



Gender Differentials in Occupational Structure and Employment Pattern in Agriculture in Punjab

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Abstract: This paper studies gender differentials in crop production in the villages of Punjab under different crops. The specific objectives addressed in the study were to: analyze the extent of female employment across cropping systems in Punjab; to examine the gender differentials in employment across various cropping systems in Punjab and to identify the factors affecting the rural women employment in agriculture. The primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to 300 rural households in Punjab. Frequency and percentage methods were used to analyze the socio-economic characteristics of women and their level of participation in agricultural production. The participation of female labour in agriculture varies depending on the number of factors viz. education level, size of the family, employment opportunities, access to land and credit, cultural and religious norms etc. Analysis of the data showed that more than two-thirds of the households in the agricultural households belonged to general category whereas the scheduled caste and the backward class were very few. The proportion of uneducated males (23.75%) and uneducated females (41.25%) was the highest among the landless category of rural households. The labour and workforce participation rates of sampled rural households on their involvement in various occupations showed that the overall LFPR of males was 88.66% and female LFPR, 29.07 per cent. The total labour use per hectare for wheat, rice, maize, cotton, chilli, peas and kinnow of the state on an average worked out to be the highest, 1155.5 hours per hectare for chilli, constituting 561.9 hours per hectare (48.62%) of males and 593.6 hours per hectare (51.37%) of females. Crop wise analysis showed that wheat occupied the minimum labour hours 271.7 per hectare offering the amount of female labour use for this crop to only 41.3 hours per hectare (13.4%) of the total labour used. More female labour was used for chilli, cotton and peas as these crops are less mechanized in contrast to other crops thus there is a tendency among the farmers to employ male labour for the mechanized and skilled operations and female labour for unskilled operations.

Keywords: Female labour, Mechanization, Agriculture operations, Labour hours
