer application (94.44%), pesticide application (83.33%) watch and ward of field (52.78%), storage (80.56%) and marketing (95.45 %) are done primarily by the male members and the contribution of female members was very less or they never involved in these activities (Table-1). Raj & Kishore (1991) also reported that the contribution of farm women in agriculture roughly estimated to be 50-60 percent in our country.

**Table 1. Gender Activity Profile of Agricultural Activities**

Activities	Women (%)	Men (%)	Jointly (%)
Field preparation	16.66	13.88	69.44
Clearing weeds	33.33	-	66.66
Ploughing	-	100	-
Sowing	5.56	83.33	11.11
Weeding	72.22	8.33	19.44
Fertilizer application	-	94.44	6.66
Pesticide application	-	83.33	16.66
Transport FYM	2.78	88.88	8.33
Watch & ward of field	27.78	52.78	19.44
Harvesting	25.00	16.66	58.33
Threshing	52.78	33.33	13.89
Winnowing	77.77	19.44	2.78
Transport harvest	5.55	30.56	63.89
Cleaning	41.66	-	58.33
Storage of Harvested crop	8.33	80.56	11.11
Marketing for agril. inputs	-	95.45	5.55

*Livestock Activities:* Animal husbandry is a major domain in which participation of rural women is seen as very high. Researchers have indicated that most drudgery-ridden tasks in this domain are collecting and bringing fodder, milking, cleaning shed, feeding animals and processing milk. In case of live stock activities except heath care (13.88%) and marketing of produce (6.66%) women always involved in all the other activities like fodder collection (66.66 %), feeding (77.7 8%), cleaning shed (91.67%), milking (97.22%), processing milk (97.22%) etc. The percentage wise participation of women in various live stock activities has been presented in (Table -2). It is evident from the table that women accounted for higher percent participation than men in

different livestock activities. Sharma & Khandelwal (2002) also reported cent percent participation in fodder collection and cleaning of animal shed, and in case of milking of animal 91.66 percent. Sankhala & Sharma (2000 -2001) found that least important role performed by farm women in marketing and healthcare of animals.

*Domestic activities* : In majority of cases women alone were responsible for all the activities related to care of family and children showing clearly that domestic or household works are more or less a female prerogative (Table-3). Regarding different domestic works the contribution of women was very high (91.67-100%) except marketing for household provisions which was primarily done by the male members (58.33%) or jointly (41.66%). Majority of women participated in household activities like fuel wood collection (94.44%), fetching water (91.67%), cleaning house (100%), cooking (100%), child care (88.88%) and washing clothes (91.67%) with a very less contribution of the male members of the family.

**Table 2. Gender Activity Profile of Livestock Activities**

Activities	Women (%)	Men (%)	Jointly (%)
Collection of fodder	66.66	27.77	6.66
Washing animals	80.56	13.89	5.55
Feeding	77.78	11.11	11.11
Milking	97.22	2.77	-
Grazing	77.77	6.66	16.66
Milk processing	97.22	2.78	-
Deliver milk at center	16.66	33.33	50
Dung cakes	100	-	-
Health of animals	13.88	86.11	-
Cleaning shed	91.67	2.78	5.55
Marketing	6.66	94.44	-

**Table 3. Gender Activity Profile of Household/Domestic Activities**

Activities	Women (%)	Men (%)	Jointly (%)
Fuel wood collection	94.44	5.56	-
Fetching water	91.67	8.33	-
Cleaning house	100	-	-
Cooking	100	-	-
Carry food to farm	94.44	5.56	-
Child care	88.88	11.11	-
Washing clothes	91.67	8.33	-
Buy household provisions	-	58.33	41.66

## CONCLUSION

It is clear from the discussion that in most of the activities related to agriculture, livestock and domestic works women participation was reported to be predominant. However, no participation or lesser was recorded in financial activities like marketing, selling of produce and allied activities owing to lack of knowledge which was considered primarily as male dominated activities. It was also observed that however women are playing significant role in most of the activities still their control over resources and products was found approximately negligible. It is time to rethink whether it is better if the target group with regard to sex in agricultural research and development should be toward farm women in developing countries to provide opportunities for women to participate in the process of development and transfer of technology projects keeping in view their greater involvement in all sort of activities in agriculture and allied areas.

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