

A STUDY OF GENDER AND EMPLOYMENT IN NON- FARM ACTIVITIES IN HARYANA AND PUNJAB

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ABSTRACT

The rural households of Punjab and Haryana were predominantly employed in the agriculture sector in the pre-reforms era. Later during the period of study (1993-94 to 2011-12), the examination of NSSO data reveals that there has been a major shift away from agriculture activities and that shift occurs towards non-farm employment (RNFE) in Punjab while towards RNFE and particularly regular salary earning in case of Haryana. The rural non-farm sector in recent times is considered to be an effective strategy for decentralization of economic activities to India and to check the migration of people to urban areas. Though employability is a function of a number of factors like level of education and type of degree, job seekers' physical and mental status, mobility of labour, and availability of coordinating factors of production like capital, entrepreneurship and stage and rate of growth of the economy (Chhaya, 2016). Yet the significance of education/skills to increase access to rural non-farm employment cannot be undermined. Improvement in the level of education develops the human capital as well as capacity and hence the chances of employment in an RNF activity. It also leads to a change in priorities, which always shift away from agriculture (Vatta and Garg, 2008). Moreover, better-educated individuals are likely to possess skills that facilitate successful involvement in non-farm activities, including the ability to manage a business, process relevant information, adapt to changing demand patterns, and liaise with public and private service providers (Wandschneider, 2003).

KEYWORDS: *Effective, Strategy, Activities, Facilitate, Significance, Decentralization.*

INTRODUCTION

Gender and Employment in non-farm activities in Haryana: during 1993-94 and 2011-12 [50th and 68th Rounds of NSSO]

In India, an absolute decline in agricultural employment and agricultural labour force has been recorded in the recent past, that too for both male and female labourers; and the decline is

relatively steeper for the female workforce and is much higher than the male workforce in agriculture (Reddy et. al., 2014). Therefore, a deeper insight into the employment of the rural workforce in farm and non-farm activities through a gender lens is quite significant. Few studies found noticeable gender differences in the income of non-farm workers in rural Punjab (Anupama, 2018). The study reported the highest differences in the case of casual workers and the lowest in the case of regular workers in the government sector. Within the category of casual employment, the difference in wages was very low in the case of professional, scientific and technical activities; while the difference was very high in the case of the construction sector.

The gender-wise proportions of the rural workforce engaged in farm and non-farm activities in Haryana, during 1993-94 and 2011-12 are presented in Table 1.1. As per NSSO data (for 50th & 68th rounds), the rural workforce is categorized into major three economic activities such as *self-employed*, regular wage/salary earner and casual labourer across both farm and non-farm sectors. Haryana continued to be an agrarian state as its 63.38 per cent workforce was still dependent on farm-related activities for their livelihood, in the year 2011-12 with 32.57 per cent, 0.40 per cent and 30.41 per cent population working as self-employed, regular salary earner and casual labourer, respectively.

TABLE 1.1: EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITIES PURSUED BY RURAL POPULATION AND GENDER IN HARYANA (1993-94 TO 2011-12) (PERCENTAGE)

Type of Economic Activities	NSSO 50 th Round (1993-1994)			NSSO 68 th Round (2011-2012)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
A. Non-Farm						
Self-Employed	18.57	5.80	17.49	17.51	4.17	16.54
Regular Salary	14.91	8.41	14.36	19.17	16.46	18.97
Casual Labour	0.68	1.34	0.73	1.08	1.49	1.11
Sub-Total (Non-Farm Related Activities)	34.16	15.55	32.58	37.76	22.12	36.62
B. Farm						
Self-Employed	36.83	39.63	37.07	33.02	26.79	32.57
Regular Salary	1.10	0.00	1.01	0.43	0.00	0.40
Casual Labour	27.91	44.82	29.34	28.79	51.09	30.41
Sub-total Farm Related Activities	65.84	84.45	67.42	62.24	77.88	63.38
Total Workforce	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Unit Level Data NSSO (1993-94) and NSSO (2011-12).

It is significant to note that in Haryana, the proportionate share of cultivators (self-employed in agricultural) and agricultural labourers (casual and regular salary earners) was almost the same, during 2011-12. Moreover, all regular salary earners in the farm sector were males with no female participation in farm-related activities. Self-employment and casual labour in agriculture were two main employment activities in farm-related activities in the state during 2011-12. Nonetheless, the proportion of male workers engaged in this activity was also negligible (i.e. 0.43 per cent).

The access of the rural population to RNFE in Haryana is also evident in Table 1.1. It depicts that workers in 2011-12, around one third i.e. (36.62 per cent) were engaged in rural non-farm activities, when disaggregated it shows 18.97 per cent were regular wage/salary earners, followed by 16.54 per cent as self-employed and a meagre proportion (1.11 per cent) worked as the casual labour in non-farm activities

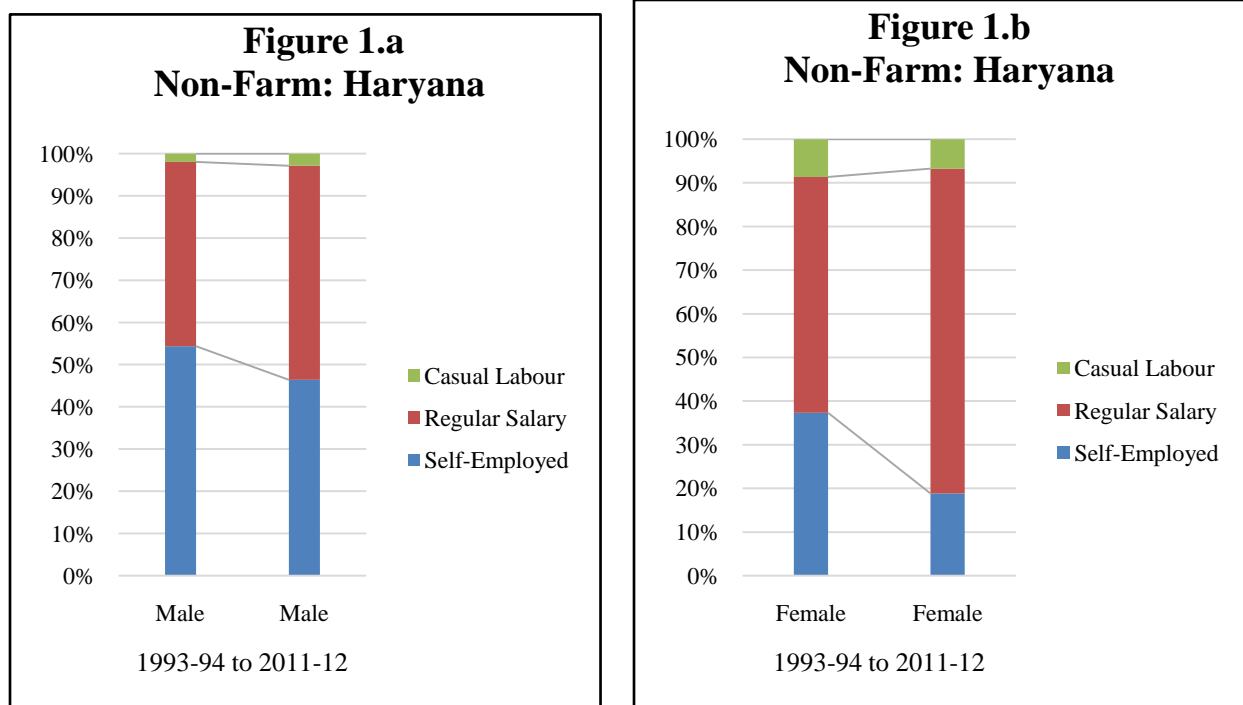
Gender wise analysis of employability in RNFE of rural workforce depicts that a relatively larger proportion of male workers (37.76 per cent) worked in RNFE than that of (i.e. 22.12 per cent) females. A study conducted by Reddy et. al., (2014) reiterates that the absorption of women in rural non-farm employment is relatively much lower. While men move from agriculture to non-farm employment, the limited opportunities for women in non-farm activities keep them in agriculture, which is also a contributing factor to the feminization of agriculture. Furthermore, out of (i.e., overall 37.76 per cent) total male workers employed in the non-farm sector, 17.51 per cent, 19.51 per cent and 1.08 per cent worked as self-employed, regularly salaried and casual labour respectively in the non-farm activities. Besides, the highest proportion of female workers engaged in non-farm activities were engaged in the activity of regular salary earning and their involvement in self-employed and casual labour in non-farm was rather insignificant. On the other side, a relatively smaller proportion of male workers (62.24 per cent) worked in farm-related activities in comparison to that of female workers (77.88 per cent) during the same period. Hence, there was lesser participation of female workers in non-farm activities in Haryana as compared to male workers. However, the majority of the male and female workers were still engaged in farm-related activities.

Table 1.1 also depicts the extent of rural transformation in Haryana from 1993-94 to 2011-12. It is evident that the engagement of both male & female workers in agricultural activities has witnessed a moderate decrease. The proportion of male workers engaged in the farm-related activities decreased from 65.84 per cent to 62.24 per cent, during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12. Likewise, the proportion of female workers working in agricultural activities declined from 84.45 per cent in 1993-94 to 77.88 per cent in 2011-12. On the other side, the proportionate shares of both male & female workers engaged in RNFE increased from 34.16 per cent to 37.76 per cent and 15.55 per cent to 22.12 per cent, respectively, during the period 1993-94 to 2011-12.

Hence, it is inferred that the rate of workforce shifting towards the non-farm sector in Haryana was quite appreciable. Due to the low growth rate of secondary and tertiary sectors in the state, the RNF sector was not able to absorb the disguisedly unemployed and redundant workforce of the agricultural sector.

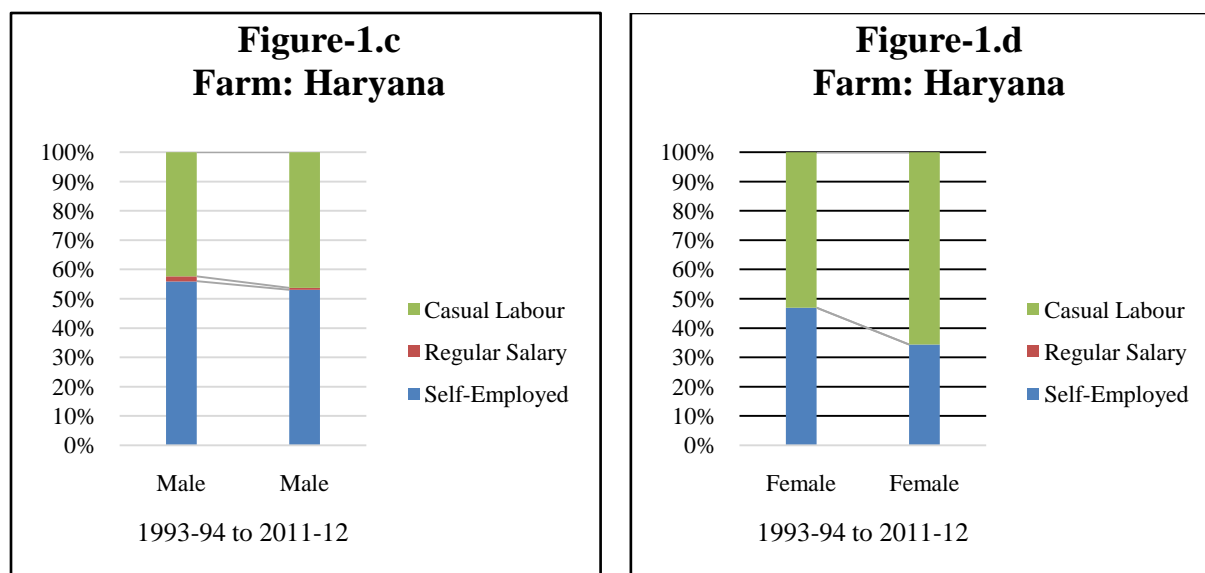
Figures 1. a and 1. b represent the participation of male and female workers of Haryana state in three RNF activities (casual labour, regular salary earning and self-employment) in the years 1993-94 and 2011-12. Figure 1.a indicates that across overall RNF male workers, the largest

proportion was that of self-employed, the second-largest proportion was that of regular salary earners and a minor proportion of male workers worked as a casual labourer in the year 1993-94. The comparative analysis of participation of male workers in different RNF activities indicates that the share of self-employed male workers declined while the share of regular salary earning and casual labour increased throughout the period of study.



Next, the trend of RNF female worker's participation in different activities in Haryana is depicted in figure 1. b. It indicates that over the period of study, the share of female workers in the RNF activity of self-employment and casual labour decreased while the share in the activity of regular salary earning increased enormously. Thus, both the figures depict an interesting picture that the participation of both male and female RNF workers increased in the activity of regular salary earning. The improvement in educational level has definitely led to such kind of change.

The trend of participation of farm workers in three farm-related activities in Haryana has been graphically presented in figures 1. c and 1.d. Figure 1. c indicates that the share of farm workers working in the activity of regular salary earning declined while the share of farm workers working as casual labourers increased. It indicates the trend of casualization of the farm workforce. While the proportion of farm workers working as self-employed witnessed a minor decline.



As far as the participation in different farm-related activities by female farmworkers is concerned, figure 1.d shows that the proportion of female farmworkers working as self-employed declined and their proportion in the activity of casual labour rather increased accordingly, in Haryana, from 1993-94 to 2011-12. It also represents that none of the female farmworkers was working as regular salary earners over the period of study.

Hence, both the male and female farmworkers have moved toward the farm-related activity of casual labour from the farm-related activity of regular salary earning. Hence the casualization of farm labour in Haryana has increased.

Gender wise proportion of workforce engaged in farm and non-farm activities in Punjab during 1993-94 and 2011-12 (50th and 68th Rounds of NSSO)

The selection of occupation largely depends upon the gender of the worker. Table 1.2 reveals a gender-wise proportionate share of the rural workforce engaged in farm and non-farm activities in Punjab, in the year 1993-94 and 2011-12. Punjab a leading agrarian state had 59.90 per cent of its population dependent on farm-related activities in 2011-12 and the remaining 40 per cent population was engaged in non-farm activities during the same period of time.

Moreover, in agriculture 59.90 per cent of workers were employed and a larger section of the workers i.e. 36.87 per cent were engaged in the activity of casual labour in agriculture, followed by 21.14 per cent of workers as self-employed and merely by 1.89 per cent workers as regular salary earners. On the other side, out of overall 40.10 per cent population working in non-farm activities, the largest proportion of workforce i.e. 22.10 per cent worked as regular salary earners, followed by 17.96 per cent workers as self-employed in non-agricultural activity. The significant trend to be noticed here is that in the Punjab workforce working as casual labour in the non-farm sector minimal proportion (0.04 per cent) of the total RNF workforce implying thereby that either they are self-employed or have regular employment.

TABLE 1.2: EMPLOYMENT ACTIVITY AND GENDER WISE DISTRIBUTION OF RURAL WORKFORCE IN PUNJAB, DURING 1993-94 & 2011-12

Economic Activities in Punjab	NSSO 50 th Round (1993-1994)			NSSO 68 th Round (2011-2012)		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
A. Non-Farm						
Self-Employed	14.69	9.04	14.35	17.63	21.95	17.96
Regular Salary	13.16	14.63	13.25	20.69	39.31	22.10
Casual Labour in	0.30	0.00	0.28	0.05	0.00	0.04
Sub-Total (RNFE Activities)	28.15	23.67	27.88	38.37	61.26	40.10
B. Farm						
Self-Employed	30.85	26.17	30.56	21.57	15.91	21.14
Regular Salary	2.57	5.60	2.75	2.04	0.15	1.89
Casual Labour	38.43	44.57	38.81	38.03	22.68	36.87
Sub-total Farm Related Activities	71.85	76.34	72.12	61.64	38.74	59.90
TOTAL WORKFORCE	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Unit Level Data NSSO (1993-94) and NSSO (2011-12).

Gender wise classification of the workforce in Punjab brings forth the fact that the majority of the male workers (61.64 per cent) worked in farm-related activities while most of the female workers (61.26 per cent) were employed in the *RNF sector*. Moreover, in the case of farm-related activities in Punjab, the largest proportion of both male (38.03 per cent) and female workers (22.68) as casual labourers, followed by the proportion of self-employed (i.e. cultivators) 21.57 per cent male and 15.91 per cent female population of Punjab were self-employed (cultivators) as per NSSO data for the year 2011-12. Agriculture is a seasonal occupation, it is understandable that the minuscule of male and female workers were employed as regular salaried persons. Gender wise distribution of non-farm workers shows that the majority (61.26 per cent) of female workers worked in RNFE which when disaggregated shows that 39.31 per cent were regular salary earners and 21.95 per cent female workers were self-employed, and a significant observation to note was that females did not work as casual labourers. It is interesting to note that in Punjab, none of the female workers worked as casual labour and enjoyed a respectable status. Furthermore, within 38.37 per cent i.e. one-third of total male workers employed in the RNF sector, 17.63 per cent were self-employed and 20.69 per cent were regular salary earners. It shows that RNFE in Punjab has provided employment to two-third of females and one-third of

the male rural workforce. It is inferred that the significant contribution of RNFE is that it is a dependable occupation for a regular source of earning (as a proportion of male and female workers as a casual labourer is around 1 per cent only).

The increase in the share of RNFE from 27.9 per cent to 40.10 per cent during 1993-94 and 2011-12 shows the growing significance of RNFE as a source of employment in the rural economy over the period of study. Nonetheless, a larger proportion of males and females opted for RNFE. During the same period of time, the proportionate share of male workers engaged in the non-farm sector increased from 28.15 per cent to 38.37 per cent. Whereas, the proportionate share of female workers engaged in RNFE increased substantially from 23.67 per cent to 61.26 per cent. The NSSO data pertaining to the 50th and 68th rounds indicate that as compared to male workers the proportion share of female workers engaged in RNFE increased at a higher rate during the periods.

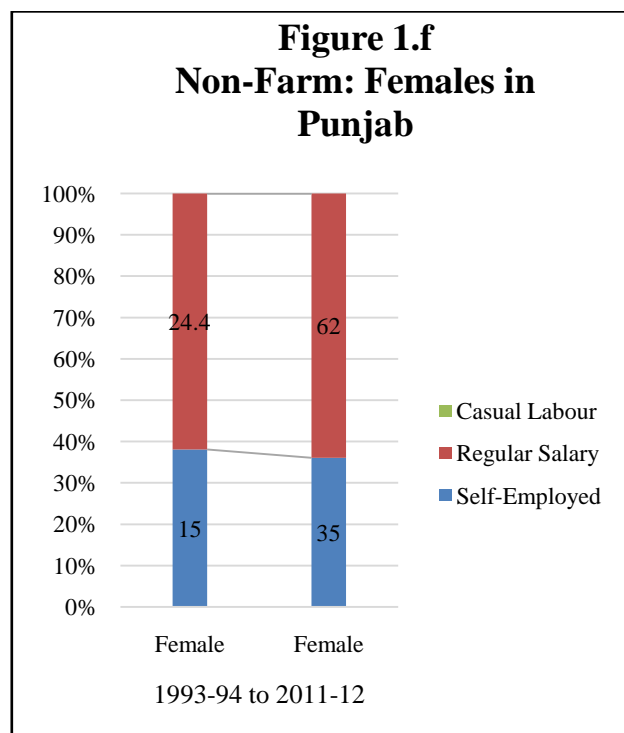
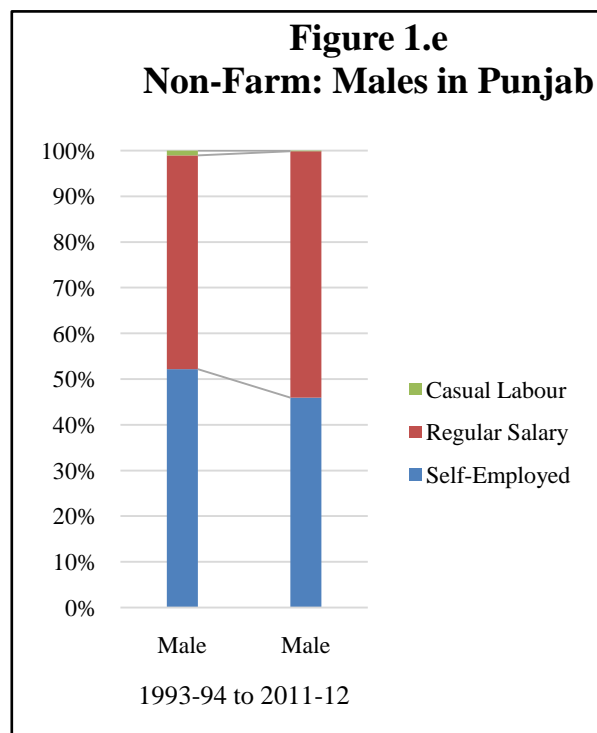
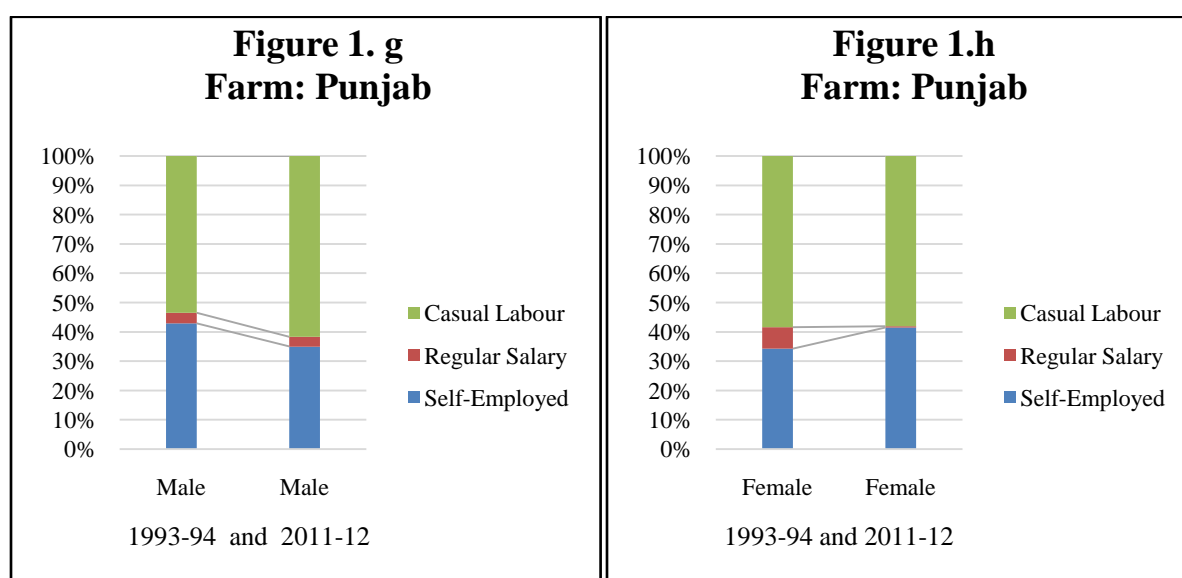


Figure 1.e represents the portion of non-farm male workers working in the different RNF activities in Punjab over the period of study. It shows that the percentage share of RNF male workers working as self-employed and casual labour decreased while the proportionate share of such workers in the activity of regular salary earning increased extensively. However, it is significant to note that the proportionate share of male workers working as a casual labourers in the RNF sector was meagre in the year 1993-94 and further reduced extensively by the year 2011-12.

With regard to the RNF female workers in Punjab, figure 1.f indicates that their proportion in the activity of salary wage-earning was increased and in the activity of self-employment was

reduced accordingly. It also enlightens that none of the female workers was working in the activity of casual labour in RNFS in Punjab over the period of study.

Figures 1. g and 1.h present proportionate shares of overall male and female farmworkers working in farm-related activities as a casual labourer, regular salary earner and self-employed in Punjab, in the years of 1993-94 and 2011-12. Figure 1.g indicates that the proportion of self-employed in farm-related activities in Punjab has reduced over the period of study. Among the male workers, the share of the regular salary earners in the farm sector remained almost the same over the period of study. Moreover, also indicates that the proportionate share of male farmworkers working as a casual labourer in farm-related activities increased from 1993-94 to 2011-12. A similar trend of casualisation of workforce in farm sector was also noticed in the state of Haryana.



The proportionate share of female farmworkers working in different farm-related activities in Punjab is presented in figure 1. f. it clearly indicates that the share of female workers working as self-employed in farm-related activities increased. While the proportionate share of female workers working as regular salary earners in the farm sector reduced drastically during the same period of time. Moreover, it is significant to note that the proportionate share of female farm workers as casual labourers was almost the same in the years 1993-94 and 2011-12. Hence, with regard to self-employment activities, in the farm sector, it was found that the proportionate share of male workers got reduced while the share of female farmworkers working in this activity increased in Punjab.

CONCLUSION

The gender-wise analysis of the rural workforce in the present study found that as compared to the male workers, the involvement of female workers in rural non-farm activities was lesser in Haryana, during 2011-12. However, a substantial proportion of both male and female workers was still engaged in farm-related activities. Furthermore, across all the non-farm activities, most of the male workers were occupied in the activities of self-employment and regular salary. Besides, the highest proportion of female workers engaged in non-farm activities was engaged in

the activity of regular salary earning. The involvement of female workers in self-employment and casual labour in non-farm was found to be insignificant in Haryana state. While the gender-wise analysis of the engagement of the rural population in Punjab found that the majority of the workforce was dependent on farm-related activities during the year 1993-94 and 2011-12. Similarly, the study also explored that the highest proportion of male workers in Punjab was engaged in farm-related activities. Whereas, the highest proportion of female workers was engaged in non-farm activities, during the period of 1993-94 and 2011-12.

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