

A STUDY ON PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE IN PEREN DISTRICT OF NAGALAND

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ABSTRACT: Nagaland is the sixteenth state of India and is located in the North Eastern region. Women in rural parts of Nagaland are very active in their participation in agricultural development, livestock production and farm management. Women in farming families participate in crop production, horticulture, vegetable production, as well as household management, a small segment of women are engaged in weaving and small scale income generating activity. Out of the twelve recognized districts, one district in particular, 'Peren district' was taken into consideration for this study whereby a total of 120 farm women were considered as final respondents. The study investigated the extent of participation of women in agriculture. Women in Peren district, Nagaland were actively involved in agricultural activities whereby, as per the study it was found that the women were 'always' involved in back breaking activities viz., field preparation, sowing, intercultural operation, harvesting, threshing, storage and marketing while they were given less importance in activities wherever decision-making was involved like selection of land, burning of jungle etc.

Key words: women, participation, agriculture, farming.

INTRODUCTION

Nagaland is the 16th State of India and was formally inaugurated on December 1, 1963. It is a part of North-Eastern Hill region of the country. "The State consists of twelve Administrative District viz., Kohima, Dimapur, Kiphari, Longleng, Mokokchung, Mon, Peren, Phek, Tuensang, Wokha, Noklak and Zunheboto. Nagaland is a land of 16 major tribes along with many sub-tribes whereby, each tribe has its own custom, language and dress.

Nagaland is an agrarian state with over 73% of population dependent on agriculture and allied its sector. Its cultures and traditions are all symbolic to agriculture and livestock sector and therefore are essential for a planned social economic development in order to achieve sustainability in all spheres of development activities in the state through restoring the ecological balance. Women in agriculture constitute more than 50.11%. In Kohima district the distribution of workers, more than half of the agricultural workers were women and as high as 73% of the total working women was engaged in agriculture as against the male average of 49% (Nakhro 2011).

Women in rural areas have impacted the agricultural system and economy of Nagaland. Any local market in Nagaland is dominated by women. Looking in the grass root level, women have contributed immensely in the food production, agro biodiversity and the local food system (source: The Morung Express daily, published on 8/3/2014). Women have taken the lead to pave the way for climate change and food security. More than 80% of the field operation are done by women farmer, more than 60% of farmers are women and they are backbone of Agriculture (source: the Morung express daily published on 16/10/2018). Rural women are engaged in activities like cultivations, dairy, fisheries, crop processing and other allied sectors. Women play crucial role in agriculture as they mould and build the destiny of the nation.

Objective:

To study the extent of participation of women in farming activities

METHODOLOGY

This research study was conducted in Peren District of Nagaland. A total of 120 farm women were considered as respondents for the study. Descriptive research design was followed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Extent of participation of women in farming activities

Table 1: Distribution of respondents as per extent of participation in farming activities

Sl no	Farming Activities	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)
1	Selection of Land	5.83	10.00	14.17	70.00
2	Cutting of Jungle	17.50	20.83	46.67	15.00
3	Burning of Jhum Fields	27.50	5.00	36.67	30.83
4	Field Preparation	32.50	56.67	8.33	2.50
5	Sowing	60.83	34.17	5.00	0
6	Intercultural Operation	57.50	38.33	4.17	0
7	Harvesting	45.00	29.17	23.33	2.50
8	Threshing	47.50	27.50	19.17	5.83
9	Storing	54.17	30.00	15.83	0
10	Marketing	69.17	22.50	8.33	0

The study revealed that majority (70%) of the respondents ‘Never’ participated in ‘selection of land’, about 14.17 percent ‘Sometimes’ participated in selection of land, 10 per cent ‘often’ participated and 5.83 per cent ‘Always’ participated in selection of land. The data showed that even though women were involved in selection of land yet decision making in selection of land were predominantly performed by men.

Women participation in ‘cutting of jungle’ was more (46.67%) in the ‘Sometimes’ category followed by 20.83 per cent under ‘Often’ category, 17.50 per cent ‘Always’ and 15 percent under ‘Never’ category. It can be inferred that conventionally this activity is also perceived as male dominated task but women are also sometimes involved in this task.

Women participation in ‘burning of jungle’ was more (36.67 %) in ‘sometimes’ category, 30.83 per cent in ‘Never’ category followed by 27.5 per cent in ‘Always’ and only 5 per cent showed ‘Often’ category. This shows that, though burning of jungle is perceived to be male activity, it was observed that women were also sometimes involved.

Women participation in ‘field preparation’ activity was more (56.67 %) under ‘Often’ category followed by ‘Always’ category at 32.50 per cent. Respondents in ‘Sometimes’ category has 8.33 per cent and respondent under ‘Often’ category showed 2.50 per cent only. It can be inferred that women are mostly engaged in back-breaking task of field preparation.

Women participation in ‘sowing’ activity was majority (60%) under ‘Always’ category, 34.17 per cent were under ‘Often’ category, 5 per cent under ‘Sometimes’ category. The study further concluded that 100 per cent of women actively participated in sowing activities.

Women participation in ‘intercultural operation’ was more (57.5%) of the respondents were under ‘Always’ category, 38.33 per cent were under ‘Often’ category and 4.17 per cent under ‘Sometimes’ category. It was noteworthy that none 100 per cent of the women actively participate in intercultural operations like thinning, weeding, hoeing etc.

Women participation in ‘harvesting’ was more (45 %) under ‘Always’ category followed by 29.17 per cent under ‘Often’ category, 23.33 per cent under ‘Sometimes’ category and 2.50 per cent under ‘Never’ category. It shows that women are always involved in back-breaking task of harvesting.

Women participation in ‘Threshing’ was more (47.5%) under ‘Always’ category is 47.50 per cent followed by ‘Often’ category with 27.50 per cent. Respondent under ‘Often’ category have 19.17 per cent while respondent under ‘Never’ category have only 7 per cent. Study shows that threshing activity was predominantly performed by women.

Women participation in 'Storing' was more (54.17 %) under 'Always' category followed by 30 per cent under 'Often' category, 15.83 per cent under 'sometimes' category. The study revealed that 100 per cent of the farm women were always involved in storage activities.

Women participation in 'marketing' was more (69.17%) under 'Always' category followed by 22.50 per cent respondents under 'Often' category. About 8.33 per cent of the participants were under 'Sometimes' category. The study concluded that 100 per cent of the women farmers were actively engaged in generating income, through marketing their farm produce.

CONCLUSION AND FINDINGS

Women in rural parts of Nagaland, India, are very active in their participation in agricultural development, livestock production and farm management. Though they share all the responsibilities and constitute about half of the total work force, yet only little is known about the participation of women, their source of livelihood, constraints faced by them, the training they received, and information flowing to them. However, the present study investigated the extent of participation of women in agriculture and concluded that women in Peren district, Nagaland were actively involved in agricultural activities whereby, as per the study it was found that the women were 'always' involved in back breaking activities viz., field preparation, sowing, intercultural operation, harvesting, threshing, storage and marketing while they were given less importance in activities wherever decision-making was involved like selection of land, burning of jungle etc.

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