

## Participation Level of Rural Women Regarding Post Harvesting Activities in Pakistan

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### Abstract

Post harvesting is a concluding activity in the agriculture to secure the foods and other crops mostly performed by the rural women. The objective of the study was to recognize the gender role regarding the post harvest activity in the rural area. The study was conducted on the 384 farm families from eight villages in the rural areas of Tehsil Faisalabad. The data were analyzed for frequencies and analysis of variance. The results indicated that most of the activities related to take the crop to the market and mills were performed by the husbands (67.97%) with limited participation in the food preservation and processing. Whereas, the wives were mainly involved in cleaning of store rooms, storing of agri products in bags and preparation of marmalade and pickles. Rural women role in post harvest operations especially in drying, storage and cleaning of grains was much important. The participation in the marketing activities was low. The high level of participation of women in activities like storage drying and packing of grains makes it necessary to transfer of technical know how on these aspects to women.

**Keywords:** Rural area, women, participation, post-harvest,

### Introduction

In rural areas women undertake 53% of all workload and devote 20% more time than men for work. This essential contribution of women is not appreciated. In this sense, women are negatively influenced by traditional pattern and economic policies. In different studies (FAO, 1998; 1996) it has been emphasized that despite women are the main element for agriculture, they face more obstacles than men do. In the general social structure of developing countries men are dominant and they take many of the critical socio-economic decisions in the society. Similarly, Anonymous (2004) reported that the farm women activities are transplanting (50%), harvesting (26.5%)

however post harvest activities such as threshing (50%), Drying (33%) and parbolining (67%). Acharya and Bennett (1983) gave detailed picture of the labour contribution by sex for rice and other staples. It is reported that women in Nepal perform 66% of labour involved in planting, 75% in weeding, and all of the cleaning and storage of rice. In the production of wheat, they contribute 66% of the work; for maize, 94%; for oil seeds, 85%. Women in West Africa play a pivotal role in agriculture, providing most farm labour and making the key decisions for many agricultural activities. (Gbolagade, 1987; Folasade, 1991). Similarly in Pakistan, rural women provide most of the labour for post harvest activities, taking responsibilities for storage, handling, stocking, processing and marketing (Dawn, 2004). Rural women participate in all operations related to crop production such as sowing, transplanting, weeding and harvesting, as well as in post –harvest operations such as threshing, winnowing, drying, grinding, husking, and storage (including making mud bins for storage).

In most rural communities, women make up a significant part of the farming workforce. Even in societies where women don't work in the fields, they are active in post-harvest activities. Though they comprise nearly two thirds of the agricultural labour force and contribute up to 80 per cent of total food production, women receive less than one percent of the total credit available to agriculture (Heyzer, 1996).

The food produced from the agriculture production processed and secured for consumption by the both gender. In Bangladesh, Paul and Saadullah (1991) reported that families without women are not sustainable and women are responsible in 90% post harvest activities further reported the role of women in homestead and family life. Rural women plays important role in post-harvest activities. Pal (2001) reported that in Bangladesh rural women have played important roles in wide range of income generating activities. These rural production activities include post-harvesting.

The rural women provide most of the labour in post-harvest activities, including handling, stocking, processing, packaging and marketing. Rural women

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are also efficiently involved in preparing pesticide solutions. The productive work done within the agriculture fields by women has been ignored and not much attempt has been made to incorporate the value of such activities within the national accounts. This is the main reason behind the exceptionally low female labour participation rate of 18.93% compared to 71.97% for men in Pakistan (GOP, 2007).

Keeping in view the involvement of rural women in the post harvest activity from the review of literature this study has been planned to estimate the frequency of involvement of rural women in the post harvest activities.

### Materials and Methods

Total population of tehsil Faisalabad was 924110 numbers. Using the Fitzgibbon *et al.* (1987) table sample size 384 farm families were selected from eight villages using the systematic random sampling technique. Data was collected by the survey method from the 768 respondents (384 husbands and 384 wives) the respondents were asked about their involvement in the post-harvest activities. The schedule consisted of seven post harvest activities regarding which the response was recorded. The data collected were subjected to the analysis using SPSS ® 10 to figure out the percentage of the involvement of the respondents who (husband, wife, both, none of them). These frequencies further utilized to compare the level of involvement of husband, wives, both of them and non of them in the post harvest (Steel, *et al.*, 1997)

### Results and Discussion

Regarding the estimation the role of gender in the post harvest activity different roles were selected to measure the diversified role of rural women.

It was revealed that most of the activities related to take the crop to the market and mills were performed by the husbands (67.97%) with limited participation in the food preservation and processing. Whereas, the wives were mainly involved in cleaning of store rooms, storing of agri products in bags and preparation of marmalade and pickles, 49.22%, 42.97% and 35.42%, , respectively (Table 1). Like other developing countries, a majority of women in Pakistan's rural areas are involved in the agriculture production process. Women are engaged in a variety of agricultural activities such as cleaning, drying, and storage of grains. Most of the researcher concluded rural women played an important role in post harvest activities especially in drying, storage and cleaning of grains in all the zones proving that they were a major

role contributor to the family food and economic security (Nazli and Hamid, 2007 and Sindhu, 2007). New technologies should be disseminated to the rural areas for the preservation of food. Implements and equipments should be introduced for marmalade and pickle manufacturing. Storage method should be taught to the rural women, which may be easy and economical. The technical guidance will help in enhancement of their capabilities which in turn will lead to reduction in losses during storage. With more and more men taking up additional income generating activities along with farming, the women should be made efficient in the handling those post harvest activities independently in which they work jointly with men. This will enable women to play pro- active role in post harvest operation.

Data illustrate that husband, wife, both husband & wife and none of them were significantly different in performing the role regarding the post harvest activities (Table 2). Comparison of means shows that wives (26%) performed post harvest activities significantly different from their husbands (21%) followed by both husband and wives (14%). The data also show that 39% of the respondents did not take/perform the activities related to the post harvest. (Fig.1). Similar reports has been reported by Paul and Saadullah (1991); Riaz (1994) and Sindhu (2007). The variations in participation pattern between zones can be attributed to difference in cropping, socio-personal and overall development pattern of the zone and recommended that high level participation of women in participation of women in activities like drying, storage and cleaning of grains makes it necessary to lay stress on transfer of technical know how- on these aspects to women . Where as, their participation was, however, low in processing and marketing activities (Rajika and Smith, 1997; Pal, 2001 and Rangalakshmi, 2002).

It was concluded that post harvest activities were confined in and out side the boundary. However, activities which were took place out side the home and involved power/traveling were performed by the husband, such as, transporting and marketing. Rural women's role in post harvest operations especially in drying, storage and cleaning of grains was much important. The high level of participation of women in activities like storage drying and packing of grains makes it necessary to transfer of technical know how on these aspects to women, the technical guidance would help in enhancement of their efficiency and reduced the losses during storage. Such education would lead to increase their income and active role in post harvest activities.

**Table 1 Frequency distribution of husband and wife according to their involvement in the post harvest activities.**

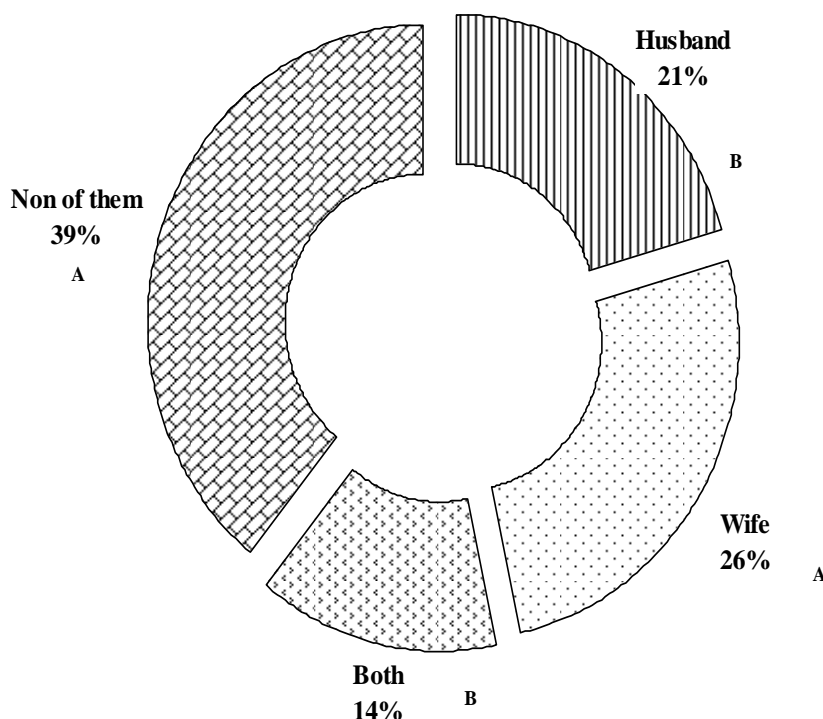
Roles	Husband								Wife							
	Husband		Wife		Both		Non of them		Husband		Wife		Both		Non of them	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Storage of wheat	70	18.23	96	25.00	151	39.32	67	17.45	69	17.97	111	28.9	143	37.24	61	15.89
Sugar cane to mill	261	67.97	0	0.00	0	0	123	32.03	259	67.45	0	0.00	0	0	125	32.55
Rice storage	39	10.16	65	16.93	9	2.34	271	70.57	35	9.11	77	20.05	12	3.13	260	67.71
Vegetables dry and	15	3.91	45	11.72	21	5.47	303	78.91	11	2.86	63	16.41	15	3.91	295	76.82
Cleaning of store rooms	73	19.01	175	45.57	69	17.97	67	17.45	71	18.49	189	49.22	56	14.58	68	17.71
Agri. Products store in bags	97	25.26	152	39.58	70	18.23	65	16.93	85	22.14	165	42.97	68	17.71	66	17.19
Marmalade and pickles	15	3.91	125	32.55	75	19.53	169	44.01	12	3.13	136	35.42	66	17.19	170	44.27

**Table 2 Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) and ranked order of the respondents regarding the role in post harvest activities**

Role in post harvest activities	Husband	Wife	Both	Non of them
<b>Total</b>	226.50	596.00	230.50	867.00
<b>Mean</b>	45.30	119.20	46.10	173.40
<b>SD</b>	35.09	55.20	29.35	108.55

**Table 3 Analysis of variance regarding the involvement in the post harvest activities.**

SOV	Df	Mean Square	F Value	Prob.
<b>Who</b>	3	23583.95	4.34	0.0084
<b>Error</b>	52	5432.65		
<b>Total</b>	55			



**Figure 1. Participation of Rural women in Post harvest activities**

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