

Total	110.7 22.2	88.5	74.6 28.4	46.2	6.0 1.3	4.7	191.3 52.0	139.4	27.2
Rural	107.6 21.8	85.8	70.3 27.2	43.2	4.9 1.2	3.7	182.8 50.1	132.7	27.4
Urban	3.1 0.4	2.7	4.3 1.3	3.0	1.1 0.1	1.0	8.5 1.8	6.7	21.6
2001	103.6 25.4	78.3	63.5 22.4	41.1	10.3 3.6	6.7	177.4 51.4	126.0	29.0
Total	101.3 24.9	76.4	60.5 21.4	39.1	8.7 3.3	5.4	170.6 49.6	121.0	29.1
Rural	2.3	188	3.0	2.0	1.6	1.3	6.8	5.1	25.8
Urban	0.5		1.0		0.3		1.8		

Source- Census 2001,1991

Women's share in the agricultural workforce has been rising in the post reform period. Between 1991 and 2001, the agricultural sector saw a decline in rural main workers from 183 million to 171million a reduction of 11.7 million male and a mere 0.5 million female workers –taking women's share in the main agricultural workforce from 27 per cent to 29 per cent (Table-1). This trend can be seen to have extended in to the new millennium. Between 1993-94 and 2004-2005, the percentage of workers in agriculture (Usual status, principal and subsidiary declined more rapidly from 74.1 per cent to 66.5 per cent for men than for women (86.2 to 83.3 per cent). The gender differential in growth rate was particularly large between 1999-2000 and 2004-2005 (Table 2) As a result, the share of female labour in the agricultural workforce increased from 39 per cent to 41.5 per cent. Evidently, men are moving out of the sector leaving women behind to assume a more dominant role.

Table 2: Employment in Agriculture by Gender and annual growth for rural India

Year	Employment Million			Compound annual growth rate (%)		
	1993-94	1990-00	2004-2005	1993-94 to 1999-2000	1999-2000 to 2004-2005	1993-94-2004 to 2004-2005
Male	139.16 (74.1)	140.44 (71.4)	145.64 (66.5)	0.15	0.73	0.41
Female	90.25 (86.2)	88.82 (85.4)	103.29 (83.3)	-0.27	3.07	1.23
Person	229.41	229.26	248.93	-0.01	1.66	0.75

Note- Figures in italics show % of usual status workers in agriculture

Source: Calculated by applying NSS ratios to workforce estimate of estimate of Unni & Raveendram, 2007

The increasing involvement of women workers in agriculture is more clearly discernible in state and district level changes. Analysing Census 2001 data. Vepa (2005) reveals that out of 582 districts analysed, 46 per cent have more female laborers than male and 8.7 per cent have excess of female over male cultivators. State level NSS data also shows an increase in women share in the agricultural workforce in 12 of the 15 major states between 1999-2000 and 2004-2005. In five of these states-

Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamilnadu women workers 50 per cent or more (Table) Further, the female agricultural workforce grew faster than its male counterpart in all except Gujarat and Mizoram

Table 3: Percentage of women in rural agricultural workforce in major state of India

Sr.	State	Female WPR		Share of women in Agricultural workers		Casual Labour amongst Female agricultural workers	
		1999-2000	2004-2005	1999-2000	2004-2005	1999-2000	2004-2005
1	Himachal Pradesh	47.1	50.6	61.8	63.4	0.5	2.0
2	Andhra Pradesh	47.8	48.3	47.2	48.6	53.8	48.7
3	Maharashtra	43.4	47.4	49.7	50.3	54.0	45.7
4	Tamil Nadu	43.0	46.1	41.8	40.6	55.1	47.3
5	Karnataka	38.0	45.9	41.6	44.2	50.5	48.1
6	Gujarat	41.3	42.7	47.0	46.4	39.3	37.9
7	Rajasthan	38.8	40.7	49.8	53.4	10.0	11.6
8	Madhya Pradesh	38.2	36.6	41.8	40.6	44.1	37.7
	All India	29.9	32.7	39.2	41.9	39.6	32.6
9	Punjab	28.0	32.2	41.1	46.8	7.4	6.4
10	Orissa	29.9	32.2	36.6	38.8	49.5	35.9
11	Haryana	20.2	31.7	37.0	50.5	12.5	12.8
12	Kerala	23.8	25.6	40.0	41.3	32.0	27.6
13	Utter Pradesh	20.1	24.0	32.5	37.6	20.9	13.1
14	W. Bengal	16.0	17.8	19.2	21.7	32.5	30.7
15	Bihar	17.3	13.8	26.2	23.1	50.8	46.5

Source: NSS Reports 409 &515

Feminization of agricultural is not a new phenomenon . It has been observed in many parts of the country since the 1970s (Duvvury, 1939 Chowdhry. 1993 da Corta and Venkateswarlu, 1999) but the current phase has gloomy connotations because of the decline in the growth income and stagnation of employment in agriculture.GDP growth rate in this sector averaged 2 per cent annum between 1997 and 2005 (down from 3.5 per cent in the 1980s and early 1990s) and jobs grew by mere 0.75 per cent between 1993-94 and 2004-2005 (GOI, 2006) The fundamental condition underlying the resources, such as persistent dependence on the monsoons, small size of holding, degradation of natural resources, acute inadequacy of public investment and high input costs, together with supply and price volatilities of global market following trade liberalization and new threats posed by climate change have rendered farming a non- viable and highly risk prone means of livelihood. The result, notwithstanding overall reductions in official poverty estimates, is the prevalence of multiple deprivations, including food insecurity particularly amongst casual labourers and the self employment in agriculture, two group that exhibit the highest rate amongst the rural populace (Radhakrishnan 2004 sen and Himansu 2004).

One response of household to these conditions has been distress migration mostly of urban areas, other rural areas and to other sectors of jobs while women have taken over as managers nd helpers on fram. Although official is not very reliable, numerous micro studies(da Corta and Venkateswarlu, 1999 Rogaly et al. 2004 Talwar and Ganguly, 2003 Hardikar, 2004 Financial Express, 2003 Garikipati,2006) have recorded this. Men have also been lost to suicide and organ sale (National Commission for Women,2005) Unfortunately, the growth of employment in the non farm sector

during this period has also been dismal, even for men. Further, the quality of nonfarm jobs has been poor, being mostly in the form of low paying self –employment in the informal sector (Unni and Raveendran, 2007) Also from the point of the women left behind to the family, repatriation of migrant income is uncertain and irregular.

3. Problems of female workers

In these days responsibility of women is not limited. Not only she contributes to household activities, not she also contributes to economic activity e.g. agriculture sector and animal husbandry at the time contribution of women is important in fisheries. It is desired that this contribution from women in the economic activities increase. For this there are three reasons. First, status of a working women is better, two this increases the income of household and three female labour is an important part of total human work force. They work of all kinds of economic activity. As the number of women work force increases , national and international level organizations make force to develop an ideology, planning, etc. specified for women. They change the condition of employment, working condition, working hours, etc. ILO suggests and recommends its member nation to implement the changes morally for women workers. ILO has suggested several important resolution like maternity security, women working during the night and underground or in mining working condition, hours of work and wage related thing. India has adopted almost all the resolution given by the ILO. But still female workers are suffering from several problems despite the efforts of ILO and its implementation by government of India. Working hours, condition of work, terms, types of job and other situation is still not favorable to women workers. Unorganized labourers have still many problems and the problem of unorganized women labours are more serious and server.

In this research, problems of female labourers working in agricultural sector has been discussed , it also discusses the types of problems, it reasons etc. This project attempts to highlight the problems and its possible solution for female labour working in agricultural sector of Gujarat State.

4. Analysis of research on problems of female labourers

Analysis of researches on problems of female labourers will be helpful to understand the problems faced by women workers. Inclusion of women in employment is increasing. The inclusion is more in rural areas than the urban areas but still the level is negligible compared to the involvement of male in the employment. According to 1961 census, 34 women per 100 were working and there were 55 males per 100. In 1971 census 12 women and 53 male were working per 100. Women and males respectively. According to 27th round of NSS in Gujarat, employment inclusion rate for male and female is 53.1 and 36.1 respectively. Most of the female work in the primary sector According to 1961 and 1971 census, 90 and 94 per cent of working female were engaged in primary sector respectively 90% of female labour works on daily wages basis which is irregular and no safe. Some of the problems of female labour is concerned with this factor.

4.1 Imbalance in the supply of female labours

Female labour is not a main person in her household who goes for work. They work as an additional income earner for the family. Thus, their supply is not continuous and balanced. Most of the time when income of a family is not sufficient, women is allowed to work. When the income increases women ask to stop the work. In season, supply of female labour is more and when there is off season, supply of women workers is very less. Thus, supply of female labourers is unbalanced at the same time most of the female labour do not prefer to work outstation.

4.2 Loss of wage employment

Changes in gender composition of the agricultural workforce during this period have been accompanied by change in the structure of employment. Between 1993-94 and 1999-2000 there was

an increase in the casualization of the agricultural workforce. From 39.9 per cent to 42.7 per cent for women compared to 37.7 per cent to 39.6 per cent for men. However, between 2000-and 2005, there was a reversal- casual work declined and self employment increased

Table 4: All India distribution of usually employment in agricultural by category of employment, rural

Year	Self employment		Regular		Casual labour	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1994-3-94						
Million	80.6	52.8	5.6	1.1	52.4	36.0
%	57.9	58.5	4.0	1.2	37.7	39.9
1999-2000						
Million	82.3	50.2	2.5	0.6	55.6	37.9
%	58.6	56.5	1.8	0.7	39.6	42.7
2004-2005						
Million	92.9	66.6	2.00	0.5	50.8	36.2
%	63.8	64.5	1.3	0.5	34.9	35.0
Annual average growth 1993-94 to 2004 %	1.30	2.02	-8.94	-6.92	-0.28	0.05
Annual average growth 1999 - 2000 to 2004-05 %	2045	5.82	-4.36	-3.58	-1.79	-0.91

Note -Absolute number have been calculated on the basis of workforce estimate in Unni & Raveendram- 2005 Source: NSS Report 512, 409

The point to be noted is that although there was a general loss of paid (casual and regular) it is women who sustained a higher proportionate loss- 7.9 point compared to 5.2 point for men. This is also reflected in higher unemployment rate for women, most of whom reported having worked as casual labour. The sharper changes for women are in part a reflection of the flexibility of women's work participation. It expands or contracts and moves from wage labour to unpaid work or vice-versa to balance change in the employment and income prospects for men. Also, in a situation of shortage of jobs within agricultural, men are able to take advantage of options in the non-farm sector while women are forced to fall back on the family farm or remain unemployed due to lower attainments in education and skill, and limited mobility on account of family responsibilities. Amply demonstrated by the high under employment amongst rural women (17 per cent compared to 4 per cent for men in 2004-05) Casualization is widely believed to be bad, but a shift to self employment may be worse for women, as it entails loss of cash income, loss of status, devaluation of women labours, increase in women work burden as well as a loss of visibility in official data system. On the other hand, working outside the home with other women of similar situation may confer better bargaining strength vis-a-vis the exploitative force at family as well as societal levels (Banerjee, 1999)

Alienation and fragmentation of land explains to a great extent the increasing casualization in the first period as well as the latest increase in self employment. Progressive landless and viability of cultivation on the increasing number of marginal and small holding since the early 1990s induced women of cultivator household to join the ranks of casual labours while majority of the women continued to work on own farms. However, a tipping point appears to have been reached. Landless now affect 43 per cent of rural household and marginal holding constitute 70 per cent of all operational holding. Evidently casual jobs hitherto offered by medium and large farms have dried up., pushing all those unable to move out of agricultural to work on own farms (Krishnaraj, 2008). Concession of agricultural land to use such as prawn farming, construction and Special Economic

Zone have also decreased supply of land for agricultural, creating at the same time fewer jobs than they have destroyed (National Commission for Women,2005)

4.3 Decline in wages

Together with the loss of paid jobs, the 1990s have seen a slowdown in the growth of real wages of female and male agricultural labour as well as widening of the gender gap, especially in many operations such as transplanting, weeding, etc. that tend to be carried out largely by women.(Krishnara and Shah 2004). For women obliged to make their living through casual labour, beside impermanence and uncertainty to jobs, low and gender differentiated wage is the norm. There is a great deal of variation across state in average earning among female workers. Punjab and Kerala have the highest wage rates, Bihar, Orissa, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh have wage rates in the lower range while Haryana, Gujarat and Rajasthan fall in the middle. However, in every state, except Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Assam and Gujarat, the nominal daily wage rates for women agricultural labour in 2004 were below the statutory minimum. While the male wage everywhere was above it (Chavan and Bedamatta, 2006)

Table 5: Daily minimum wages and actual wages of male and female agricultural labourers, state wise, 2004

No	State	Minimum Wage	Actual Wage Male	Difference Male	Actual Wage female	Difference Male female
		1	2	3(=2.1)	4	5(=4-1)
1	Andhra Pradesh	52.00	59.88	7.88	32.71	-19.20
2	Assam	50.00	69.70	19.70	55.06	5.06
3	Bihar	50.00	58.27	8.27	44.47	-5.53
4	Gujarat	50.00	69.15	19.15	51.41	1.41
5	Haryana	84.29	84.73	0.44	75.87	-8.42
6	Himachal Pradesh	65.00	123.00	58.00	84.60	19.60
7	J & K	45.00	121.71	76.71	n.a	n.a
8	Karnataka	56.30	59.29	2.99	36.23	-20.07
9	Kerala	100.00	238.71	138.71	100.13	0.13
10	Madhya Pradesh	56.96	50.95	-6.01	36.58	-20.38
11	Maharashtra	48.00	63.00	15.00	34.09	-13.91
12	Orissa	52.5	54.11	1.61	39.33	-13.18
13	Panjab	87.59	n.a	n.a	n.a	n.a
14	Rajasthan	67.30	82.94	15.64	48.58	-18.72
15	Tamil Nadu	54.00	117.21	63.21	39.61	-14.4
16	Tripura	50.00	74.33	24.33	n.a	n.a
17	Utter Pradesh	58.00	60.56	2.56	-7.42	-7.42
18	W. Bengal	107.99	84.48	-23.51	-58.36	-58.36

Source- Chavan & Bedamatta, 2006

Summarizing the change in the last decade as reflected by official data, there is clear evidence of men moving out of agricultural resulting in an increase in women's share in the agricultural workforce and an expansion of their role in the sector. However, with labor absorption in agriculture on the decline. Particularly in terms of paid jobs, more than two-third of women workers are self employment, working as manager and helper on the family farm without any remuneration. Those who continue to work as casual labour earn wage less than the statutory minimum Further, the growth in wages has failed to keep up with price of consumption goods in general and cereal price in particular and the male –female disparity in wage has widened. The disparities continue to be highest for operations

in which women specialize. In response to the distress in agriculture, men are migrating to other rural or urban areas and to other sectors; they are also resorting to suicide and organ sales. Non-farm employment prospects for men are none too cheerful, with only low quality self-employment available.

5. Major Problems of Female labourers

Problems of female agricultural labourers are different and specific. There is very bad in comparison to other to other female workers in organized sector. Not only that female agricultural labourers face more problems than that of other unorganized sector labourers. They do get comparatively less employment and wages than organized sectors female labour. They have to work hard but they are not being paid well. They have serious problems and specific difficulties than male labour.

1. There are inadequate employment opportunities for Female agricultural labourers they get seasonal employment. They do not get employment in all days of a season. They do not get work except seasonal days. Because of sectorial farming and other processes farming becoming more a physical work. Number of small farmer is very high in the country, who fulfill their requirement through involving family members in laborious job. Male workers do get more employment than female labour. According to second agricultural labour research committee report male worker got employment for 197 days and worked for 40 days in their own farm. But female got work for 168 days, were unemployed for about 197 days, whereas male worked for 237 days. In 1964-65, agricultural labour got work for 277 days which declined to 250 days in 1974-75. Female agricultural labour has to remain unemployed for more than six months in a year.
2. Female agricultural labourers are less paid. It wage rates are high and number of employment days are low they should not be affected economically, but situation is reverse. They have to work at very low wage rate. For the same kind and type of work female workers are paid less compared to male workers. This difference is marginal. But in a work, which requires greater skill women workers are not paid well as male workers are being paid. At the same time demand for women agricultural labourers is low.
3. Health standard of female agricultural labourers is weak. They have to perform types of duty at home, in family and in farm. This affects their health and which deteriorates their health. They do not get nutrition food and proper medical attention in case of illness. After their overall health.
4. Most of the female agricultural labourers live below poverty line. Their standard of living is also low. They do not get adequate employment. They are not being paid good wages. Thus, their income is very low. They are not able to satisfy their basis need and are not able to get nutrition good.
5. A female agricultural labourer has to work for more hours. They have to work for more than eight hours. In season, they have to work for 12 to 12 hours a day. They work in open space. They have to work in heat. Rain and cold. This difficult season affects adversely to their health which affects to their daily life.
6. There are changes of accident in farming work. Condition of work in agricultural sector is very difficult. Female has to work in open, in heat or in cold. Sometime equipment of farming can also bring injuries to them, Female agricultural labourers has to work in adverse condition. Sometime they are affected by fatigue.
7. Female agricultural labourers are exploited. Female agricultural labourers are exploited according to the definition of exploitation in economics. They are being paid fewer wages than marginal productivity. They have to work more at low wage rate. Tribal and S.C female labourers are more exploited.
8. Female agricultural labourers has to work from early in the morning to late night, continuously, In addition to farming they have to work at home. They have to take care of children, animal husbandry, social gatherings and so on. This working condition adversely affects the health of labour her daily life.

9. At the place of female agricultural labourers work, some specific facility like separate sanitation, place for leisure and rest, etc. is desired which is not provided by farmers.
10. Female agricultural labour do not enjoy their maternity. They do not get proper rest after childbirth. Wages for number of days they work are not paid so the worker will not ask for leave in any situation. They also not get proper food after the delivery. In Gujarat state, from 19986-87 , scheme for economic assistance is provided to female agricultural labourers before and after the delivery. According to this scheme female labour is being paid at minimum wage rate for six weeks after delivery for the first time and for second time she is for 4 weeks. The benefits of this scheme do not reach to the female agricultural labourers.
11. Female agricultural labourers do suffer many social and family problems. Situation of a widow labour, sometime is very serious. They have to work for most the life but their social status not considered to be very high.
12. After going through all these details. It is observed that problems and difficulties of female agricultural labourers are different, serious and specific. Their problems are not only economic related but also suffer from social and family problems. Their condition is pity. Government should pay more attention to the problems of female agricultural labourers.

6. Characteristics of Female agricultural Labourers

There are different types of labourers who earn and fulfill the basic requirements of family by doing different types of work or job. They possess different types of characteristics. All the workers have different types of problems, work types and specific working style. Most of the workers earn through physical activity. On the basis of sex labourers can be divided in two groups, male labourers and female labourers . Female labourers work in all sectors. At the same time female also work in agricultural sector. Characteristics of female agricultural workers can be listed as below.

1. Female agricultural labourers are semi- skilled. The work they do in the field do not require skills . Here they require only physical work ability. In other field also female labourers are unskilled or semi- skilled such as construction where female labourers are unskilled . Some sectors do require skills . Female labourers in agricultural sector are semi- skilled because they do not perform duties involving skill like, handling of machinery, etc.
2. They have to work in open, thus, seasonal change do affect their work. They do perform works involving hard physical work. Female agricultural workers do affected by cast and rural factors. Female agricultural labourers are found to be illiterate. There a danger of accident in the work they perform. They do not prefer to move out to urban areas if they get opportunity to work in rural areas.
3. Female agricultural labourers do perform different agricultural activities which do not require specific skill women labourers are not trained and unskilled or semi skilled . Duties they perform is purely dependent on pure observation. They learn this type of work from their family members or parents.
4. Female agricultural labourers do move out but the reason for their moving out is not economical it is more social based. They do not move out for getting employment. Their migration is in Same district or in the same state.
5. There is a lack of specialization in the Female agricultural labourers. They do not perform same kind of work in the farm. Sometime they the job of transportation.
6. If castwise analysis of Female agricultural labourers is undergone it can be observed that most of the Female agricultural labourers come from backward class. They are Harijan, Ahir, Rajput, etc. Size of family of the female labourers of this cast is big comparatively. Their living standard is low income is low but earning members in the family are more.
7. Female agricultural labourers are unorganized. They do not have any national, state or regional level organization or union. Thus, female labourers of organized sectors do get some more benefit than that of unorganized one. Workers from organized sectors with their united power

- and collective efforts gets more liberal payment and works under better condition. Because of unorganised working force female agricultural labourers do not get any of these benefits.
8. Female agricultural labourers are not daily wages. There are permanent labourers in agricultural sector but most of them are males. They work on yearly system. But most of the female labourers in this sector are casual and works on daily wages system.
 9. Demand of female agricultural labourers is different in different season. When crop is ready for cultivation, demand of female workers increases. But at the time of farming demand decline . Thus, demand differ from season to season
 10. Demand of Female agricultural labourers depend on the size of areas under cultivation in farm. If farming area is small than demand for female labourers is not present because in most of these types of farm the family members of farmer work. They do not require agricultural labourers. But when farm is large and there are several crops under cultivation demand of agricultural labourers, including female labourers increases.
 11. Demand of Female agricultural labourers Also depends on types of nature s of family activity. If activity requires more physical strength than demand for male workers is more. In this kind of work male workers are preferred.
 12. Employment and wages rate of female agricultural labourers are unstable. If monsoon is good Female agricultural labourers increases and they get good wage rate. But in case of drought or flood employment opportunities for Female agricultural labourers decline.