

ROLE OF FARMWOMEN IN DECISION MAKING RELATED TO FARM AND HOUSEHOLD OPERATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Women have played and continued to play a key role in the conservation of basic life support system such as land, water, flora and fauna. Some historians believe that it was women who first domesticated crop plants and there by initiated the art and science of farming. India is predominantly an agriculture country and majority of farmwomen actively participate in many agriculture and animal husbandry related activities, besides their usual role of caring for children and home keeping. Hence women have a major role in decision-making in agriculture, animal husbandry and household activities. This study was conducted to know the role of farmwomen in decision-making related to farm and household operations. The participation of women in the decision-making process is an important segment of each and every household. These decisions vary in importance and affect the farm families in one-way or other.

Key words : Decision Making, Farmwomen, Farm and Household Operation

INTRODUCTION

Decision-making is a process that underlies all functions of family resource management. Decision-making plays an important role in the management of our day-to-day activities. The role of women in decision-making process is an important segment. These decisions vary according to regional and cultural norms and affect the farm families in one way or the other.

In the past, the focus has often been on women's reproductive, health care and nurturing roles. These roles are concurrent with their role as agricultural producers in most of the developing countries. The specific farming responsibilities assigned to female members of the household or society, therefore, must receive an appropriate share of attention in project, identification, design and implementation.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in four villages Bichpuri, Sadarwan, Chauhatana and Maghatai of C.D. Block Bichpuri, in Agra District (U.P.). A sample of 88 farmwomen was selected by proportionate random sampling method. Data were collected by pre tested well-structured interview schedule by personal interview method. The data was collected from the selected house ladies, those was the main decision maker in the family for farm and home affairs. Collected data were analyzed by statistical techniques, percentage or simple tabular analysis. The present study was conducted to study the involvement of the farmwomen in the decision making for adoption of farm, home and dairy practices.

Some Definitions used in this study

1. Key Decision Maker—This is an individual who

is the head of farming and takes decision for all but her decision may be influenced by others, also some possibilities is remain to change her decision.

2. Sole Decision Maker—It includes those respondents who take decision with bearing risk herself without any hesitation. Nobody can refuse her decision taken.

3. Consultant—An individual who suggest or give opinion to the decision maker whenever they need for her suggestions or consultancy.

4. No Decision Maker—An individual who did not take any decisions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In decision-making process there are four categories of farmwomen i.e. Sole Decision Maker, Key Decision Maker, Consultant and No Decision Maker. Table indicates that majority of the farm women, 61.36 per cent, 56.82 per cent, 47.73 per cent, 45.45 per cent and 35.23 per cent did not take any decision in use of fertilizer, selection of seed, irrigation, plant protection and field preparation, respectively. In these activities, the involvement of farm women were found more as a consultant in comparison to key decision-maker and sole decision-maker. They were consulted mostly 38.64 per cent, 31.82 per cent, 29.55 per cent, 26.14 per cent, 23.86 per cent and 21.59 per cent in field preparation, improved implements, plant protection, irrigation, selection of seed and use of fertilizers respectively. The table also indicates that in case of harvesting, decisions were taken by 48.86 per cent as a sole decision-maker, 25.00 per cent as key decision-maker and 22.73 per cent as a consultant. Similarly in case of grading and storage and

marketing, majority (38.64% & 47.73%) was sole decision-maker, 35.23% & 34.09% were consultant and 25.00% 18.18% were key decision-maker, respectively.

Table 1. Showing existing position of respondents in decision making for farming.

Particulars	S.D.M.	K.D.M.	C.D.M.	N.D.M.
1. Field preparation	6 (6.82)	17 (19.32)	34 (38.64)	31 (35.23)
2. Selection of seed	8 (9.09)	9 (10.23)	21 (23.86)	50 (56.82)
3. Fertilizers	5 (5.68)	10 (11.36)	19 (21.59)	54 (61.36)
4. Imp. Irrigation	9 (10.23)	14 (15.91)	23 (26.14)	42 (47.73)
5. Imp. Implements	13 (14.77)	21 (23.86)	28 (31.82)	26 (29.55)
6. Plant protection	8 (9.09)	14 (15.91)	26 (29.55)	40 (45.45)
7. Harvesting	22 (25.00)	43 (48.86)	20 (22.73)	3 (3.4 1)
8. Grading & storage	22 (25.00)	34 (38.64)	31 (35.23)	1 (1.14)
9. Marketing	16 (18.18)	42 (47.73)	30 (34.09)	0
Mean	12.11 (13.76)	22.67 (25.76)	25.77 (29.29)	27.44 (31.18)

Thus it could be concluded that on an average 69.00 per cent farm women were taking decision in all the agricultural activities as key decision-maker (13.76%), sole decision-maker (25.76%) and consultant (29.29%), respectively.

Table 2. Showing existing position of respondents in decision making for animal husbandry & dairying

Particulars	S.D.M.	K.D.M.	C.D.M.	N.D.M.
1. Selection of Cattle	22 (25.00)	32 (36.33)	27 (30.68)	7 (7.95)
2. Feeding	50 (56.82)	29 (32.95)	8 (9.09)	1 (1.14)
3. Sales and purchasing	51 (57.95)	24 (27.27)	13 (14.77)	-
4. Milk processing	57 (64.77)	25 (28.41)	6 (6.82)	-
5. Artificial insemination	11 (12.5)	19 (21.59)	26 (29.55)	32 (36.33)

The data about involvement of farm women in decision-making in animal husbandry showed that the majority 64.77 per cent, 57.95 per cent and 56.82 per cent farm women took the decision as a key decision-maker in milk processing, sale and purchasing of animals and feeding of animals, respectively. As a sole decision-maker 36.33 per cent farmwomen were involved in selection of cattle, 32.95 per cent in feeding of animals, 28.41 in milk processing and 27.27 per cent were involved in sales and purchasing of animals. The table further shows that in case of artificial insemination majority (36.33%) were not taking any decision. Only 12.5 per cent were key decision-maker, 21.59 per cent were sole decision-maker and 29.55 per cent were observed consultant.

Thus, it can be said that on an average 91.00 percent farm women were involved in taking decision in animal

husbandry as key decision-maker (43.40%), sole decision-maker (29.32%) and consultant (18.18%) respectively

Table 3. Showing existing position of respondents in decision making for home practices

Particulars	S.D.M.	K.D.M.	C.D.M.	N.D.M.
Sanction of home	88	-	-	-
Child care	88	-	-	-
Cooking	88	-	-	-
Education of children	41 (46.59)	36 (40.91)	11 (12.5)	-
Religious work	84 (95.45)	4 (4.55)	-	-
Participation in social functions & ceremonies	63 (71.59)	21 (23.86)	4 (4.55)	-
Generous reception of guests	86 (97.73)	2 (2.27)	-	-
Celebration of festivals	88	-	-	-

Regarding the involvement of farmwomen in home activities, the data indicated that in case of sanitation of home, childcare, cooking and celebration of festivals 100.00 per cent farmwomen was key decision-maker. In case of generous reception of guests, religious work and participation in social functions and ceremonies, they were taking decision 97.73 per cent, 95.45 per cent and 71.59 per cent as a key decision maker respectively. In case of education of children, their involvement were observed 46.59 per cent as a key decision-maker, 40.91 per cent as a sole decision-maker and 12.5 per cent as a consultant.

In case of household operations, women independently except education of children took mostly decisions because the farmwomen had not much knowledge about educational institutions. They were observed (88.92%) key decision-maker, (8.95%) sole decision-maker and (2.13%) consultant.

CONCLUSION

From the earlier discussions, it could be seen that in agriculture and allied activities women play a very crucial role and contribute a lot. In all the activities maximum involvement was observed in house hold practices and animal husbandry as compared to agriculture. Women were not much involved in decisions independently related to farm activity.

The findings of this study shall help in understanding process of decision making for adoption of improved farm practices by farm women which may help the extension worker or researcher in making proper approach while introducing new agricultural technology.

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