

Violation of Human Rights against Farm Women Labourers in Cuddalore District of Tamil Nadu State

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ABSTRACT

One of the most distinguishing features of the rural economy of India has been the growth in the number of agricultural workers, cultivators and agricultural labourers engaged in crop production. The phenomena of under-employment, under development and surplus population are simultaneously manifested in the daily lives and living of the agricultural labourers. They usually get low wages, conditions of work put an excessive burden on them and the employment which they get is extremely irregular. Women farm labourers possess no skill of training; they have no alternative employment opportunities. Socially, more number of agricultural workers belonging to SC & ST. They are not organised and they cannot fight for their rights. Unlike industrial labour, agricultural labourers is difficult to define. The reason is that unless capitalism develops fully in agricultural, a separate class of workers depending wholly on wages does not come up.

1. Introduction

The women farm labourers divided into landless labourers and very small cultivators. Their main source of earning to their small and sub-marginal holdings is wage employment. Landless labourers in turn can be divided in to two broad categories such as Permanent labours attached to cultivating households and Casual labours. The main features and character of India farm women labourers are scattered, unskilled and less training, unorganized sector, low social status, less bargaining power, at the bidding of the landlord. Some of the causes for the growth of the agricultural labour regarding human rights are increase in population, decline of cottage industries and handicrafts, increase in indebtedness, capitalistic agriculture etc. In Tamil Nadu state the farm women labourers predominant in cultivating crops. The situation as same as mentioned earlier in India. There lot of human related violation of farm women labourers in Tamil Nadu like under wage payment, over time work, bonded labour, lack of agricultural labour organization, not follow any labour laws and rules etc. In Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu very much violation of human rights of farm women labourers. So this study needed to measure how violated human rights in the district regard to farm women labourers.

2. Specific Objective of the Study

To study the violation of human rights against farm women labourers in Cuddalore District of Tamil Nadu State.

3. Review of Literature

Usha Tuteja (2000) in her study argues that, the women agricultural workers contribution to the overall income of the family and household is very much important. The income of the women agricultural 40 workers from the agricultural work in farms and fields is most crucial for the families which are landless and whose standard of life is very low in the villages. On the other hand the women belonging to the land owning classes, even though they work in the farms get more decision making power and also enjoy the financial powers in the family. The present research work also notices the conditions and

status of the poor rural women agricultural worker as very important but, it is seen to be sufferings.

Padmanabhan (2001) explains by his study that, the women agricultural workers play an important role in the management of their rural house hold and they belong to the landless labour class. Their husband or male migrates to the other places for labour work and leaves the women in the villages. They will be the income earner in the village by working in the agricultural farms and fields. He further says that, it is very important to empower the women agricultural worker by giving them training and through the welfare schemes of the government.

Dogra (2002) in his research paper highlights that, the women agricultural workers are the workers working in the farms and they are primarily unorganized labour class. They are victims many time by exploitation and by gender injustice and gender bias. They are in such a position that they agree to perform the agricultural work at a very very low wages. The wages which they get is only for subsistence and for two times bread to lead a poor life in rural societies. They do not have equal rights.

Satyasundaram (2003) in his article put forth that, there are many policies and programmes launched by central and state government for the women agricultural workers. These policies are very good, but are 41 lagging and swinging itself on the paper. The present research say that, these policies are very good for seeing, reading and listening but they does not hold good for poor rural women workers.

Jaivir Singh and Meenakshi (2004) examines that, a women agricultural worker may be working as a casual worker, daily wage worker or piece wage worker, she faces discrimination in wage rates as well as working hours. There is a high percentage of women workers in agricultural work than the male in the agricultural work of the rural areas.

Swarna Vepa (2005) discuss about the decreasing socioeconomic position and level of the women agricultural worker, even though they contribute at very higher level. The

women agricultural worker is the main source of labour in agricultural farms and fields. The women remains to be marginalized when it comes to the question of paying wages to them. The men migrate from the low paid agricultural work to high paid agricultural work. Whereas the women does not like to migrate to other places due to family duties and functions and they will be binded by the social situations to work in agriculture with lower wages at same place, area and village.

Nadal (2006) states that, in a country like India the importance of women cannot be ignored and taken for granted, the women 42 agricultural workers does the 60% of the work related to agriculture and agricultural food production. There is a developing trend towards making the feminization of agriculture. Because of high illiteracy level among the rural women, they take the stand to stick to the agricultural work only.

Kumar and Jha (2008) examines in their study that, the women agricultural workers of Samastipur District plays a very important role in the production of paddy. This is because the women work for various activities and sub-activities needed for the paddy crop.

4. Research Methodology

The researcher native place is in Cuddalore District and purposively selected for the study. Cuddalore district is situated

about 160 kms south of Chennai, the state capital. The area of the district is 3706 km square. The district has a total population of 26 lakhs with 13, 11,151 males and 12, 89,729 female (Census, 2011). The total strength of workforce is 9, 72,066 of which 6, 36,911 are males and 3, 36,155 are females. Totally Cuddalore district have 13 blocks. The researcher's native is in Parengipettai block that's why selected this block purposively. Among the female population 15,500 women labourers in that block. From the Parengipettai block two revenue villages were selected namely B.Mutlur and C. Kothangudi. That village's agriculture is main occupation and more number of farm women labours available. From the two revenue villages 25 farm women labours each selected. Totally we conducted survey to 50 farm women labours. The list of variables selected by conducted pilot survey by asking question of human rights violation against farm women labours in other than the study area. The list of 12 variables selected and two point continuum of asking correct and incorrect. If answer correct give score of 1 and incorrect give score of 0. The percentage analysis was used to analysis the human rights violation against farm women labourers.

5. Results and Discussion

Human rights violation against farm women labourers was presented in table 1.

Table 1. Human Rights violations against the farm women labourers

(Multiple Responses)

S.NO	Human rights violations	Numbers	Percentage
1	No skill oriented training to farm women labourers	50	100
2	Less bargaining power	50	100
3	Wages for women labourers is less than half of the men labourers	50	100
4	Low remuneration for equal works	50	100
5	Violation of freedom of work in the field	40	80
6	Exploitation of gender inequality and injustice in the work place	40	80
7	Migration not allowed to farm women labourers in higher wages areas	38	76
8	Restriction by men labourers doing skilled oriented farm operations	35	70
9	Engaged in difficult and hard works	32	64
10	In 100 days wages employment schemes given preferences to the men labourers	25	50
11	No additional wages for overtime work	22	44
12	Bonded labour	10	20

1) No skill oriented training to farm women labourers

From the Table 1 it was discussed that the 100 per cent of the farm women labourers were no skill oriented training. The respondents opined that the training was given to male labourers. They did not giving training to women labourers. The owners of land also not involved in this matter. This was the way of violates the human rights.

2) Less bargaining power

This was reported by all the respondents. This might be due to the fact that farm women labourers whatever agricultural practices they can do. They cannot bargain either work or wages. They bargain means lose their work. This is the violation against farm women labourer's rights.

3) Wages for women labourers is less than half of the men labourers

This was opined by 100 per cent of the respondents. As universal concept of women is the weaker section of the workforce even though they work equal to the men labourers they cannot asked the question to owners about their under wages paid for their equal works.

4) Low remuneration for equal works

This was noticed by cent percentage of the respondents. They complained that most of the agricultural activities even skill oriented works women's were engaged, but wages they

paid are less and also no remunerations paid for equal to men works.

5) Violation of freedom of work in the field

This was expressed by 80 per cent of the respondents. This might be due to the fact that women labourers not have any freedom to work in the field. What the instruction given by men labourers and owners that should strictly follow otherwise they lose their job.

6) Exploitation of gender inequality and injustice in the work place

This was opined by 80 per cent of the respondents. The respondents reported that there is inequality in terms of gender and injustice in treating the women in the work place. This is utter violation of farm women labourer's rights.

7) Migration not allowed to farm women labourers in higher wages areas

This was mentioned by 76 per cent of the women farm labourers. The respondents reported that the men labourers easily move from one place to another for employment and higher wages, but the women labourers never allowed to even in nearby villages for farm works.

8) Restriction by men labourers doing skilled oriented farm operations

This was opined by 70 per cent of the respondents. This might be due to the fact that inequality exist in the work places especially skilled oriented farm operations even though they know to do.

9) Engaged in difficult and hard works

This was expressed by 64 per cent of the farm women labourers. They coated that all simple agricultural operations like ploughing, irrigation, bund farming, supervision etc. were carried out by men labourers, but some difficult works like fertilizer and pesticide applications, weeding, harvesting etc. engaged by women labourers.

10) In 100 days wages employment schemes given preferences to the men labourers

This was reported by half of the respondents. The respondent's complaint that in most of the places women's actively working in 100 days wages employment schemes. In the study area during lean seasons men labourers engaged in other than agricultural activities like construction work, bricks making and other works in the nearby town areas because of higher wages. Sometimes work not available outside to men labourers they give first preferences to this schemes for men labourers.

11) No additional wages for overtime work

This was opined by only 44 per cent of the respondents. The respondents opined that the owners not paid for overtime works especially for farm women labourers and rights to asked them the additional wages next day they not allowed to work in their field.

12) Bonded labour

This was only meagre per cent (20 per cent) of respondents mentioned as the bonded labour system prevail in the study area. Now slavery and bonded labour system mostly banned in India and all the States. But in some remote villages, the landlords follow the bonded labour and slavery system with help of political powers.

6. Conclusion

From the conclusion of the study, among the 12 human rights violations, all the respondents opined that no skill oriented training to farm women labourers, less bargaining power, wages for women labourers is less than half of the men labourers and low remuneration for equal works. It was suggested from the study that better implementation of legislative measures, resettlement of agricultural workers, Improvement the bargaining position, creating alternative source of employment, improving the working conditions and regulation of hours of work.

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