

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL SCIENCES

PEER REVIEWED, INDEXED & REFEREED QUARTERLY INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL

ISSN 0302-9298

<https://www.jndmeerur.org>

[Vol. 33, No. 1 (January-March), 2024]

<https://doi.org/10.62047/CSS.2024.03.31.101>

Problems Faced by Rural Woman Labourers in Punjab : A Case Study of Ludhiana District

Rupinder Kaur and Manider Kaur***

*Assistant Professor, Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala-147002, Punjab (India) E-mail:<rupinderkaur0076@gmail.com>

**Research Scholar, Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala-147002, Punjab (India)

Abstract

An attempt has been made in this paper to analyze the problems that rural woman labourers face at the workplace and on the domestic front. The study is based on primary data collected from 151 rural women labourers in the Ludhiana district of Punjab. The study reveals that more than three-fifths of the respondents worked as labourers within their native village. There is an inverse relationship between the number of woman labourers and the distance of the respondents' workplace. Only 32.45 per cent enjoy some facilities and 67.55 per cent are not provided any facilities. More than one-third of the respondents have reported that wages are not paid equally to male and female labourers for the same type of work. A very large proportion of woman labourers are not aware of the Minimum Wage Act, standard working hours, and Equal Remuneration Act. About 63 per cent of the respondents stated that their husbands accepted their employment from outside of the home because they were contributing to the family expenditures. The majority of the respondents have reported that their children are attending school.

Keywords

Woman, Labourers, Problems, Workplace, Domestic.

JEL codes : J16, J31, J71, J81

Research Foundation International, New Delhi
(Affiliated to UNO)

Editorial Office : D-59, Shastri Nagar, Meerut - 250 004 (INDIA)

Ph. : 0121-2763765, +91-9997771669, +91-9219658788

Problems Faced by Rural Woman Labourers in Punjab : A Case Study of Ludhiana District

1. Introduction

Many factors are responsible for the growth of the newly emerging class of working women. The socio-economic changes in the country are the main factors that have affected the lives of Indian women (Singh et al. 2019). The financial demands of the Indian families are increasing day by day. Increased cost of living, expenses on the education of children, and cost of housing properties in India have risen and these reasons force every family in India to look for ways and means of increasing the household income. So, women in India who were mostly known as homemakers are forced to work (Barati et al. 2015). Women work for longer hours than men and contribute substantially to family income, still, they are not considered productive workers (Bhattacharyya, 2018).

The vast majority of working women are involved in the informal sector and not included in official statistics. Most of the jobs in the informal sector are unskilled and low-paying. Women working in the informal sector of India's economy are also susceptible to critical financial risks and vulnerable to being poor (Kamini and Dashora, 2013). Women's low levels of education and skill training severely affect their employability as well as mobility (Mamgaina and Khan, 2021). The status of women labourers in unorganized sectors is poor and not satisfactory. The various problems faced by women in unorganized sectors were gender inequality, lack of education and knowledge, sexual harassment, work pressure, low wages, long working hours, and victims during the period of COVID-19 (Solanki and Parmar, 2022). The majority of women are working in the categories of vulnerable employment. The movement from vulnerable employment into salaried work can be a major step toward economic freedom for many women. But, unfortunately, such progress is unsatisfactory. In many countries, vulnerable

employment for women continues to increase and the shares of women in vulnerable employment remain very high (ILO, 2010).

The subject of women and development has attracted a good deal of attention, especially in the case of rural women. The majority of the women workers in rural areas suffer from the problems of poverty, unemployment, and underemployment. Rural woman shares abundant responsibilities and perform duties in running the family, maintaining the household, attending to farm operations, attending domestic chores, and animal rearing. However female labour engaged in such activities is usually not measured in economic terms. They are concentrated in low-skilled, low-productivity, and low or unpaid jobs with long working hours and poor working conditions (ILO, 2018). Working hours, conditions of work, terms, types of jobs, and other situation is still not favourable to women workers (Desai, 2015). Besides economic conditions, caste structure, social customs, values, beliefs, norms, mode of things, aspirations, attitudes, and cultural background are also responsible for taking unpaid work (Singh et al. 2019).

The majority of rural women are engaged in agriculture. About three-fourths of rural women workers are still employed in agriculture (Mangaina and Khan, 2021). In the post-liberalization period, participation of women in agriculture has been growing relative to men (Kanchi, 2010). The domination of agriculture as the primary source of work for most of our workers (especially women) is a particular problem given the agrarian crisis that has persisted for nearly two decades in the Indian countryside, which makes involvement in such work increasingly fraught and financially unviable (Ghosh, 2016). As for productive activities, women from lower classes have suffered two forms of exploitation : wage differentials and the second concerning their position as the main component of the reserve army of labour. In the analysis of the possibilities of economic development, the contribution of male labour is given a prominent place, but the contribution of women and the possibilities of mobilizing their labour for economic development are generally overlooked. In this paper, a modest endeavour has been made to analyze the problems the rural woman labourers faced at the workplace and on the domestic front in the Ludhiana district of Punjab.

2. Research Methodology

The present study is based on primary sources of data gathered from the Ludhiana district of Punjab. The primary data is collected through a well-designed questionnaire. There are 13 development blocks in the district. For this study, one village from each development block has been selected randomly for the survey. Thus, in all, 13 villages were selected from the district for the survey. A representative proportional sample of households comprising of scheduled caste, backward class, and general caste woman labour households have been taken up for the survey. As many as 10 per cent of the total households are selected to conduct the survey. As a result, a total of 151 households have been investigated. Among these 151 households, 106 households belong to scheduled caste, 37 households belong to backward class and 8 households are from general caste.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Problems at the Workplace

The impoverished financial situation forces rural women to begin working as labourers at a young age. Due to the issues on the home front, they began their employment with meagre pay. Generally, casual employees are required to labour wherever they find a job. It was noted during the field study that the homes of the rural women labourers were in poor condition. Their living circumstances are appalling. They begin working as labourers to improve the standard of living for their family members and to provide a brighter future for their children. They begin working at a young age to provide for their fundamental necessities. Table-1 demonstrates that over three-fifths of the participants found employment as workers in their home villages. Work was obtained in the native village by 78.77 per cent of respondents from the backward class, 62.5 per cent from the general caste, and 57.55 per cent from the scheduled caste women labour households. However, a mere 37.09 per cent of participants indicated that they seek labour outside of their native village when jobs become available. 42.45 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, 21.63 per cent from the backward class and 37.5 per cent of respondents from the general caste got work as labourers outside the native village.

Table-1 : Distribution of Respondents according to their Place of Work and Distance of Workplace

Description	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Place of work	Within native village	61 (57.55)	29 (78.37)	5 (62.5)	95 (62.91)
	Outside native village	45 (42.45)	8 (21.62)	3 (37.5)	56 (37.09)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Distance (in Kms)	Less than 1	55 (51.89)	17 (45.94)	4 (50.00)	76 (50.35)
	1 to 2	24 (22.64)	10 (27.02)	1 (12.5)	35 (23.17)
	2 to 3	14 (13.20)	7 (18.91)	2 (25.00)	23 (15.23)
	3 to 4	8 (7.54)	3 (8.13)	1 (12.5)	12 (7.94)
	4 & more	5 (4.73)	—	—	5 (3.31)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

The above table further shows that there is an inverse relationship between the number of woman labourers and the distance of the workplace of the respondents, i.e. as the distance of the workplace increases, fewer respondents are interested in working. The fact responsible for this phenomenon is that the domestic chores and responsibilities of children force them to work nearby. 50.35 percent of respondents got work around an area of one kilometer. This proportion is 51.89, 50, and 45.94 per cent for the scheduled caste, general caste, and backward-class woman labourers. Only 3.31 per cent of female labourers are going to work up to a distance of 4 kilometers or more, whereas, 15.23 per cent of respondents are going to work around an area of 2 to 3 kilometers. This proportion is the highest among the general caste woman labourers and the lowest among the scheduled caste woman labourers. On average, 23.17 per cent of respondents worked 1 to 2 kilometers away from native villages. Out of the total respondents, 22.64 per cent from the

scheduled caste, 27.02 per cent from the backward class, and 12.50 per cent from the general caste get work 1 to 2 kilometers away from their native village. About 5 per cent of the respondents from the scheduled caste worked more than 4 kilometers away from native villages.

There is no doubt that most facilities such as arrangements of canteen, first aid, toilet and other facilities made available to the labourers at the workplace contribute a lot towards their involvement in work. The following table-2 provides the data collected in this regard:

Table-2 : Facilities available to Rural Woman Labourers at the Workplace

Description	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Facilities	Available	29 (27.36)	17 (45.95)	3 (37.5)	49 (32.45)
	Not available	77 (72.64)	20 (54.05)	5 (62.5)	102 (67.55)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Types of facilities	Canteen	7 (6.60)	4 (10.82)	1 (12.5)	12 (7.95)
	Toilet	7 (6.60)	5 (13.51)	—	12 (7.95)
	Creche	—	—	—	—
	First aid	15 (14.16)	8 (21.62)	2 (25.00)	25 (16.55)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

It is evident from the above table that only 32.45 per cent of the sampled women enjoy some facilities and 67.55 per cent are not provided any facilities. About 73 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, 54.05 per cent of respondents from the backward class, and 62.5 per cent of respondents from the general caste woman labourers do not enjoy any facilities at the workplace. Only 27.36 per cent of respondents from scheduled caste, 45.95 per cent from the backward class and 37.5 per cent from the general caste woman labourers are provided some facilities. About 8 per cent of woman labourers have been provided the canteen facility and toilet facility at the workplace. 16.55 per cent of woman labourers accept the facility

of first aid that is provided to them. Not a single woman has reported the facility of creche at the workplace. The field survey revealed that the woman labourers, who are enjoying some type of facilities at the workplace, are those working in factories or as domestic servants, mid-day meals or asha workers, etc. At the place of work, some specific facilities like separate sanitation, places for leisure and rest, etc. are required for female agricultural labourers but these facilities are not provided (Desai, 2015).

The woman labourers have also faced wage discrimination and continue to be paid less than men for equal work. Table-3 depicts the wage discrimination faced by woman labourers. Slightly more than one-third of the respondents reported that wages are not paid equally to male and female labourers for the same type of work. The remaining two-thirds of respondents reported no discrimination of wages between male and female labourers. 33.02 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, 29.73 per cent from the backward class, and 37.5 per cent from the general caste reported wage discrimination. About 67 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, 70.27 per cent from the backward class and 62.5 per cent of respondents from the general caste reported no wage discrimination. When the woman labourers were asked to elucidate the different reasons for such differences in wage rates, about 5 per cent of respondents stated that male labourers can do all kinds of work and hence, they are given higher wages. As many as 3.72 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, 5.41 per cent from the backward class, and 12.5 per cent from the general caste reported that men can do all types of work and hence they are given higher wages. About 11 per cent of the respondents reported that wage discrimination among male and female labourers prevails due to the nature of work. Similarly, 13.22 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, 2.71 per cent from the backward class, and 12.5 per cent of respondents from the general caste state that wage discrimination among the male and female labourers occurs due to the nature of work. Many types of work require hard labour, so only men can do such work. Hence, they are paid more as compared to females. Lack of mobility among rural woman labourers is another reason for wage discrimination between male and female workers. 7.54, 13.51, and 12.5 per cent of respondents respectively from the scheduled caste, backward class, and general caste stated lack of mobility as a reason for wage discrimination. A big proportion of

female respondents (66.23 per cent) gave no response regarding reasons for wage discrimination.

Table-3 : Wage Discrimination among Male and Female Labourers

Description	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Wage discrimination	Yes	35 (33.01)	11 (29.72)	5 (62.5)	51 (33.77)
	No	71 (66.98)	26 (70.27)	3 (37.5)	100 (66.23)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Reasons for wage discrimination	Male labourers are able to do all kinds of work	4 (3.72)	2 (5.41)	1 (12.5)	7 (4.81)
	Nature of work	14 (13.22)	1 (2.71)	1 (12.5)	16 (10.83)
	Gender discrimination	8 (7.54)	3 (8.10)	2 (25.00)	13 (8.61)
	Lack of mobility	8 (7.54)	5 (13.51)	1 (12.5)	14 (9.42)
	No response	71 (66.98)	26 (70.27)	3 (37.5)	100 (66.23)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

Table-4 depicts the details of awareness among the rural woman labourers about the standard working hours, Minimum Wage Act and Equal Remuneration Act. The majority of the woman labourers from different caste categories are not aware of these three acts. A very large proportion of the woman labourers, i.e. 82.12 per cent are not aware of the minimum wage act fixed by the government for labourers. Only 18 per cent of the respondents are aware of it. It is also noted that only 10.53 per cent of respondents are aware of the Equal Remuneration Act. 27.15 per cent of the total sampled woman labourers from different caste categories are aware of the standard working hours that are fixed by the government. The remaining 73 per cent of the woman labourers are not aware of the standard

working hours fixed by the central government of the country. This is mainly because of their illiteracy and ignorance of their rights. Only 16.04, 9.44, and 23.58 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste were aware of the Minimum Wage Act, the Equal Remuneration Act, and standard working hours. Among the backward class, only 21.63, 16.22 and 35.14 per cent of respondents respectively are aware of these three acts. 25.00 and 37.15 per cent of woman labourers from the general caste are aware of the Minimum Wage Act and standard working hours, respectively. Not even a single respondent among the general caste is aware of the Equal Remuneration Act. Eswari and Anumuthan, (2021) also found that women are more unaware of their rights in rural areas and they are socially, economically, and legally very low.

Table-4 : Awareness among Rural Woman Labourers about different Wage Acts

Description	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Minimum Wage Act	Yes	17 (16.04)	8 (21.63)	2 (25)	27 (17.88)
	No	89 (83.96)	29 (78.37)	6 (75)	124 (82.12)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Equal Remuneration Act	Yes	10 (9.44)	6 (16.22)	—	16 (10.59)
	No	96 (90.56)	31 (83.78)	8 (100)	135 (89.41)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Standard working hours	Yes	25 (23.58)	13 (35.14)	3 (37.5)	41 (27.14)
	No	81 (76.42)	24 (64.86)	5 (62.5)	110 (72.84)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

The working relationship of the rural woman labourers with their employers and co-workers are also studied. They were asked whether it was good or bad or formal. Their response data is presented in Table-5. As many as 37.75 per cent of respondents reveal that it is good, while 4.64 per cent of respondents report that it is bad, while the remaining 57.61 per cent have described it to be formal. It is observed that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 60.37 and 59.46 per cent from the scheduled caste and backward class woman labourers have formal relations with their employers, while the general caste woman labourers respondents have only 12.5 per cent of formal relations with their employers and they have about 62.5 per cent cordial relations with their employers. The remaining 4.73 and 25.00 per cent of the scheduled and general caste respondents have strained relations with their employers.

Table-5 : Working Relationship of Woman Labourers with Employers and Co-Workers

Relationship	With Employers			
	Scheduled Caste	Backward class	General Caste	All Sampled
Good	37 (34.90)	15 (40.54)	5 (62.5)	57 (37.75)
Bad	5 (4.73)	—	2 (25.00)	7 (4.64)
Formal	64 (60.37)	22 (59.46)	1 (12.5)	87 (57.61)
Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
	With Co-workers			
Good	102 (96.23)	34 (91.89)	6 (75.00)	142 (94.03)
Bad	—	—	—	—
Formal	4 (3.77)	3 (8.11)	2 (25.00)	9 (5.97)
Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

The field survey observed that the rural woman labourers are more social and friendly to everyone. So, they have good relations with their employers. Similarly, the respondents were asked to respond to their working relationship with their co-workers. More than nine-tenths of the respondents have described that their relationship is good with their co-workers. While the remaining 5.97 per cent of respondents have revealed it to be formal. On the other side, in response to the working relation with their co-workers, the highest proportion of the respondents, i.e. 96.23 per cent respondents from the scheduled caste have good relations with their co-workers. This proportion is 91.89 and 75.00 per cent, respectively for the backward and general caste woman labourers. 3.77, 8.11, and 25.00 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, backward class, and general caste have formal relations with their co-workers.

3-2 Problems faced on the Domestic Front

In addition to the problems faced at the workplace, rural woman labourers face a lot of problems on the domestic front. All this makes their situation more miserable. The woman labourers undertake the work only under economic compulsions. After the whole day at work, the rural woman labourers have the responsibility of looking after their children and attending to the domestic chores. Sometimes they are victims of domestic violence too. During the time of their illness, most of the women are ill-treated by their husbands or other family members and they are forced to go to work. They are also not included in the family decision-making process.

Out of 151 respondents, 110 (72.85 per cent) woman respondents are living with their husbands and the remaining 41 (27.15 per cent) are either unmarried or widowed or divorcees. 80 (75.48 per cent) from the scheduled caste, 17 (72.96 per cent) from the backward class and 5 (37.5 per cent) from the general caste woman labourers are living with their husbands and the remaining is either unmarried, widowed, or divorced. 36.43 per cent of the respondents have stated that their husbands are drug addicted. About 38 per cent of the scheduled caste, 35.13 per cent from the backward class, and 25.00 per cent from the general caste woman labourers stated that their husbands are drug addicted. Out of the total, 55.62 per cent of the respondents have cordial relationships with their husbands while the remaining 17.23 per cent have stated that their relations with their husbands are strained.

Table-6 : Types/Behaviour of Husbands of Rural Woman Labourers

Particulars	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Spouse addicted	Yes	40 (37.74)	13 (35.13)	2 (25)	55 (36.43)
	No	40 (37.74)	14 (37.83)	1 (12.5)	55 (36.42)
	Not Applicable	26 (24.52)	10 (27.04)	5 (62.5)	41 (27.15)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Relationship with respondents	Cordial	64 (60.37)	17 (45.94)	3 (37.5)	84 (55.62)
	Strained	16 (15.09)	10 (27.02)	—	26 (17.23)
	Not applicable	26 (24.54)	10 (27.04)	5 (62.5)	41 (27.15)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Accept your employment	Yes	69 (65.09)	23 (62.16)	3 (37.5)	95 (62.91)
	No	11 (10.37)	4 (10.80)	—	15 (9.94)
	Not applicable	26 (24.54)	10 (27.04)	5 (62.5)	41 (27.15)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Contribute his income to the family	Yes	59 (55.66)	21 (56.76)	3 (37.5)	83 (54.67)
	No	21 (19.80)	6 (16.20)	—	27 (17.88)
	Not applicable	26 (24.54)	10 (27.04)	5 (62.5)	41 (27.15)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)

Husband's behaviour during illness	Amiable	59 (55.64)	21 (56.74)	3 (37.5)	84 (55.63)
	Aggressive	21 (19.82)	6 (16.22)	—	23 (15.22)
	Not applicable	26 (24.54)	10 (27.04)	5 (62.5)	41 (27.15)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote ppercentages.

It may also be observed that about 63 per cent of the respondents stated that their husbands accepted their employment from outside of the home because they were contributing to the family expenditures. While 9.94 per cent of the respondents revealed that their husbands are not happy with their job or accept their present employment. Regarding the contribution of their income to the family, about 55 per cent of the woman labourers stated that their husbands contribute their entire income to the family expenditure. On the other side, about 18 per cent of the respondents revealed that their husbands do not contribute their entire income to the family. They are spending their entire income on drugs. Regarding the behaviour of their husbands during illness, 15.22 per cent have reported that they are treated aggressively by their husbands during the period of illness. This proportion is 19.82 and 16.22 for the scheduled caste and backward class, respectively.

Education is another social factor that leads to the reduction of inequality in society. Knowledge, skill, values, and attitudes acquired through education, help one to lead a good quality of life (Balakrishnan, 2005). Table-7 carries the data giving the details about the education of the children of rural woman labourers in the Ludhiana district of Punjab.

This table depicts that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 56.96 per cent have reported that their children are attending school. The proportion of such respondents is 64.15 per cent for the scheduled caste, 45.96 per cent for the backward class, and 12.5 per cent for the general caste woman labourers. 15.89 per cent of the respondents reported that their children are not attending school. On the other side, 11.33 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste and 25.00 per cent from the general caste reported that their children

never go to school. About 53 per cent of the respondents' children study in government schools, while 3.97 per cent of children of the woman labourers go to private schools in the Ludhiana district of Punjab. 62.27 and 37.83 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste and backward class respectively stated that their children attend government schools. Only 1.88, 8.10, and 12.5 per cent of the respondents from the scheduled caste, backward class, and general caste respondents stated that their children attend a private school.

Table-7 : Schooling of Respondents' Children

Particulars	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Attending all school	Yes	68 (64.15)	17 (45.96)	1 (12.5)	86 (56.96)
	No	12 (11.33)	10 (27.02)	2 (25)	24 (15.89)
	NA	26 (24.52)	10 (27.02)	5 (62.5)	41 (27.15)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Type of school	Govt.	66 (62.27)	14 (37.83)	—	80 (52.98)
	Private	2 (1.88)	3 (8.13)	1 (12.5)	6 (3.98)
	Total	68 (64.15)	17 (45.96)	1 (12.5)	86 (56.96)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

Table-8 shows the extent of involvement of the rural woman labourers in the decision-making process of their families. The table reveals that a large number of woman labourers reported that their family members consult them in matters of daily purchase, children's health decisions, and children's education issues. The majority of the woman labourers (70.19 per cent) are always consulted by their family members in daily purchases. In the daily purchase, 77.36, 64.86 and 75 per cent of respondents from the scheduled caste, backward class, and the general caste, respectively

stated that they are consulted by their family members. Similarly, 68.86, 94.59 and 87.5 per cent respondents from the scheduled caste, backward class, and general caste categories, respectively stated that they are always consulted in the matter of healthcare of their children. This proportion is 76.17 for all the sampled woman labourers. In the matter of purchase of durable assets, slightly more than 41 per cent of the respondents are consulted by their family members. This proportion is 51.35, 50 and 36.79 for the backward class, general caste, and scheduled caste woman labourers.

Table-8 : Involvement of Rural Woman Labourers in Decision-making

Description	Response	Schedule Caste	Backward Class	General Caste	All Sampled
Opinion considered in daily purchase	Always	82 (77.36)	24 (64.86)	6 (75.00)	106 (70.19)
	Sometimes	24 (22.64)	13 (35.14)	2 (25)	39 (25.81)
	Never	—	—	—	—
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Durable assets	Always	39 (36.79)	19 (51.35)	4 (50)	62 (41.05)
	Sometimes	56 (52.84)	17 (45.95)	3 (37.5)	76 (50.33)
	Never	11 (10.37)	1 (2.70)	1 (12.5)	13 (8.62)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Purchase of property	Always	42 (39.62)	20 (54.05)	4 (50)	66 (43.72)
	Sometimes	49 (46.23)	17 (45.95)	3 (37.5)	69 (45.69)
	Never	15 (14.15)	—	1 (12.5)	16 (10.59)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)

Children's education	Always	44 (41.52)	32 (86.48)	6 (75)	82 (54.32)
	Sometimes	55 (51.88)	5 (13.52)	2 (25)	62 (41.05)
	Never	7 (6.60)	—	—	7 (4.63)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)
Children's health	Always	73 (68.86)	35 (94.59)	7 (87.5)	115 (76.17)
	Sometimes	32 (30.18)	2 (5.41)	1 (12.5)	35 (23.17)
	Never	1 (.96)	—	—	1 (0.66)
	Total	106 (100)	37 (100)	8 (100)	151 (100)

Source : Field Survey, 2019-20.

Note : The figures given in parentheses denote percentages.

On the other side, in the matter of the purchase of property, about 44 per cent of respondents stated that they are always involved. The corresponding figure is 54.05, 50 and 39.62 per cent for the backward class, general, and scheduled caste woman labourers. 54.32 per cent of the total respondents reported that they are always consulted in the education of their children. This proportion is as high as 86.48 and 75 per cent for the backward and general caste woman labourers, respectively. More involvement in the decision-making of the rural woman labourers in the matters of daily purchases and children's education and health is due to the reason that they are more responsible for the domestic chores and their children in the patriarchal society.

4. Conclusions and Policy Implications

The above analysis reveals that more than three-fifths of the respondents were employed as labourers in their home villages. The number of female workers and respondents' workplace distance are inversely correlated; that is, fewer respondents are interested in working as workplace distance rises. Just 32.45 per cent of people have access to some facilities, while 67.55 per cent have none at all. The female labourers who benefit from certain workplace amenities

are those who work in factories, as domestic helpers, midday meal workers, or asha workers, among other occupations. A little over one-third of the respondents stated that male and female labourers do not receive the same pay for doing the same kind of labour. A significant percentage of woman labourers are ignorant about the Equal Remuneration Act, standard working hours, and the government-imposed minimum wage. Most of the participants maintain formal relations with their employees. Conversely, when asked about their professional relationships with their co-workers, the majority of respondents stated that they had positive relationships with them. Approximately 63 per cent of the participants said that their spouses accept their jobs from outside the home since they help with family expenses. The majority of those surveyed stated that their kids are enrolled in school. The vast majority of the respondent's kids attend public schools. The vast majority of woman labourers receive no benefits at work. The government should make it necessary for employers to provide daycare centers, first aid kits, and restrooms to their rural woman employees. The majority of respondents were unaware of the minimum wage and standard working hours acts. To safeguard women's rights and grant them equality with men, it is therefore necessary to execute the Equal Remuneration Act and the Minimum Wage Act more successfully.

References

- Balakrishnan, A., *Rural landless Women Labourers : Problems and Prospects*, New Delhi : Kalpaz Publications, 2005.
- Barati. A., Arab, R. O. and Masoumi, S. S., "Challenges and problems faced by women workers in India", *Chronicle of the Neville Wadia Institute of Management Studies & Research*, Pune, 2015, 76-82. Retrieved from <https://www.studocu.com/in/document/new-delhi-institute-of-management/management-of-business-administration/azadeh-barati-15-it-is-taken-from-browser/34850953>
- Bhattacharyya, A., "Rural women in India : the invisible lifeline of rural community". (2018). <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/HRBodies/CEDAW/RuralWomen/ArundhatiBhattacharyya.pdf>
- Desai, S. M., "Problems of female workers", *International Journal for Research in Management and Pharmacy*, 4(2), 2015, 33-41. http://www.raijmr.com/ijrmp/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/IJRMP_2015_vol04_issue_02_07.pdf

- Dashora, Kamini B., "Problems faced by working women in India", *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences*, 2(8), 2013, 82-94. <https://garph.co.uk/IJARMSS/Aug2013/7.pdf>
- Eswari, M. and Anumuthan A., "Awareness about legal rights among rural women in Vellore district - An analysis", *NIU International Journal of Human Rights*, 8(9), 2021, 115-122. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356970958_AWARENESS_ABOUT_LEGAL_RIGHTS_AMONG_RURAL_WOMEN_IN_VELLORE_DISTRICT_-AN_ANALYSIS
- Ghosh, J., "Women's work in the India in the early 21st century, Conference Paper", *India Today : Looking Back, Looking Forward*. (2016). Retrieved from <https://in.one.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/jayati.pdf>
- ILO, *Women in Labour Markets : Measuring Progress and Identifying Challenge*, Geneva : International Labour Office, 2010. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---emp_elm/---trends/documents/publication/wcms_123835.pdf
- ILO, *Rural Women at Work : Bridging the Gaps*, Geneva : International Labour Organization, 2018. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_protect/---protrav/---ilo_aids/documents/publication/wcms_619691.pdf
- Kanchi, A., *Women workers in agriculture: Expanding responsibilities and shrinking opportunities*, ILO Asia Pacific Working Paper Series, New Delhi : Subregional Office for South Asia, 2010. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/---sro-new_delhi/documents/publication/wcms_146115.pdf.
- Mamgaina, R. P. and Khan, K., "Withdrawal of women from work in rural India: Trends, causes and policy implications", SRSC Working Paper - 1/2021, Hyderabad: National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, 2021. http://nirdpr.org.in/nird_docs/srsc/srsc120321.pdf
- Singh, G., Dharmpal, Kaur, V. Kaur, G and Jyoti, *Socio-economic Conditions and Political Participation of Rural Women Labourers in Punjab*, Patiala : SLM Publishers, 2019.
- Solanki, A. J. and Parmar, A. I., "Status of women labourers in unorganised sectors and their problems", *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 10(4), 2022, a574-581. <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2204073.pdf> ★