

## ATTITUDE OF LANDLESS WOMEN LABOURER TOWARDS EDUCATION IN RELATION TO THEIR LITERACY LEVEL AND ECONOMIC STATUS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The Present Study aims to explore the attitude of landless women labourer towards education in relation to their literacy level and economic status. Landless labourer have been defined as those who are basically unskilled, unorganized and who work in farms on wages for a larger part of the year. But when they do not get work in the villages some of them migrate outside their villages in search of work. In the modern contexts the word literacy level refers to reading and writing at a level adequate for communication, or at the level that lets one understand and communicate ideas in a literate society, so as to take part in the society. Sample of 150 landless women labourers were selected for this study. For this purpose attitude scale and interview schedule were used. Mean, Standard deviation and Correlation were used for analysis of the data.*

**Keywords:** *Attitude, Landless women Labourer, Literacy Level, Economic Status*

### **Introduction**

Women play a vital role in the rural societies and their role in agriculture is still more important. Survival in the developing countries and regions depend on the work women do. Agriculture sector is the backbone of the rural economies and majority of the females depend upon agriculture as labourer. Indian economy is an agrarian economy. The rural agricultural system and female labourer are closely associated with each other mainly through the supply of their labour power throughout the production process, except during ploughing and sowing. Even though they work hard, their socio-economic status is very low. Their dependence on labour has aggravated this situation. With the growth of industrialization and urbanization, landless labourer in the absence of assured source of employment in rural areas migrate to urban areas in the search of employment. In the urban areas, women are generally employed in informal sectors like weaving, handicraft, tailoring, sale of fish and construction activities. The present study is mainly concentrated on landless women labourer who are engaged in agriculture with special reference to Ludhiana district of Punjab. In rural areas of Ludhiana district, women play a significant part in agricultural production. The agriculture sector is the backbone of this district. While considering the problems of female agricultural labourer, the phase of economic development and the nature of rural economy, the present study mainly based on agriculture sector and landless women agricultural labourer.

Women in agriculture have vast potential, intelligence and ability, which is tapped properly, may enable them to join the main stream of agricultural development. The main problem and source of exploitation of these women are rooted in their ignorance, helplessness, landlessness, lack of education, lack of organization and inequality in status. It is therefore; necessary to equip these women with required information, knowledge and skills to enable them to do their work efficiently and became equal partners in agricultural production.

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### **Landless women labourers**

Landless women labourers may be defined as labourers who work in agriculture or allied activities for the whole or part of the year in return for (in cash or kind or both) for full-time or part time work. The agriculture labourer has no risk in the cultivation, and no right of lease or contract on land but merely works on another person's land for wages. The definition includes workers who are engaged in other agri-based occupation such as dairy farming, horticulture, poultry etc. It also includes the people who don't work throughout the year but only for part of the year. Agriculture labor Enquiry Committee defined agriculture labor household as the household whose main source of income is derived as wages for working on farms of others.

The landless agricultural labourers belong to the disadvantaged sections of the Indian society constituting about 25% of the total labour force. Indeed, they should be paid special attention to lessen their aggravating employment situation and provided with other social security shield

### **Literacy Level**

According to UNESCO the revised meaning of literacy is as follows: A person is literate who can with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life. A person is illiterate who cannot with understanding both read and write a short simple statement on his everyday life. A person is functionally literate who can engage in all those activities in which literacy is required for effective functioning of his group and community and also for enabling him to continue to use reading, writing, and calculating for his own and the community's development.

### **Economic Status**

By the term 'status' we mean the recognition given to an individual by his /her group relations (Kelly 1951) in terms of the sense of belonging (Park and Burgess 1921). It is the result of the ranking of a role by the group that determines for its possessions of a degree of respect prestige and influence. They are the ancient pavers and privileges of the family bestowing prestige, authority and power. Societies have thus developed two types distinct status the ascribed and achieved status:

**The ascribed status:** Ascribed status is the recognition, which a society gives to a person because of his position. It is assigned to individuals without any reference to their innate. It can be predicted and ascertained since birth.

**The achieved status:** Achieved status is as minimum those requiring special qualities although they are not necessarily limited to those. They are not assigned to an individual since birth but are left open to be filled through individual efforts.

The socio-economic status of agricultural labour household is closely related to the ownership of land holdings. The ownership of land provides dignity, status and power in the society. The majority of women agricultural labourers, along with their men folk in most cases, are property less with no productive assets of their own to credit except their labour power. Lack of land, that makes them labour on others' land and suffer, appears to be the root cause of all their problems. Most of them (68.87 per cent) own a small plot of land, which is less than 10 cents each. It has to be noticed that no labour households own paddy fields. As a whole, about 38 per cent of the households do not have anything more than their house site area

### **Objectives of the study**

1. To determine the literacy level of the Landless Women Labourers.

2. To study the economic status and attitude of landless Women Labourers towards education.
3. To find out the relationship between the literacy level of landless Women Labour and their attitude towards education.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

**Bhattacharya (1985)** there are some other studies, which tried to explain the women labour participation rates, in terms of economic and non-economic factors. Economic factors include wages, technology, irrigation, cropping pattern, farm size, economic development and urbanization etc. And non-economic factors or socio-cultural factors are caste, education, migration, marriage, family size and sex discrimination etc

**Swamikannan and Jeyalakshmi (2015)** study about women labourers in Indian agricultural sector and found that female work participation rate has declined drastically during last few decades, which shows that female workers are moved from agricultural to non-agricultural activities because wage differences between male and female workers for the same type of work discourages female workers.

**Mugadur & Hiremath (2014)** studies about socio-economic condition of agriculture women labourers in Mangudi village and found that women face many problems like illiteracy, low and irregular wages, scolding & beating by men etc. They concluded that women do not know how to face these problems.

**Chandrama Goswami (2013)** in "Female agricultural workers in Assam: A case study of Darrang district" concluded that poor women are contributing more to household income by working as a labourer even under poor working conditions and with lower wages to improve the economical conditions of the family. There were no land ownership amongst female and even they do not have any right on their earnings. Women accept to work in farms because they can get employment without proper training or education and it is temporary in nature. It was also proved that in spite of having more shares of females as agricultural labourers than men, they get lower wages than males.

**Das (2006)** examined increasing gender gap and socio-economic status of women in North-East India. It was found that the best possible indicators of the determination of the status of women were education and employment. Education coupled with employment have made women more conscious of their rights and helped in making them assert in the society. Women's participation on equal terms with men in domestic decision making makes them being recognized in the family.

**Amaresh Dubey, Veronica Pala and Eugene D. Thomas (2004)** emphasized that role of education and participation of women in the labour force. The paper showed that as the economic status improves the female labour force participation rate declines. Women work participation rates with increase in education level especially at the primary and secondary levels.

**Padmanabhan (2001)** argued that women are engaged in agriculture and allied activities and their role are managers to landless labour. Migration of male labour leaving women in rural areas and they are the 41 income earners in agriculture in rural areas. To empower rural women in agriculture through effective training and extension services and welfare schemes to improve the working conditions of agricultural women.

**Sultania (1994)** conducted a study at micro-level in the major parts of Jaipur city on the women workers engaged as contract laborers. The main analysis was based on

the causes of inequality of women contract laborers and its impact. The characteristics, profile and recruitment were also dealt with. It was projected that construction was the main industry employing labour on contract illiterate, earning fewer wages, experienced male dominance, worked for 10-12 hours daily had no medical or leave facilities and were under pitiable state of affairs.

**Bhople and Palki (1988)** studied socio-economic dimensions of farm women labour in rural India. They reported that rural women perform a variety of roles of which many are of greater economic significance and farm women play a significant role in domestic and socio - economic life of the society.

**Hypotheses of the study:**

1. Majority of the Landless Women Labour have low literacy level studying not more than primary school level.
2. There will be significant positive correlation between the literacy level of Landless Women Labour and their attitude towards education.
3. There will be significant positive correlation between the economic status of the Landless Women Labour and their literacy level.

**Methodology**

The present study was delimited to landless women labourers of Ludhiana district only. A sample of 150 landless women labourers were selected for this study. Interview schedule, self prepared rating scale was prepared by the researcher. Efforts were made to establish rapport with female labourers before administering the tools. After distributing the tools, the subjects were asked to fill the preliminaries at the top of the information sheet. The response sheets were scored. Statistical techniques like mean, S.D, and Correlation were used.

**Results and Discussion**

**Table No.1**  
**Correlation between Literacy level and Attitude towards Education of Landless women labourers**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Correlation</b>
Literacy level	150	1.69	1.55	r= 0.051
Attitude towards Education	150	101.3	7.15	

Table: 1 Shows correlation between attitude towards education and literacy level of Landless Farmers. The Mean score of literacy level of Landless women labourers is 1.69 and attitude towards education is 101.03. Standard deviation of Literacy level and attitude towards education were 1.55 and 7.15 respectively. The correlation value of literacy level and attitude towards education was found 0.051 which is positive but it is very near to Zero correlation value. So our hypothesis "There is positive correlation between the literacy level of landless women labourers and their attitude towards education" is accepted. The literacy data of the Landless Farmers shows that 56 counts are fully illiterate and 11 counts are primary school educated. Since as much as 37% and 7% of Landless Farmers are illiterate and just having primary education, it is likely that they might not have reflected a positive View on education, or have shown them just neutral Without expressing any concern of education, probably they are more concerned with their occupation, their daily bread and butter (struggle for

survival) than anything else. Hence the almost zero correlation between literacy level and attitude towards education of Landless women labourers was found.

**Table No.2**  
**Correlation between Economic status and Literacy level of Landless women labourers**

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	Correlation
Economic Status	150	2.586	1.50	r =0.254
Literacy Level	150	1.693	7.15	

Table No.2 Indicates a clear significant positive correlation between economic status and literacy level. The mean scores of economic status are 2.586 whereas literacy level 1.693. Their respective S.Ds are 1.50 and 7.15. The correlation between the economic status and literacy level is 0.254. Since there is a low correlation between economic status and literacy level of Landless women labourers one can say that a person having a better economic status is expected to have relatively high literacy level and vice-versa. The two variables show positive relationship' so it can be concluded that Literacy Level and Economic status were positively related to each other. So our hypothesis "There is positive correlation between the economic status of the landless women labourers and their Literacy level." remain accepted.

**Table No.3**  
**Correlation between Economic status and Attitude towards education of Landless women labourers.**

Variables	N	Mean	S.D.	Correlation
Attitude towards education	150	101.03	7.15	r =0.038
Economic status	150	2.586	1.50	

Table No: 3 Indicates a clear significant positive correlation between attitude towards education and economic status. The Mean score of attitude towards education is 101.03 whereas economic status is 2.586. Their respective S.Ds is 7.15 and 1.50 the correlation between the economic status and attitude towards education is 0.038 since there is a negligible positive correlation between the attitude towards education and economic status. The two variables, attitude towards education and economic status of Landless women labourers show positive relationship. The value of correlation was found very much near to Zero Correlation Value. This means there is no Correlation between both Variables. So hypothesis "There is positive correlation between Attitude towards Education and economic status of the landless women labourers" is accepted.

**Conclusion**

- Almost zero correlation between literacy level and attitude towards education of Landless women labourers was found.
- It can be concluded that Literacy Level and Economic Status were positively related to each other.

- The two variables, attitude towards education and economic status of Landless women labourers show positive relationship. The value of correlation was found very much near to Zero Correlation Value.

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