



Profile Of Farm Women And Constraints Faced By Them In Participation Of Farm And Allied Activities

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ABSTRACT

The findings of the study indicate that 42.50 per cent of women educated up to high school level. About 31.67 per cent of respondents had 2.01 to 4.00 ha. of land holding, above half (51.66%) of women respondents had annual income in the range of Rs. 75,000/- to 1,50,000/-. Over half of the respondents (54.17%) had medium category of family size and (56.67%) were from nuclear type of family. Majority (70.84%) of the respondents had medium level of farming experience and above two third (67.50%) had spent moderate time in farm and allied activities. Women respondents in higher proportion (64.17%) had an access to the sources of information to medium extent. The major constraints in participation of farm women in farm and allied activities were lack of technical knowledge about farming activities, frequent health problem, secondary status in decision making, poor economic condition and burden of family work.

Keywords : Profile, farm women, participation, constraints

Introduction

Some historians believe that woman was the first agriculturist; means domesticated crop plants and thereby initiated the art and science of farming. Women started gathering seeds from the native flora and began cultivating those of interest from the point of view of food, feed, fodder, fibre and fuel. While men went out of hunting in search of food.

In today's society, the role of women extends much beyond the home upbringing of children. They have to perform dual roles of house wife as well as wage earner and play a vital role in agricultural operations. A large number of farm women are not only engaged in farm operations as cultivators assistant but also playing vital role in kitchen gardening, poultry keeping, goat rearing, preserving seeds, marketing of milk, vegetables and fruits etc. Whenever they are not having employment on their own farm, they get engaged in off farm activities.

In agriculture women are actively involved in some selected pre-sowing and post-sowing operations, harvesting and post harvesting operations as well as allied activities. During the peak of agricultural operations, especially at harvesting time, women of farm families work on an average 7-8 hours a day in the field besides their routine duties such as cooking, child rearing, cleaning etc. The per cent contribution of women in agriculture is higher than the men. About 82.20 per cent of women in the rural sector are employed in the primary production as family helpers on the farm. Women are responsible for at least 50.00 per cent of all food production. Their Participation in home and farm activities is depending upon social, cultural and economic conditions of the area.

Now a day, it is accepted fact that, women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields including in the main crop production, livestock production, horticulture, post harvest operations, agro/ social forestry, fisheries, etc. Hence, it is necessary to know the profile of the farm women and constraints faced by them in participation of farm and allied activities with the following objectives.

1. To study the profile of farm women participating in farm and allied activities.
2. To study the constraints faced by the farm women in participation of farm and allied activities

Materials and Methods

The present study was carried out at Hinganghat Panchayat Samiti of Wardha district of Vidarbha region in Maharashtra state. Out of eight panchayat samities in Wardha district, Hinganghat Panchayat Samiti was purposively selected due to higher area under field crops like cotton, tur, soybean and vegetable and fruit crops cultivation compared to rest of the Panchayat samities of the district.

The list of farm families in selected villages having working women who are engaged in production of major agronomical and horticultural crops to more or less extent and having 1 and 2 or more than 2 milch animals were prepared with the help of revenue department and Panchayat Samiti officials. From the list of farm families in selected villages, 10 farm women as respondents were randomly selected by 'N'th method from each selected villages. Thus, in all total 120 respondents were constituted the samples for the study. In the present investigation, an exploratory design of social research was used and the data were collected personally by the researcher with the help of structured interview schedule developed for this purpose.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their profile

Sr. No.	Educational levels	Respondents (n=120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	08	06.67
2	Primary School	11	09.16
3	Middle school	21	17.50
4	High school	51	42.50
5	College	29	24.17
Sr. No.	Land holding levels		
1	Marginal	11	09.17
2	Small	36	30.00
3	Semi-Medium	38	31.67
4	Medium	33	27.50
5	Large	02	01.66
Sr. No.	Annual income levels		

1	Up to Rs. 75,000/-	32	26.67
2	Rs.75,001 to Rs. 1,50,000/-	62	51.66
3	Above Rs. 1,50,000/-	26	21.67
Sr. No	Family size levels		
1	Small	43	35.83
2	Medium	65	54.17
3	Large	12	10.00
Sr. No	Type of family levels		
1	Nuclear family	68	56.67
2	Joint family	52	43.33
Sr. No	Experience in farming levels		
1	Low	13	10.83
2	Medium	85	70.84
3	High	22	18.33
Sr. No	Time spent levels		
1	Less time	24	20.00
2	Moderate time	81	67.50
3	More time	15	12.50
Sr. No	Sources of information use levels		
1	Low	27	22.50
2	Medium	77	64.17
3	High	16	13.33

A perusal at Table 1 indicated that, with regard to education, 42.50 per cent of women respondents were educated up to high school level followed by 24.17 per cent who were educated up to college level. Further, it was noticed that 17.50 per cent respondents were educated up to middle school level. Respondents belonging to primary school level and illiterate category were 9.16 and 6.67 per cent respectively. These findings are in conformity with the findings of previous research studies conducted by Mankar et al. (2007), Nita Devikar (2010) and Megha Landage (2011) showing that majority of women respondents were educated up to high school level.

In case of land holding, the women having more land are mostly involved in decision making related to farm activities. It is revealed that higher proportion of 31.67 per cent of the respondents were belonged to semi-medium category of land holding having land between 2.01 to 4.00 ha followed by 30.00 per cent of respondents belonged to small land holding category who possessed land between 1.01 to 2.00 ha, whereas, 27.50 per cent of respondents were belonged to medium (4.01 to 10.00 ha) category. Only 9.17 per cent and 1.66 per cent respondents were observed in marginal and large category respectively. The findings are in consonance with findings of previous research studies conducted by Sujata Deokar (2008) who found that majority of women respondents were from small land holding category and showed semi-medium to medium level of involvement in economic management.

As far as family income is concerned it influences many things. It helps to project the overall economic stability of family. A low level of family income compels oneself to work more to earn more and more. It is an important factor in participation of farm women in farm and allied activities. The data in Table 1 shows that above half (51.66%) of the respondents belonged to medium annual income category having income in the range of Rs 75,000 to 1,50,000/-, while above one fourth (26.67%) of the respondents had low annual income i.e. up to Rs. 75,000/- and 21.67 per cent respondents had annual income above Rs 1,50,000/-.

The findings of the study have been supported by the findings of previous research studies conducted by Rashekar (1998) and Bhosle (2000) who found that majority of women respondents were in the medium annual income category.

With regards to family size, it may influence the respondents' participation in farm and allied activities besides adoption of improved technology. Respondents' behavior is likely to change in various family situations and hence, this variable has been included in present study

It is apparent from the Table 1 that the large proportion (54.17%) of the respondents were from medium size family having 5-7 members in a family, whereas 35.83 per cent respondents were belonged to small size family having up to 4 members in a family and 10.00 per cent of respondents had belonged to large family.

The above findings are supported by the findings of Jayashri Yesankar (2010) who found that majority of women respondents were belonged to medium size family.

Family type i.e. joint and nuclear type can affect the women participation in farm and allied activities in both ways i.e. if female belongs to joint family, she may have less worth, less scope to do or vice versa. Women's behavior is likely to change in various type of family and hence, it has been included in the present study

Table 1 showed that, more than half of women respondents (56.67%) were observed from nuclear type of family and remainder 43.33 per cent women respondents were from joint type of family.

The above findings of the study have been supported by Chauhan (2001), Bimla et al. (2004) and Vidya Tayde (2006) who had observed similar result in their studies and found that majority of the women respondents were from nuclear type of family.

The number of years of experience of the women respondents in cultivation of various crops was considered as farming experience.

It is evident from data in Table 1 that majority of the women respondents (70.84%) had medium level of farming experience i.e. between 12 to 27 years, whereas 18.33 per cent of respondents had high (above 27 years) and above one tenth (10.83%) of respondents had low farming experience (up to 11 years).

The above findings of this study have been supported by Shinde et al. (2000) who found that majority of the respondents had farming experience of above 17 years. Similarly Mishra (2006) and Sujata Deokar (2008), who found that majority of the women respondents, had medium level of farming experience, also support present findings.

Table 1 indicates that above two third of the women respondents (67.50%) had spent moderate (8 to 10 hours) time for farm and allied activities, whereas exact one fifth (20.00%) of respondents had spent less time and 12.50 per cent of respondents had spent more time for farm and allied activities.

The findings of the study have been supported by the findings of previous research studies conducted by Sushila Srivastava and Sheriff (1991) who found that majority of the respondents had spent moderate time in farm and allied activities.

Due to exposure to various sources of information women get influenced to do something new to increase their socio-economic status. From this point of view, the source of information has been considered for the present study as one of the independent variable.

The data in Table 1, revealed that, majority (64.17%) of the women respondents were in medium category of sources of information, followed by 22.50 per cent and 13.33 per cent of the women respondents had low and high access to sources of information respectively. Thus, it leads to inferred that majority of farm women respondents had an access to the sources of information to medium extent.

The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Vidya Tayde (2006) who found that majority of women respondents had an access to the sources of information to medium extent.

Table 2: Constraints faced by farm women in participation in farm and allied activities

Sr. No.	Constraints	Respondents (n=120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Secondary status in decision making.	55	45.83
2	Difficulties to spend time for farm operations due to domestic work.	30	25.00
3	Being women it is difficult to perform certain Agricultural operations	29	24.17
4	Burden of family work	99	82.50
5	Unfavorable social conditions for getting information from extension workers.	35	29.17
6	Working under unfavorable condition	48	40.00
7	Lack of technical knowledge about improved farming activities.	69	57.50
8	Male dominated society	25	20.83
9	Poor economic condition	50	41.67
10	Health problems	60	50.00

From the data in Table 2, it has been observed that the burden of family work was the major constraint faced by majority (82.50%) of the respondents. Lack of technical knowledge about farming activities (57.50%), frequent health problem (50.00), secondary status to women in decision making (45.83%), poor economic condition

(41.67%), and working under unfavorable conditions (40.00%) were some of the major constraints faced by women respondents while participating in farm and allied activities.

Besides these, unfavorable social conditions for getting information from extension workers (29.17%), difficulties to spend more time for farm operations due to domestic work (25.00%), difficulties of women class in performing certain agricultural operations (24.17%) and male dominated society (20.83%) were some of the other constraints faced by women respondents while participating in farm and allied activities.

Thus, it may be concluded that women in the study area faced various constraints while participating in farm and allied activities which need to be solved on priority to improve their participation in farm and allied activities.

It is necessary that farm women should be encouraged to attend kjrishi melawa, agricultural exhibitions, educational tours, crop demonstrations and other agricultural programmes. It is also suggested that they should be given agricultural information and training in agricultural technology through women extension workers to improve their participation in farm and allied activities.

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