

## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## A Study on Decision Making Ability of The Rural Women on Farm Management

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### ABSTRACT

*Farm women decision is an important factor for agricultural management. In India majority of the agricultural workers were women. There are different factors are present which is influence the decision-making ability of the women farmers. Keeping this in view the present study was conducted to find out the decision-making ability of the rural women on agricultural management and factor influencing on this decision. The study was conducted in North Bengal region of India with the help of ex post facto research design. It was found from the study that majority of the farm women jointly take farm decision with the male members of the family, decision making ability level was medium and the independent variables information exchange, constraints, communication skill, sources of farm information, land holding, scientific orientation and farm knowledge are the crucial factor of decision-making skill of the rural women on farm management.*

**Key words :** Farm women; Decision; Information exchange; Communication skill; Farm knowledge.

Farm women characterize as women who have basic leadership and decision to control over an arable plot (or plots) of land. These choices or decision may incorporate how to cultivation of land, sowing of crops, weed management, collection of crops, processing of crops and sell the produces (*World Bank, 2014*). In India farm women are polymorphic work in nature which is extending from child care to crop cultivation, dietary consideration of the family to post-harvesting activity (*Kanungo et al. 2015*). *Samuel (2001)* defined that farm information is the information for decision-making and resource that must be acquired and used in order to make a good decision. Decision making ability is the procedure or action of choosing a suitable course-plan from alternative courses. There are different types of decision were taken by the farm women on agricultural management. Information has a central role in our modern way of living and farm sector is no exception. According to *Niederhauser et al. (2008)* the supply chain in agriculture not only means the flow of products and income but also that of information. As rightly pointed by out by *Herdon (2009)* information communication technologies (ICT) offers new opportunities for

efficient operation, decision making and adaptation to the environment. Information and knowledge are inseparable since the most important input in decision originates from the stratum of information. The main traits of quality information are relevance, accuracy, comprehensiveness and timeliness. In the present study the term has been conceptualized as different type of farm information received by the respondents from various sources or channel. Individual farmers have their favourable information sources, which they use depending on the specific information being sought. The amount of information collected depends on the complexity of the task and the importance of the decision (*Hill, 2009; Burge (1983)* found from his study that husbands of the farm women take major decisions on farm machinery and selection of the crops. It was also shown from his study that farm women and their husband jointly take decision on investments and borrowing of money, while the farm women take decision only on home furnishings and child care. *Deshpande et al. (1987)* found that in the women training programs, it was fundamental to train and motivate adult women in the primary stages as they were the decision makers in the family. They

finally conclude that training brings about behavioural changes of rural women.

The decision-making level of the farm women is not up-to-date. Socio-economic conditions, farming situation, communication with different information sources, information exchange, information seeking behaviour, information need, participation in various events of the Farm Science Centre, mass media exposure, e-resource exposure and various types of limitation may influence on decision making ability of the farm women. Keeping this in view the present study was undertaken to find out the decision-making ability of the rural women on farm management and factor influencing on this decision.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in North Bengal region of India from 2017 to 2020. The research design was followed in the study was ex-post facto research design. Cooch Behar district was purposively selected. Random sampling methods were used for selection of four numbers of village from each block and 25 numbers of respondents from each village. In this way total 12 numbers of villages from 3 numbers of blocks and 3 numbers of sub divisions were selected randomly and from the selected area total of 300 respondents were taken for the study. The important statistical measures that were used to analysis the research data included mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation, range, pair wise ranking and correlation coefficient. Decision making ability of the farm women were analysis through SAS and SPSS 21. Data had been gathered through structured

interview schedule. The sources of qualitative data were key informants, assistant director of agriculture, farm science centre, university, village leaders, NGO workers, farmers club and SHGs.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Decision making ability of the farm women* : Decision making ability is an important factor for agricultural management. In this section decision making ability of the farm women on agricultural management are find out.

It is evident from the Table 1 that less percentage of the respondent's decision were not considered in case of attending farmers meeting (22%) followed by subscribe newspaper (17.33%), type of seed or variety (8.33%) and to try new farm practices (7.67%). It is evident from the Table 2 that majority of the respondent's decision were considered after consultation in case of selecting the type of fertilizers and pesticide (90%) followed by the selecting type of seed or variety (85.67%), borrow money for the farm (81.33%), to try new farm practices (80.33%), hire farm workers (78.67%), utilization of farm income (77.67%), to buy farm machinery (70.67%), subscribe newspaper (53%) and to attend farmers meeting (39%). The result of this study is line with the result reported by *Burge, (1983); Mishra et al. (2009)*. It is found from the Table 1 that less percentage of the respondents independently take decision on attending farmers meeting (39%) followed by subscribe newspaper (29.67%), buy farm machinery (25%), utilization of farm income (18.33%), hire farm workers (17.33%), borrowing money for the farm (13.33%) and try new

**Table 1. Decision making ability of the respondent (N=300)**

Decision making area	Not Considered		Considered after consultation		Considered independently	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
To try new farm practices	23	7.67	241	80.33	36	12.00
Borrow money for the farm	16	5.33	244	81.33	40	13.33
To buy farm machinery	13	4.33	212	70.67	75	25.00
Choose kind of fertilizers and pesticide	15	5.00	270	90.00	15	5.00
Chose type of Seed or variety	25	8.33	257	85.67	18	6.00
To attend farmers Meeting	66	22.00	117	39.00	117	39.00
Subscribe Newspaper	52	17.33	159	53.00	89	29.67
Hire farm workers	12	4.00	236	78.67	52	17.33
Utilization of Farm Income	12	4.00	233	77.67	55	18.33

Minimum score: 0, Maximum score: 2 (Score: Not considered= 0, Considered after consultation=1, Considered independently=2)

**Table 2. Distribution of respondent according to the level of decision-making ability (N=300)**

Category & Score	No.	%
Low (4 to 8.66)	78	26
Medium (8.67 to 13.33)	189	63
High (13.34 to 18.00)	33	11
Statistics		
Range= 4 to 18		
Mean= 9.88		
SD= 2.79, CV= 28.24%		

farm practices (12%). The result of this study is line with the result reported by *Pal and Haldar (2016)*.

It is evident from the Table 2 that decision making ability of the respondents were medium (63%) followed by low (26%) and high (11%). The coefficient of variation value within the distribution 28.24% implies that there exists a high consistency level of the distribution for the variable decision-making ability. It is revealed from the study that decision making ability

**Table 3. Association between some selected traits of the respondents with the decision-making ability on farm management (N=300)**

Variables	'r'
Age	-.006
Educational Level	.086
Type of family	-.088
Marital status	-.049
Annual Income	.137*
Land holding	-.089
Type of land	.360**
Crop grown	-.094
Water resources	.154**
Farming experience	-.031
Irrigated area	.205**
Livestock possession	.340**
Material possession	.173**
Social participation	.324**
Cosmopoliteness	.255**
Scientific orientation	.153**
Economic orientation	.295**
Communication skill	.388**
Mode of information preservation	.253**
Mass media exposure	.303**
E-resources exposure	.064
Sources of farm Information	.180**
Information seeking behaviour	.199**
Information Exchange	.443**
Participation of FSC programme	.208**
Attitude of the respondents towards FSC scientist	.306**
Constraints	-.121*
Farm Knowledge	.390**

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

of the farm women were medium followed by low and high. The result of this study is line with study of *Sabitakumari (1995)*.

It is revealed (Table 3) from the study that there exist a positive and significant association between the decision making ability of the farm women on agricultural management and the variables annual income, type of land, water resources, irrigated area, livestock possession, material possession, social participation, cosmopoliteness, scientific orientation, economic orientation, communication skill, mode of information preservation, mass media exposure, source of farm information, information seeking behaviour, information exchange, participation of FSC programme, attitude of the farm women towards FSC scientist and farm knowledge. This finding somewhat contradicted with the study of *Bhattacharya et al.(2001)*, *Kumari and Singh (2002)*; *Damisa and Yohannna (2007)*. It is noted from the study that scientific orientation of the farm women is an important factor on decision making ability of the farm women which is support the findings of *Premavathi and Setharaman (2005)*. It is also noted from the study that economic orientation of the farm women is an important factor on decision making ability of the farm women which is support the findings of *Nath (2013)*. It is also found from the study that the variable constraints had negatively and significantly correlated with the decision-making ability of the farm women on agricultural management. The rest of the variables i.e age, educational level, type of family, marital status, landholding, crop grown, farming experience and e resource exposure had no significant association with the decision-making ability of the farm women on agricultural management.

## CONCLUSION

It is concluded from the study that majority of the farm women decision were considered after consultation with the male members of the family in case of selecting the kind of fertilizers and pesticide use followed by the type of seed or variety, borrow money for the farm, try new farm practices, hire farm workers, utilization of farm income, buy farm machinery, subscribe newspaper and to attend farmers meeting. It is revealed from the study that very less number of the farm women can take independently decision on to attend farmers meeting followed by subscribe newspaper, buy farm machinery, utilization

of farm income, hire farm workers, borrow money for the farm and to try new farm practices. It is shown from the study that decision making level of the farm women on farm management were medium followed by low and high. It is also shown from the study that variable constraints had negatively and significantly influence the decision-making ability of the farm women on farm management. This study would be useful for the practice in the field of agriculture in the coming days and would be act as a reference for the gender based agricultural policy works. Future research can be taken to study with more numbers of independent variables in a broader perspective.

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