

Willingness of Family Heads towards Participation of Farm Women in Training Programmes

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ABSTRACT

The Extension programmes in India are male dominated and predominantly oriented towards male farmers which have led to lack of access to information, education and training of farm women. Although farm women play an integral role in farm management, in general, they are “economically inactive” due to various cultural and social constraints. Hence, an investigation was carried out in five selected KVKs from different agro-climatic zones of Uttar Pradesh to study the impact of communication channels on the willingness of the family heads towards participation of women in on-campus and off-campus training programmes. The study revealed that increased contacts with friends and relatives resulted in greater willingness to send female wards for off-campus trainings, whereas contacts with neighbors, friends and relatives discouraged head of family to send their female wards for on-campus (with staying) training programme. Similarly those who had greater contacts with friends and relatives were less willing to send their female wards for on-campus training programme (without staying) while exposure to radio encouraged them to do so.

Key words: Communication channel; Family head; Farm women; Training programme;

Although women farmers report a highly positive attitude towards agricultural education (*Charatsari et al., 2011*), they remain an underserved population group from farm extension/education services due to diverse cultural backgrounds with limited formal education and social and geographical isolation. Since agricultural extension service in the country is male dominated and predominantly oriented towards male farmers of the households (*Ngatwa, 2006*), women are typically, and wrongly, still characterized as “economically inactive”. Though, the major sources of knowledge and information for farm women are informal sources, indigenous knowledge and their husbands (*Clare and Ranjitha, 2005*), only one percent of women had heard of the technologies from their husbands (*DFID, 1999*) which indicates that men are less likely to pass on farm information to their wives.

On the other hand, women have limited access to communication sources and exposure to local and personal channels of communication. Hence, training of rural women deserves special attention since social and cultural values in India make women not to go out

unescorted. So, it requires special decision of head of the family for participation of women in on campus and off campus training programmes organized by various institutions. In this regards, an earnest effort was made to study the effect of communication channels, on the willingness of family heads to send their female wards for on-campus and off-campus (with and without staying) trainings at KVKs.

METHODOLOGY

The present study compares the effect of information and communication sources on the willingness of family heads to send their female wards for on-campus and off-campus (with and without staying) trainings at different KVKs of Uttar Pradesh. The study was conducted in five selected KVKs of Uttar Pradesh which were selected by keeping following points:

- i. At least one KVK from each of the categories was selected i.e. SAU based KVK, Educational Institution based KVK, NGOs based KVK and ICAR based KVK.

- ii. KVKs were included from maximum number of agro-climatic zones,
- iii. Selected KVKs had completed at least five years of their inception, and
- iv. Selected KVKs were well connected by transport facilities.

Two blocks from each KVK, in which 25 families from each block were selected randomly. A total of fifty families from each KVK and a total 250 farm families formed the sample of this study. An interview schedule was prepared to study willingness of family heads to send their female wards for training after consultation with experts and various reviews of literatures. Pretesting was conducted for 25 beneficiaries of KVK, Aonla through personal interview method. After necessary inclusion and suggestions, the final interview schedule was used to collect information through personal interview method from head of the family. The findings of the study were analyzed and interpreted accordingly. The chi-square test used in the study elaborates the importance of various variables in the willingness of parents/guardians to send their female wards for training.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 depicted that contact with neighbors and progressive farmers did not affect the willingness of family heads to send female wards for off-campus training Programmes while increased contacts with friends and relatives resulted in greater willingness of family heads to send female wards for off-campus training. A study conducted by *Rathod et.al (2011)* for dairy farmers revealed that friends and relatives were the major information sources to create awareness and increase knowledge vel of farmers.

The study revealed that contact with neighbors had effect on the willingness of family heads to send female wards for on-campus trainings (with staying) (Table 2). It means that, respondents who had more contacts with neighbors were less willing to send female wards for on-campus training programmes (with staying) which may be due to social taboos and feeling of insecurity during stay (*Gupta, 2002*).

Increased contacts with friends and relatives affect the willingness of family heads to send female wards for on-campus training (with staying). Those respondents who had less contact with friends and relatives were more willing to send female wards for on-campus

training (with staying). *Gupta (2005)* revealed that greater contacts with friends and relatives had less favorable attitudes towards training programmes as compared to those who had lesser contacts with friends and relatives.

Table 1. Willingness to send female wards for off-campus training programmes and degree of local contact

Degree of local contact	Willing	Not willing
<i>Neighbors</i>		
Often	161	6
Occasional	46	6
x^2	3.42	
<i>Friends and relatives</i>		
Often	77	5
occasional	69	6
x^2	4.68*	
<i>Progressive farmers</i>		
Often	15	0
occasional	91	5
x^2	0.23	

*significant at 1% level

Table 2. Willingness of family heads to send female wards for on-campus (with staying) training programmes and degree of local contact

Degree of local contact	Willing	Not willing
<i>Neighbors</i>		
Often	25	122
Occasional	12	25
x^2	5.39*	
<i>Friends and relatives</i>		
Often	10	53
Occasional	21	36
Chi-square	8.01**	

*significant at 1% level **significant at 5% level

The exposure to radio and television did not affect the willingness of family heads to send their female wards for on-campus trainings (with staying) (Table 3).The results showed that exposure of respondents to exhibition had negative effect on the willingness of family heads to send their female wards for on-campus trainings(with staying). It means that, farmers who had more exposure to exhibition were less willing to send their female wards for on-campus trainings (with staying), due to their lack of urge for scientific know-how and improve the knowledge of their female heads.

Though, interpersonal and mass media communication sources had favorable effect on their decision of family heads to send the female wards for training programmes (*Gupta, 2002*), it lacked due to

various reasons. Hence, family heads and farm women should be oriented and motivated to use communication sources like VLWs, University Scientists, Radio and Television programmes or a combination of suitable communication media, in order to increase the knowledge level of the latest technologies.

Table 3. Willingness of family heads to send female wards for on-campus (with staying) training programmes and degree of mass media contact

Degree of mass media contact	Willing	Not willing
Radio		
Often	16	83
Occasional	13	46
x^2	1.29	
Television		
Often	7	20
occasional	16	64
x^2	0.14	
Exhibition		
Often	9	21
occasional	24	105
x^2	22.33**	

*significant at 1% level

**significant at 5% level

The contact of the respondents with neighbors and KVK officials did not affect the willingness of family heads to send the female wards for on-campus (without staying) training programmes. Table 4 depicted that contact with friends and relatives affected the willingness of family heads to send the female wards for on-campus training programmes (without staying). Those who had greater contacts with friends and relatives were less willing to send their female wards for on-campus training programmes (without staying).

The exposure of respondents to radio (Table 5) had effect on the willingness of family heads to send the female wards for on-campus training programmes (without staying). Those who had more exposure to radio were more willing to send their female wards for such trainings, while exposure to television did not have any effect on the family heads. Though, a study conducted by *Gholamreza and Naser (2005)* and *Mchombu (2004)* reported that radio and television were the most common information sources, the present study revealed that radio was more effective than television.

Table 4. Willingness of family heads to send female wards for on-campus (without staying) training programmes and degree of local contact.

Degree of local contact	Willing	Not willing
<i>Neighbors</i>		
Often	49	91
Occasional	17	27
x^2	0.07	
<i>Friends and relatives</i>		
Often	6	56
occasional	29	38
x^2	16.73**	
<i>KVK Officials</i>		
Often	8	9
Occasional	50	60
x^2	0.02	

*significant at 1% level

**significant at 5% level

Table 5. Willingness to send female wards for on-campus (without staying) and degree of mass media exposure

Degree of mass media contact	Willing	Not willing
<i>Radio</i>		
Often	44	54
Occasional	27	36
x^2	8.45**	
<i>Television</i>		
Often	10	16
occasional	43	37
x^2	1.27	

*significant at 1% level

**significant at 5% level

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that increased contacts with friends and relatives resulted in greater willingness of family heads to send female wards for off-campus trainings, whereas contacts with neighbors, friends and relatives discouraged them to send their female ward for on-campus (with staying) training programmes. The family heads who had greater contact with friends and relatives were less willing to send their female wards for on campus (without staying) training programmes while exposure of respondents to radio had positive impact on family heads.

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