

Regional Disparities in Primary and Secondary Occupational Activities: A Case Study of Meo Muslims in NUH District

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the regional variations in primary and secondary occupational activities among the Meo Muslim community inhabiting villages in Nuh district, Haryana. Nuh is an agriculturally dominant region located near Delhi, where the economy heavily relies on primary sectors such as farming, livestock, and agricultural labor. However, there is also a presence of secondary occupations including small industries, construction, factory work, and household production. Primary data was collected through surveys conducted across 10 villages in Nuh district with significant Meo Muslim populations. A total of 805 primary workers and 247 secondary workers were surveyed across occupations in cultivation, agricultural labor, livestock rearing, construction, household industries, factories, and brick kilns. The findings reveal that agricultural labor forms the predominant primary occupation for Meo Muslims across most villages, indicating a strong reliance on farm wage work. Gulalta and Uleta exhibit balanced involvement in cultivation, labor, and livestock, with male workers predominantly engaged in labor and significant female participation in all activities. Secondary occupations across villages display significant diversity, with women increasingly participating in construction and factory work, despite traditional household industries remaining important. The study reveals that Meo Muslims in Nuh district have diverse employment patterns, with higher involvement in construction and brick kilns in urban areas.

INTRODUCTION

Occupation plays a vital role in how people secure their livelihood and where they stand in the socio-economic hierarchy (Saha & Bahal, 2015). The occupational structure of a region depicts its division of labour as well as the opportunities available to different social groups. In India, caste and religion have historically shaped social identities and determined access to occupations (Desai & Dubey, 2012). The occupational structure often reflects deep-rooted social inequities and segregation along lines of gender, caste and race. For example, certain religious communities or lower castes may be concentrated in poorly-paid manual labor jobs due to long-standing discrimination and lack of alternative opportunities.

In fact, studies have shown that the link between social identities and economic standing remains entrenched over time, with certain identities like SCs, STs and Muslims consistently facing higher disadvantages compared to Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and upper-caste Hindus (Jahan, 2016; Mansoor & Abraham, 2021; Kannan, 2022). The social identities have greatly influenced both the type of work available as well as chances to participate in different types of work. Historically disadvantaged groups tend to be concentrated in lower-status or poorly-paid manual labor roles due to limited alternatives and social discrimination (Singh, 2012). Women often face restrictive norms while the religious minorities may experience indirect discrimination (Prasad & Pratap, 2017). Moreover, intersectionality of multiple identities like being a low caste woman further compounds marginalization. Consequently, India's occupational landscape continues to mirror deep-rooted inequities and segregation. In this context, the aim of this study is to analyze regional variations in primary occupations like cultivation and livestock rearing as well as secondary occupations across rural and urban areas for the Meo Muslim community residing in Nuh district of Haryana. The economy of Haryana has transformed substantially over the years. While the state traditionally relied heavily on agriculture engaging a large proportion of its workforce, Haryana has now witnessed considerable growth in its secondary and tertiary sector (Pattayat & Rani, 2017). However, agriculture continues to be an important occupation for the majority especially in the rural areas. As per the Census reports, over half of the working population is engaged in other occupations outside of agriculture, involved in various industries and services (Sharma, 2021). Agriculture still employs a significant portion, with around a quarter involved in cultivation activities and

about 17% as agricultural labour. This has significantly modified the occupational structure from being solely agrarian to more diversified.

The proportion of workers engaged in secondary sector is higher in districts near Delhi that have experienced greater industrialization and urbanization (Aggarwal & Moudgil, 2015). In contrast, many interior districts continue to rely on primary sector for their livelihood. The growth of industries such as automobiles, tractors, and agro-processing in the state have provided employment to considerable portion of the population leading to a shift in occupational structure.

Nuh district is located in close proximity to Delhi but retains a predominant agrarian character (Devi et al., 2022). Agriculture forms the major source of income with majority of residents engaged in primary activities for their livelihood. Farming and crop cultivation continue to be important occupations along with allied sectors such as livestock rearing and agricultural labour. The Meo Muslims form a significant part of the demography in the district. Therefore, the district forms an appropriate case study with an intersection of religious minority population residing in an agricultural district located in the proximity of the National Capital.

Study Area

Nuh district is located in the state of Haryana, India. It lies between latitudes 27° 39' 05" to 28° 20' 00" North and longitudes 76° 51' 05" to 77° 20' 00" East. The district encompasses an area of 1859.61 square kilometres and has a population of over 1.09 million, as per the 2011 census. Nuh is bordered by Gurugram in the north, Palwal in the east, and Alwar district in Rajasthan to the south and west. A small portion of Nuh also shares a border with Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh in the north-west. As per the 2011 census, 79.2% of the population are Muslims belonging to Meo community. The overall literacy rate in the district is 54.08 % which is significantly lower than the literacy rate of Haryana State. The rural and urban literacy rates also denote significant gap where the urban literacy rate is 67.99% and the rural literacy rate is 50.16%. Nuh district, near Gurugram city, has high disparities in male and female literacy rates, ranking as the most underdeveloped in India, despite poor health, education, and infrastructure.

Objectives

- To analyse the distribution of workers from the Meo Muslim community in Nuh district engaged in primary and secondary occupational activities.
- To analyse the disparity in occupational engagement in primary and secondary activities among workers from the Meo Muslim community in Nuh district.

DATABASE & METHODOLOGY

This study is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire administered to sampled households selected through multi-stage stratified random sampling. For the purpose of the study, ten villages out of 432 total villages have been randomly selected consisting of two villages from each of five blocks i.e., Sikarpur and Chila in Taoru, Chandeni and Salamba from Nuh block, Sultanpur and Umra from Nagina block, Mundheta and Niwana from Punhana block, Shekhpur and Rawa from Firozpur Jhirka block. Within the selected villages, a purposive random sampling technique was applied to identify 5% of households from each village for the survey. A particular emphasis was to exclusively sample Meo Muslim households to ensure the research captured socio-economic characteristics specific to this community as it represents the demographic majority in Nuh district. The non-probability sampling approach allowed targeted data collection from households belonging to the target population for a more focused analysis of occupational structures prevalent among Meo Muslims residing across villages.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

The findings of the primary data collected through surveys conducted in ten villages of Nuh district with significant Meo Muslim populations have been discussed here. The occupational engagement of the Meo Muslim community across primary agricultural activities and secondary livelihood options are analyzed. The distribution of workers in different occupations such as cultivation, livestock, agricultural labor, construction, household industries, factories and brick kilns are discussed for each sampled village.

Classification of Workers by Activities among Meo Muslims

The occupational activities of the Meo Muslim community are classified into primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors based on the nature of economic work. Primary activities constitute an important part of the livelihood of Meo Muslims given their traditional involvement in farming activities such as agriculture, livestock rearing and fishing.

Secondary activities involving the processing and manufacturing of raw materials into finished goods through industries like textiles, construction, and other small-scale manufacturing works such as weaving and pottery. This classification helps analyse the different domains of work participation of the Meo Muslims.

Workers Engaged in Primary Activities among Meo Muslims

The data presented in Table 1 has provided insights into the occupational engagement of Meo Muslim workers in primary activities across different villages. In Mubarikpur, a substantial 70.73% of workers have been involved in agricultural labor, indicating a strong reliance on this sector for livelihood. A smaller proportion has engaged in cultivation (13.41%) and livestock rearing (15.85%). This pattern has suggested that agricultural labor is the predominant occupation for the Meo Muslim community in Mubarikpur, likely due to the village's agrarian landscape, which has demanded significant manual labor for farming. The large share of agricultural laborers has reflected the labour-intensive nature of farming in Mubarikpur, emphasizing its role as the primary economic activity. In contrast to Mubarikpur, Gulalta has a higher percentage of workers in agricultural labor at 49.34%, compared to 40.13% in cultivation and 10.53% in livestock industries, indicating a greater focus on cultivation rather than labour-intensive jobs. Uleta stands out with a significant 32.14% of workers involved in livestock industries, alongside 42.86% engaged in cultivation. Jogipur presents a unique case, with the majority of its workforce (75.00%) employed as agricultural laborers.

The lower percentage in cultivation (25.00%) suggests an economy heavily reliant on farm labor, possibly due to less emphasis on or suitability for livestock rearing activities. On the other hand, Raipuri and Chandeni display a more balanced distribution of workers among cultivation (30.43% and 30.91%, respectively), agricultural labor (63.04% and 51.82%), and livestock industries (6.52% and 17.27%), reflecting a more diversified local economy in these villages. This has suggested a moderate diversification of economic activities, with a significant portion of the population engaged in agricultural labor while also participating in cultivation and livestock rearing.

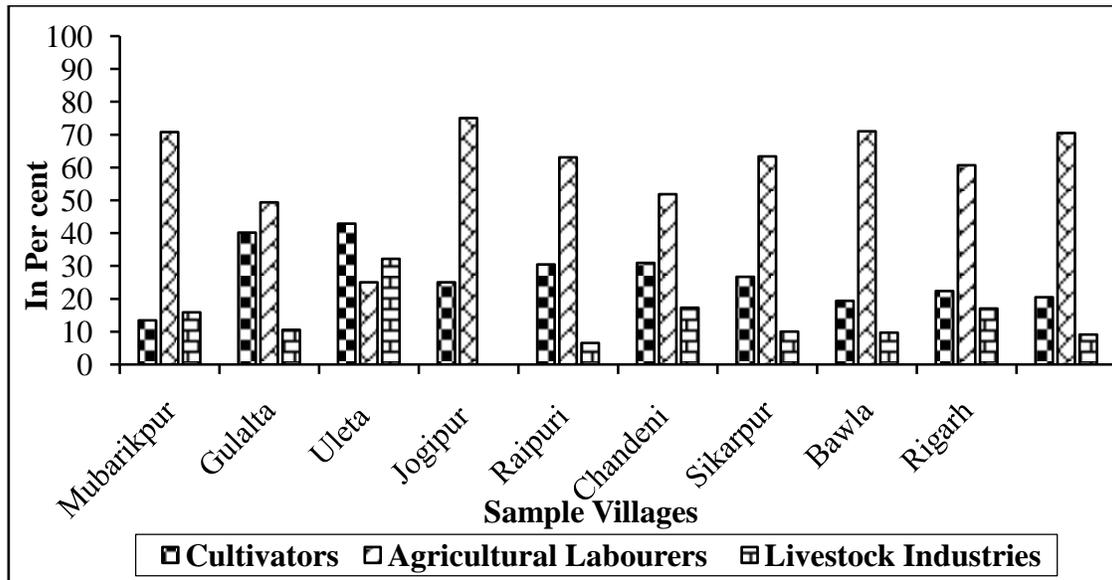
Sikarpur and Bawla have shown high percentages of agricultural laborers (63.33% and 70.97%, respectively) with lower involvement in livestock industries, indicating a strong reliance on agricultural labor, potentially due to the local economic structure and land use patterns. Similarly, Rigarah and Ferozepur Jhirka have displayed higher participation in agricultural labor (60.64% and 70.45%) compared to cultivation and livestock industries. The intensive farming practices in these villages have created demand for manual labor in agriculture, further reinforcing the reliance on agricultural labor as a primary economic activity.

Table 1: Workers Engaged in Primary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

| Sr. No. | Name of the Villages | Cultivators | | | Agricultural Labourers | | | Livestock Industries | | | Forestry | | | Total Workers | | |
|---------|----------------------|-------------|-------|-------|------------------------|-------|-------|----------------------|-------|-------|----------|------|------|---------------|-----|-----|
| | | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F |
| 1. | Mubarikpur | 11 | 07 | 04 | 58 | 37 | 21 | 13 | 05 | 08 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 82 | 49 | 33 |
| | (In %) | 13.41 | 14.29 | 12.12 | 70.73 | 75.51 | 63.64 | 15.85 | 10.20 | 24.24 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 2. | Gulalta | 61 | 32 | 29 | 75 | 34 | 41 | 16 | 07 | 09 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 152 | 73 | 79 |
| | (In %) | 40.13 | 43.84 | 36.71 | 49.34 | 46.58 | 51.90 | 10.53 | 9.59 | 11.39 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 3. | Uleta | 12 | 07 | 05 | 07 | 05 | 02 | 09 | 02 | 07 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 28 | 14 | 14 |
| | (In %) | 42.86 | 50.00 | 35.71 | 25.00 | 35.71 | 14.29 | 32.14 | 14.29 | 50.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 4. | Jogipur | 09 | 06 | 03 | 27 | 16 | 11 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 36 | 22 | 14 |
| | (In %) | 25.00 | 27.27 | 21.43 | 75.00 | 72.73 | 78.57 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 5. | Raipuri | 14 | 09 | 05 | 29 | 20 | 09 | 03 | 01 | 02 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 46 | 30 | 16 |
| | (In %) | 30.43 | 30.00 | 31.25 | 63.04 | 66.67 | 56.25 | 6.52 | 3.33 | 12.50 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 6. | Chandeni | 34 | 21 | 13 | 57 | 34 | 23 | 19 | 08 | 11 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 11 | 63 | 47 |
| | (In %) | 30.9 | 33.3 | 27.6 | 51.8 | 53.9 | 48.9 | 17.2 | 12.7 | 23.4 | 0. | 0.0 | 0. | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 7. | Sikarpur | 32 | 19 | 13 | 76 | 43 | 33 | 12 | 07 | 05 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 12 | 69 | 51 |
| | (In %) | 26.6 | 27.5 | 25.4 | 63.3 | 62.3 | 64.7 | 10.0 | 10.1 | 9.80 | 0. | 0.0 | 0. | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 8. | Bawla | 18 | 11 | 07 | 66 | 37 | 29 | 09 | 04 | 05 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 93 | 52 | 41 |
| | (In %) | 19.3 | 21.1 | 17.0 | 70.9 | 71.1 | 70.7 | 9.68 | 7.69 | 12.2 | 0. | 0.0 | 0. | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 9. | Rigarh | 21 | 13 | 08 | 57 | 34 | 23 | 16 | 07 | 09 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 94 | 54 | 40 |
| | (In %) | 22.3 | 24.0 | 20.0 | 60.6 | 62.9 | 57.5 | 17.0 | 12.9 | 22.5 | 0. | 0.0 | 0. | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| 10. | Ferozpur Jhirka | 09 | 06 | 03 | 31 | 17 | 14 | 04 | 01 | 03 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 44 | 24 | 20 |
| | (In %) | 20.4 | 25.0 | 15.0 | 70.4 | 70.8 | 70.0 | 9.09 | 4.17 | 15.0 | 0. | 0.0 | 0. | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Total | | 221 | 131 | 90 | 483 | 277 | 206 | 101 | 42 | 59 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 80 | 45 | 35 |
| (In %) | | 27.4 | 29.1 | 25.3 | 60.0 | 61.5 | 58.0 | 12.5 | 9.33 | 16.6 | 0. | 0.0 | 0. | 10 | 10 | 10 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023. Compiled by Researcher



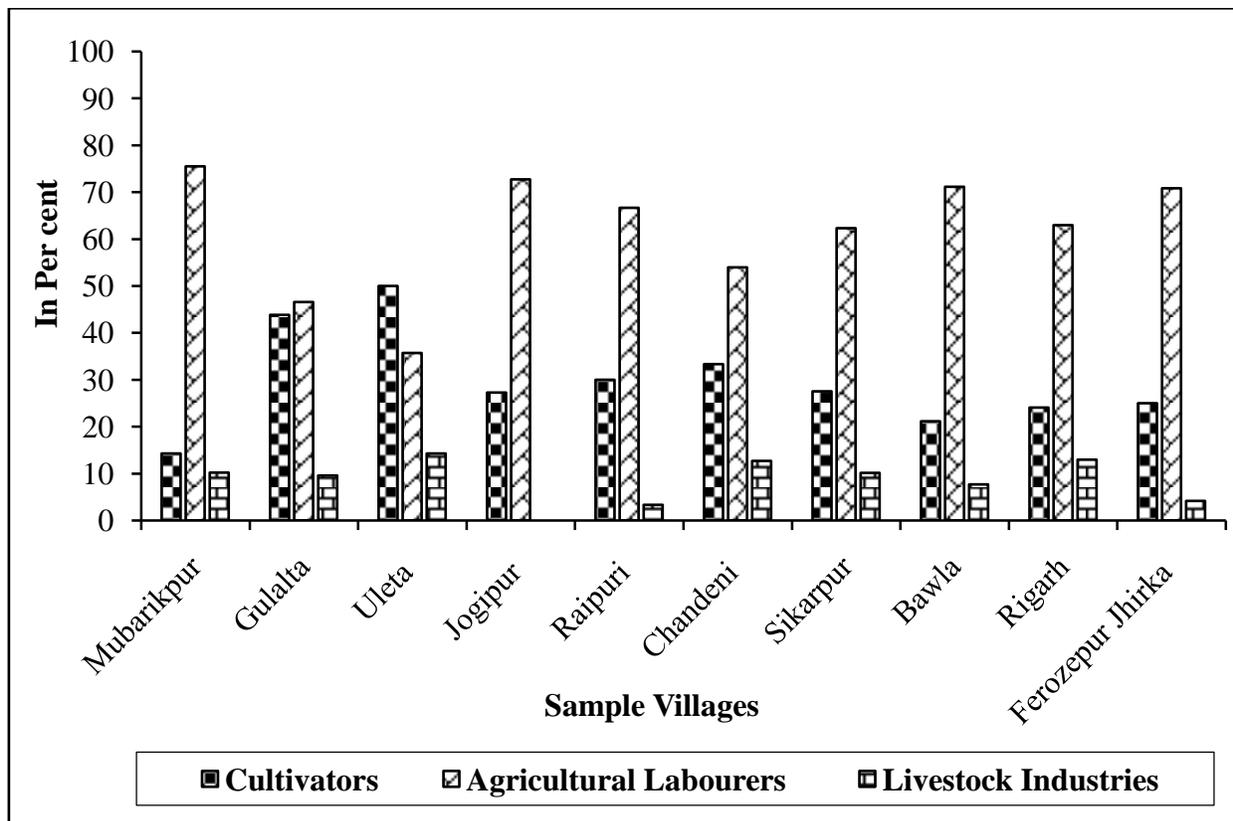
Source: Based on the table 1

Figure 1: Workers Engaged in Primary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

The primary survey findings revealed notable trends in economic participation among male Meo Muslim workers engaged in primary activities across villages. In Mubarikpur, the majority of males were engaged in agricultural labor, accounting for 75.51% of the male workforce (Fig. 2). A smaller percentage were involved in cultivation (14.29%) and livestock industries (10.20%), indicating a strong reliance on farm labor among males in Mubarikpur. In Gulalta, male cultivators made up a significant portion of the workforce, while agricultural labor accounted for 46.58%, and livestock industries represented 9.59% among males. The findings from the primary survey also showed varied male workforce participation in primary activities across other villages. In Uleta, a higher percentage of males were cultivators (50.00%) with notable involvement in livestock industries (14.29%), while 35.71% were agricultural laborers. This diversity suggested that Uleta

had integrated crop cultivation and livestock rearing, likely benefitting from favorable local conditions. In contrast, Jogipur had a majority of males as agricultural laborers (72.73%) and only 27.27% as cultivators, with no engagement in livestock industries. This reflected a heavy reliance on farm labor, possibly due to resource constraints or suitability limitations (Table 1).

Raipuri also depended largely on male agricultural labor (66.67%) for primary activities, with 30.00% involved in cultivation and 3.33% in livestock. Chandeni presented a fairly balanced distribution across cultivation, labor, and livestock activities. Similarly, Sikarpur had a significant proportion of 62.32% males engaged in farm labor, with the remaining workforce participating in cultivation and livestock. Across many villages, there was a strong reliance on agricultural labor, while still maintaining participation in cultivation and livestock activities. In Bawla, a high proportion of 71.15% of males were agricultural laborers, compared to 21.15% cultivators and 7.69% involved in livestock, reflecting the predominant focus on farm labor, similar to other villages. Rigarh had a sizeable 62.96% of males in agricultural labor, supported by 24.07% in cultivation and 12.96% in livestock, showing diverse involvement despite the emphasis on farm work. Ferozpur Jhirka similarly presented 70.83% of males as agricultural laborers, while the others were involved in cultivation (25.00%) and livestock (4.17%). The notably high percentages of male agricultural laborers across all three villages pointed to their significant reliance on primary sector work.

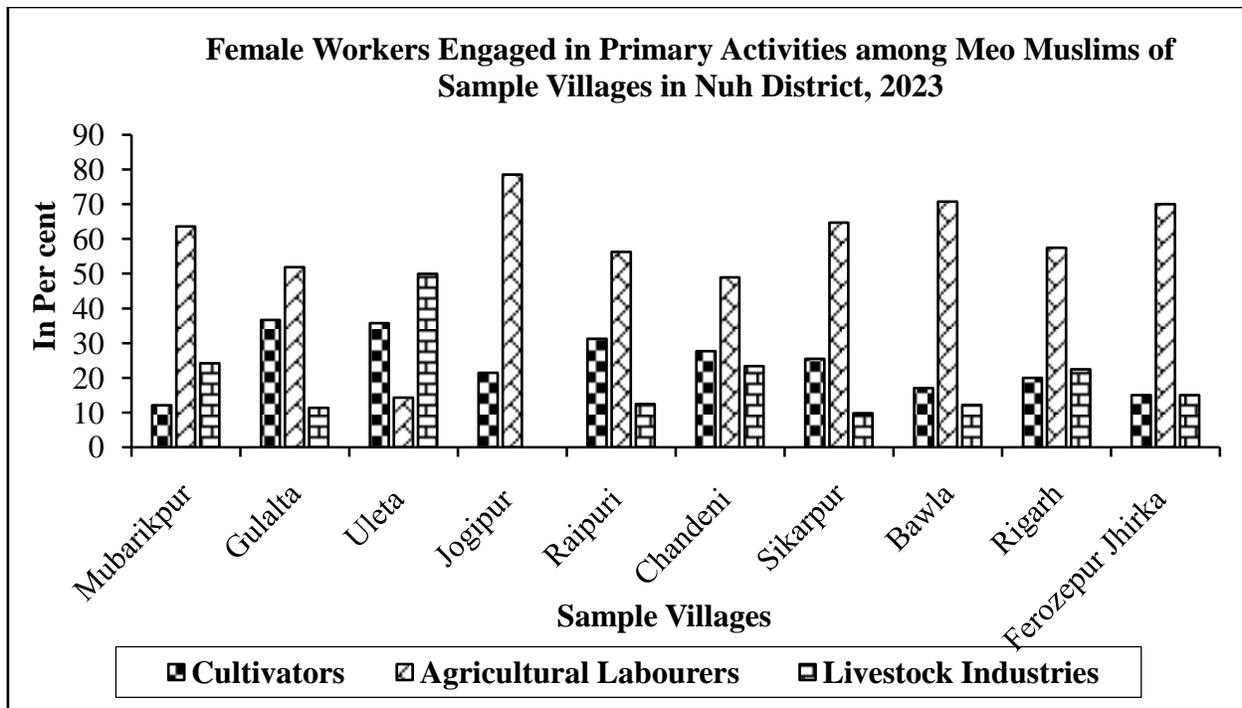


Source: Based on the table 1.

Figure 2: Male Workers Engaged in Primary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

In terms of female work participation, there were significant variations in involvement in primary activities. Mubarikpur had the highest female participation at 63.64%, followed by Gulalta, where females showed high involvement in cultivation (36.71%) and moderate participation in agricultural labor (51.90%) (Fig. 3).

Gulalta also recorded smaller engagement in livestock, reflecting a balanced participation across different activities. In Uleta, 50% of females were engaged in livestock rearing, alongside 35.71% in cultivation and 14.29% in agricultural labor, indicating a strong focus on livestock activities among women in Uleta (Fig. 3).



Source: Based on the table 1

Figure 3: Female Workers Engaged in Primary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

In contrast, Jogipur relied heavily on female agricultural labor, with 78.57% of women engaged in this sector, while a smaller 21.43% participated in cultivation, and there was no involvement in livestock work, reflecting limited diversification for women. Meanwhile, Raipuri exhibited a more balanced distribution, with 31.25% of women as cultivators, 56.25% as laborers, and 12.50% in livestock, indicating comparatively diverse work involvement. The findings also highlighted predominant female involvement in agricultural labor, cultivation, and livestock industries across several villages. In Chandeni, Sikarpur, Bawla, and Rigarh, women notably worked as agricultural laborers and in livestock rearing (Fig. 3).

Specifically, Sikarpur had higher female participation in agricultural labor compared to cultivation and livestock, while Bawla similarly showed a focus on agricultural labor among women. Ferozepur Jhirka also exhibited a significant 70% of females engaged in agricultural labor, with the remaining 15% each involved in cultivation and livestock industries. Overall, this reflects a strong emphasis on female agricultural labor as the primary activity, complemented by participation in other sectors. The balanced involvement underscores the crucial role played by female Meo Muslim workers in sustaining agricultural productivity and livestock management within these communities. It is notable that agricultural labor was the predominant primary occupation for Meo Muslims across most villages, with over 60% of total primary workers engaged in farm wage work, indicating a strong reliance on this as the main source of livelihood.

However, villages like Gulalta and Uleta demonstrated a more balanced engagement across cultivation, agricultural labor, and livestock rearing, with 30-50% of workers involved in each category, highlighting a diversified local economy in these areas. Male workers were predominantly involved in agricultural labor, making up over 60% of male primary workers on average. Female participation in primary activities was also significant across all three sectors: cultivation, agricultural labor, and livestock industries.

However, there were variations in occupational patterns for males and females across villages. For example, Uleta had higher female involvement in livestock compared to other villages, while Mubarikpur showed the highest reliance on agricultural labor, with over 70% of workers in this sector. In contrast, Gulalta had 40% of its workforce involved in cultivation. Jogipur relied heavily on agricultural labor for both males and females, with no female participation in livestock work. The households in Raipuri and Chandeni exhibited a more balanced distribution of workers across different primary occupations, reflecting greater diversity in economic activities.

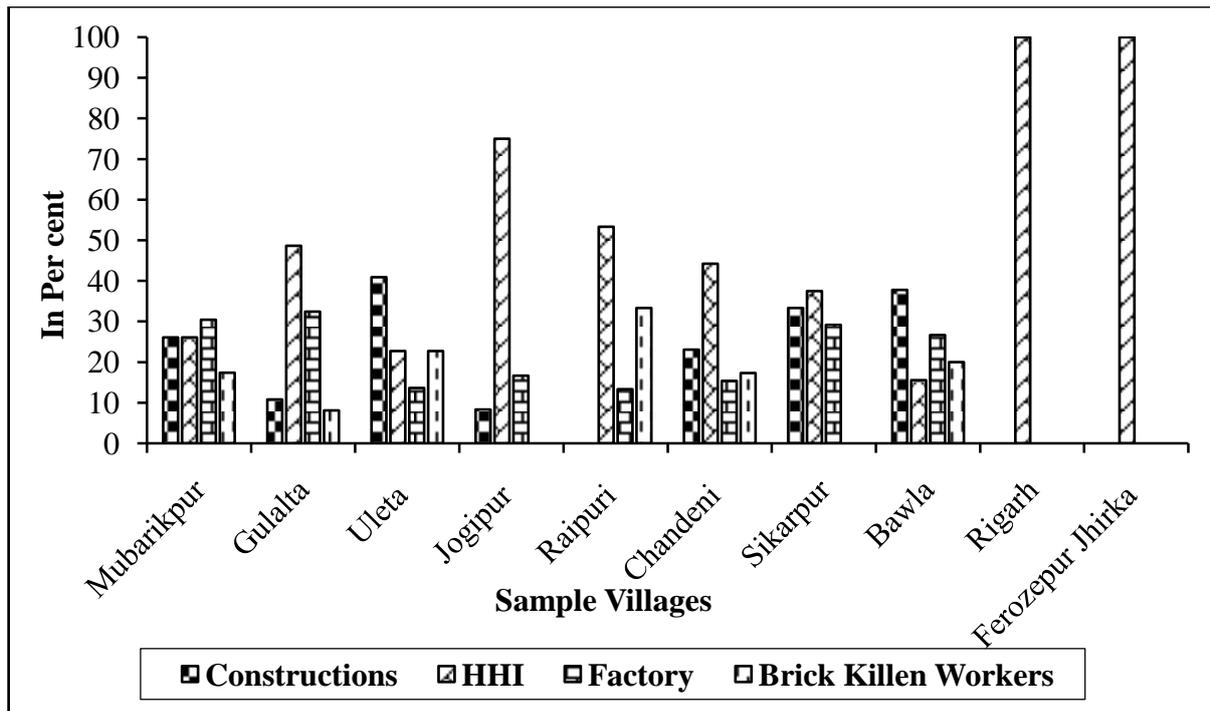
Workers Engaged in Secondary Activities among Meo Muslims

Meo Muslim workers engaged in secondary activities refers to those who participate in supplementary economic pursuits alongside their primary occupations. These secondary activities often involve various types of informal or ancillary work, such as household industries or small-scale manufacturing. These supplementary activities help to augment the income derived from primary occupations (Parveen, 2016). The findings from the primary survey, noted in Table 2, reveal variations in the engagement of Meo Muslim workers across different secondary sector activities in the villages (Table 2).

Table 2: Workers Engaged in Secondary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

| Sr. No. | Name of the Sample Villages | Constructions | | | HHI | | | Factory | | | Brick Killen Workers | | | Total Workers | | |
|---------------|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|------------|------------|
| | | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F | T | M | F |
| 1. | Mubarikpur | 06 | 05 | 01 | 06 | 00 | 06 | 07 | 04 | 03 | 04 | 03 | 01 | 23 | 12 | 11 |
| | (In %) | 26.09 | 41.67 | 9.09 | 26.09 | 0.00 | 54.55 | 30.43 | 33.33 | 27.27 | 17.39 | 25.00 | 9.09 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 2. | Gulalta | 04 | 04 | 00 | 18 | 04 | 14 | 12 | 09 | 03 | 03 | 03 | 00 | 37 | 20 | 17 |
| | (In %) | 10.81 | 20 | 0.0 | 48.65 | 20 | 82.35 | 32.43 | 45.00 | 17.65 | 8.108 | 15 | 0.0 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 3. | Uleta | 09 | 07 | 02 | 05 | 00 | 05 | 03 | 03 | 00 | 05 | 04 | 01 | 22 | 14 | 08 |
| | (In %) | 40.91 | 50.00 | 25.00 | 22.73 | 0.00 | 62.50 | 13.64 | 21.43 | 0.00 | 22.73 | 28.57 | 12.5 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 4. | Jogipur | 01 | 01 | 00 | 09 | 00 | 09 | 02 | 02 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 12 | 03 | 09 |
| | (In %) | 8.33 | 33.33 | 0.00 | 75.00 | 0.00 | 100.00 | 16.67 | 66.67 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 5. | Raipuri | 00 | 00 | 00 | 08 | 03 | 05 | 02 | 02 | 00 | 05 | 03 | 02 | 15 | 08 | 07 |
| | (In %) | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 53.33 | 37.50 | 71.43 | 13.33 | 25.00 | 0.00 | 33.33 | 37.50 | 28.57 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 6. | Chandeni | 12 | 09 | 03 | 23 | 08 | 15 | 08 | 05 | 03 | 09 | 06 | 03 | 52 | 28 | 24 |
| | (In %) | 23.08 | 32.14 | 12.50 | 44.23 | 28.57 | 62.50 | 15.38 | 17.86 | 12.50 | 17.31 | 21.43 | 12.5 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 7. | Sikarpur | 08 | 05 | 03 | 09 | 00 | 09 | 07 | 04 | 03 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 24 | 09 | 15 |
| | (In %) | 33.33 | 55.56 | 20.00 | 37.50 | 0.00 | 60.00 | 29.17 | 44.44 | 20.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 8. | Bawla | 17 | 13 | 04 | 07 | 00 | 07 | 12 | 09 | 03 | 09 | 07 | 02 | 45 | 29 | 16 |
| | (In %) | 37.78 | 44.83 | 25.00 | 15.56 | 0.00 | 43.75 | 26.67 | 31.03 | 18.75 | 20.00 | 24.14 | 12.5 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 9. | Rigarh | 00 | 00 | 00 | 11 | 03 | 08 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 11 | 03 | 08 |
| | (In %) | 00 | 00 | 00 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| 10. | Ferozpur Jhirka | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 06 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 06 | 00 | 06 |
| | (In %) | 00 | 00 | 00 | 100 | 00 | 100 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 00 | 100 | 00 | 100 |
| Total | | 57 | 44 | 13 | 102 | 18 | 84 | 53 | 38 | 15 | 35 | 26 | 09 | 247 | 126 | 121 |
| (In %) | | 23.08 | 34.92 | 10.74 | 41.30 | 14.29 | 69.42 | 21.46 | 30.16 | 12.40 | 14.17 | 20.63 | 7.44 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2023. Compiled by Researcher.



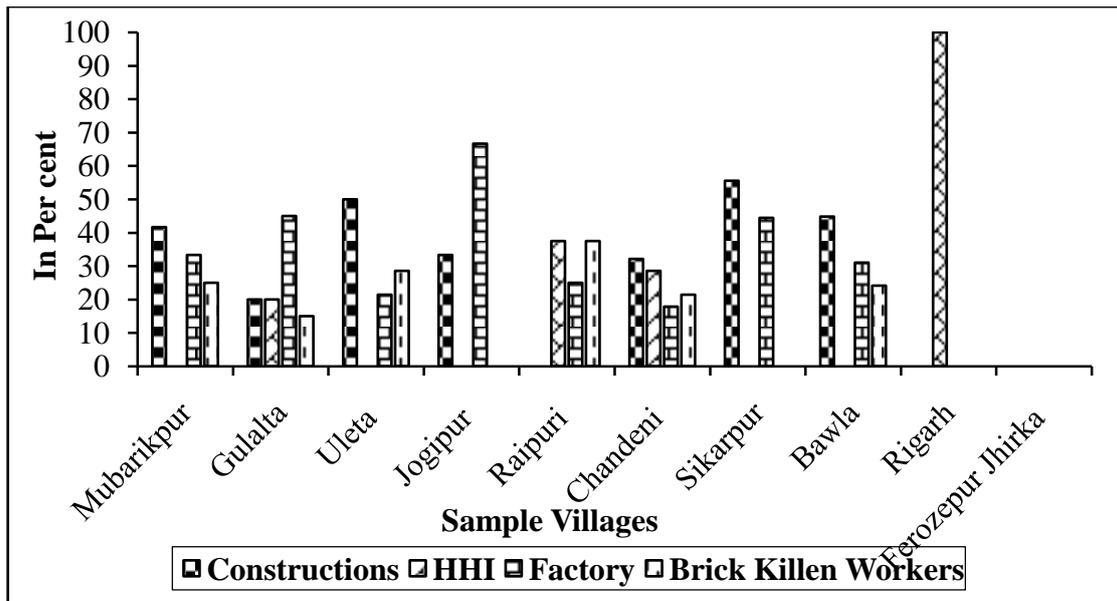
Source: Based on the table 2.

Figure 4: Total Workers Engaged in Secondary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

These differences reflect the diverse economic opportunities available within these communities, allowing workers to combine income from both primary and secondary sources. In Mubarikpur, there was a balanced distribution of workers across construction, household industries, factory work, and brick kiln activities. On the other hand, Gulalta village showed a strong focus on household industries, engaging 48.65% of workers, alongside a substantial 32.43% working in factories. In contrast, Uleta stood out with larger shares of Meo Muslim workers involved in construction and brick kiln activities, highlighting distinct secondary occupational patterns in these villages (Table 2). These secondary occupations provided alternative sources of income generation among the Meo Muslims across the villages in Nuh district. It was found that households in Jogipur had a high percentage of workers engaged in household industries (75.00%), with minimal involvement in construction (8.33%) and no participation in brick kiln activities. Similarly, Meo Muslim households in Raipuri were significantly involved in household industries (53.33%) and brick kiln work (33.33%) as primary sources of employment, with no participation in construction. On the other hand, households in Chandeni exhibited a balanced involvement of workers across construction, household industries, factories, and brick kilns, indicating a diversified local economy. This variation across villages reflected the differing opportunities for secondary income generation within the region (Table 2).

Sikarpur also demonstrated considerable engagement in construction as well as factories, complementing significant household industries, which depicted its dynamic economic landscape. Bawla stood out with a stronger focus on construction activities, while moderately relying on factories and brick kilns, implying its orientation towards construction and material production. In contrast, Rigarh and Ferozpur Jhirka solely depended on household industries. Overall, the findings brought forth a varied engagement in the secondary sector, influenced by individual skills, regional employment opportunities, and available resources for Meo Muslims.

While certain villages exhibited balanced involvement in secondary activities, others noted significant participation in secondary work (Fig. 4). Furthermore, there were variations in male Meo Muslim involvement in secondary occupations across villages. In Mubarikpur, construction and factory work saw high male work participation, while household industries had lesser male involvement. Gulalta was predominantly oriented towards factories, with substantial participation in construction and household industries as well. Distinctively, male work participation in Uleta was higher in construction and brick kilns compared to household industries, whereas Jogipur primarily had male workers in factories, with one-third involved in construction. In contrast, male work participation in Raipuri was higher in household industries and brick kilns. Chandeni displayed a diversified economic structure with males engaged across key secondary sectors.

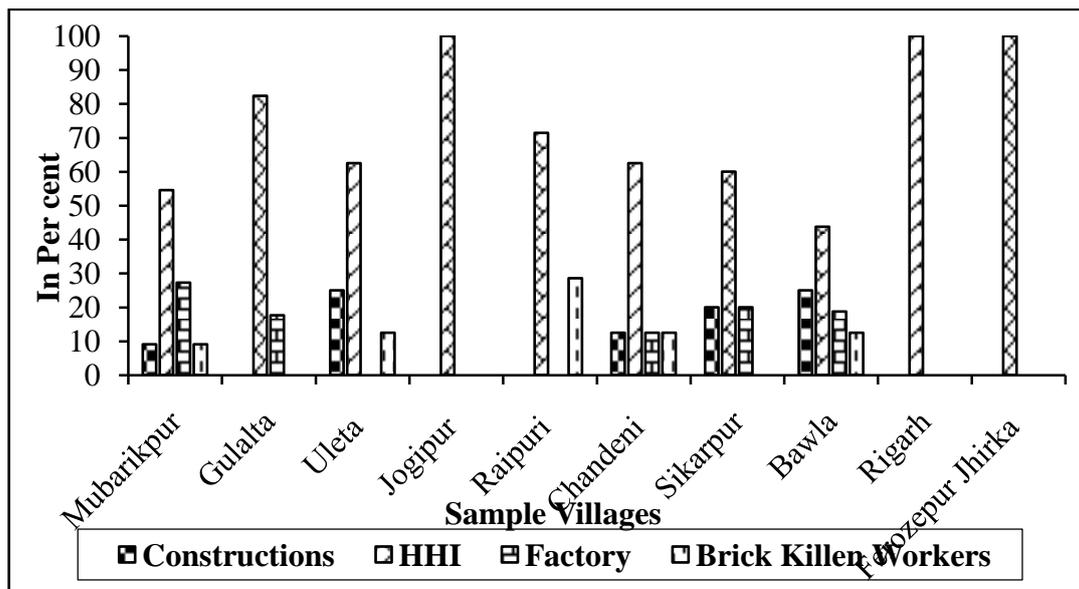


Source: Based on the table 2

Figure 5: Male Workers Engaged in Secondary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

Like Sikarpur and Bawla, males in Rigarh were mostly focused on construction and factories, highlighting these priorities. Interestingly, Rigarh solely depended on household industries, while Ferozpur Jhirka lacked secondary participation among males, as seen in Figure 5.

In terms of female work participation in secondary activities, female workers from Mubarikpur were mainly involved in household industries and factories, while construction and brick kilns had less female employment. Similarly, female workers in Gulalta had higher work participation in household industries. However, female workers in Uleta were engaged in household industries and construction, with some participation in brick kilns, but no involvement in factory work. This denoted a priority towards construction and household production (Fig. 5). Meanwhile, female workers in Jogipur exclusively depended on household industries for all their employment. Similarly, female workers in Raipuri were concentrated in household industries and brick kilns, with no engagement in construction or factories.



Source: Based on the table 2

Figure 6 : Female Workers Engaged in Secondary Activities among Meo Muslims of Sample Villages in Nuh District, 2023

Besides, Chandeni demonstrated diverse female engagement across household industries, construction, factories, and brick kilns, highlighting its balanced secondary sector employment. Sikarpur and Bawla also exhibited significant

female participation in these key activities. On the other hand, female workers in Rigarh and Ferozpur Jhirka entirely depended on household industries, with no participation in other secondary activities (Fig. 6).

Overall, female Meo Muslims widely participated in household industries, construction, and factories as their primary secondary activities. The findings revealed significant variations across villages in terms of Meo Muslim workers engaged in secondary activities. Some villages demonstrated a more balanced participation across different sectors. For instance, Mubarikpur displayed an equal distribution of workers among construction, household industries, factory work, and brick kilns. Gulalta exhibited a strong focus on household industries, engaging 48.65% of workers, with substantial 32.43% participation in factories as well. In contrast, Uleta stood out with larger shares of workers involved in construction and brick kiln activities compared to other villages. Jogipur showed the majority of workers concentrated in household industries, accounting for 75% of the total secondary workforce, with minimal 8.33% participation in construction. Similarly, Raipuri had notable engagement of workers in household industries (53.33%) and brick kiln work (33.33%) as predominant secondary occupations.

Households in Chandeni presented a relatively diversified occupational structure, with a balanced involvement of workers across construction, household industries, factories, and brick kilns. Variations were also observed in male and female participation across different secondary occupations within villages. For instance, while males were more engaged in construction, factories, and household industries in Mubarikpur, females predominantly worked in household industries and factories. Traditional sectors like household industries remained a significant source of supplementary incomes, particularly for women workers. Meanwhile, construction and factory work emerged as major employers for both male and female Meo Muslim workers. Villages in close proximity to developing urban centers exhibited greater involvement of their workforce in construction and brick kiln activities. Overall, secondary occupations helped diversify economic activities and supplement incomes for the Meo Muslim communities residing across different villages in Nuh district.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the regional disparities in primary and secondary occupational activities among the Meo Muslim population inhabiting villages in Nuh district, Haryana. The analysis of primary and secondary data gathered from surveys conducted in 10 villages revealed key trends in occupational patterns. Agricultural labor emerged as the dominant occupation for Meo Muslims across most villages, indicating a strong reliance on agricultural wage work. However, villages like Gulalta and Uleta exhibited a more balanced engagement between cultivation, farm labor, and livestock rearing.

Male workers were primarily involved in agricultural labor, alongside participation in cultivation and livestock activities. Female contribution was notable across all three primary sectors, highlighting their important roles in crop farming and animal husbandry. In the secondary sector, the villages displayed considerable diversity. Some villages specialized in particular sectors, such as household industries in Jogipur or construction in Uleta, while traditional household industries continued to serve as a critical source of supplementary income, especially for women. The findings also indicated that factory work and construction have emerged as major employers in villages closer to developing urban areas, showing greater involvement in construction and brick kiln work. Villages in proximity to Delhi, such as Mubarikpur, demonstrated more varied participation in secondary occupations compared to more remote villages. While primary occupations centered around agriculture and wage labor prevailed predominantly, the alternative livelihood opportunities in the secondary sector have facilitated occupational diversification.

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