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RESEARCH ARTICLE :

Study on awareness utilization and constraints of farm women in drudgery reducing farm tools in Khammam district Telangana state

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SUMMARY : The present study is exploratory study to assess the awareness level of farm women on drudgery reducing farm tools. The study was conducted in Khammam district Telangana state. A sample of 100 farm women were interviewed with self developed questionnaire to understand the activities, awareness and barriers towards the usage of improved tools. The results showed that most of the farm women are engaged in tedious farm work and their awareness levels about the improved tools to reduce the work was very less. Lack of availability of information about these tools and lack of training in utilizing the improved tools are perceived as barriers.

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KEY WORDS :
Drudgery, Improved tools, Farm women, Activities, Awareness, constraints

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The rural women play a significant role in agriculture and other agro based activities. The daily work schedule of rural women is very demanding and arduous. It is estimated that during peak period women work every day for about 8-9 hours in agriculture and 4 hours in household activities and there are certain agricultural operations in which female agricultural workers are considered better than male workers as studied by Bhople and Pattai (1998). Women carryout such jobs as weeding, transplanting, harvesting, threshing and storing grains, tending animals and providing fuel and water (Swaminathan, 1993). The farm women put in hard physical labour beyond their capacity. A continuous work affects adversely their mental and physical well being. Tedious, menial or unpleasant work can be termed as drudgery. Drudgery is generally conceived as physical and mental strain, agony, fatigue, monotony and hardship experienced by human being. Women-friendly improved implements and tools need to be developed, refined and evaluated based on feedback of the farm women. Number of machines developed so far to increase efficiency and reduce drudgery at lower cost

are popular only among male farmers (Singh and Gite, 2007). Scientific and technological inputs and interventions are thus required in agriculture to relieve farm women from the physical and mental strain (Singh *et al.,* 2008). Keeping these points in view this study was conceptualized to understand the awareness of farm women on efficiency of drudgery-reducing farm implements.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study investigates awareness towards improved farm tools and implements by the women farmers/farm workers in 5 adopted villages of Krishi Vigyan Kendra Wyra in Khammam district. Data was gathered from 100 women farmers (20 from each village) through a well structured questionnaire, focused group discussion and personal interview. In the study, various types of primary as well secondary data have been analyzed. The main objective of the study was to assess the awareness about drudgery reducing tools and implements and preparedness of the community to accept the intervention regarding improved tools.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The demographic profile of the respondents presented in the Table 1 clearly indicates that majority *i.e*. 63% of the sample are in age group of 31-40 yrs, 17% of them are 20-30 yrs old. In age group of 41-50 years 13% of the respondents are present while 7% of the sample are in group of 50-60years. The education of the respondents indicate that 51% of them are illiterates and 42% of the farm women are educated to primary level only 7% of them studied till the high school.

Table 2 represents information about farm activities and tools. The tillage was farm activities engaged by 73%, seed bed preparation by 82%, 52% of respondents were involved in sowing activity, 81% of them in planting. The study reveals that 62% of the sample were involved in weeding while 37% of them in intercultural operations.The activities in which the farm women are engaged are harvesting (71%), threshing (63%), grading (46%), cleaning (52%), grading (32%), shelling (54%), dehulling (72%) and peeling (52%).

The awareness of farm women about drudgery reducing farm tools and implements was presented in the Table 3. The study reveals that 13% of the farm women were aware about the seed treatment drum while 87% were unaware of it. The awareness of seed drill (23%), paddy drum seeder (11%), clearly state that majority of them 77% and 89% were not aware f the seed drill and paddy drum seeder. The awareness level of farm tools like rice transplanter (16%), fertilizer broadcaster 921%), cotton stalk puller (14%), sugarcane stripper (16%), fruit harvester (19%), Bhindiplucker (23%), paddy winnower (31%), twin wheel hoe weeder (21%), hand ridger (22%), manual dibbler (31%) and improved sickle (22%).

Table 1: Profile of the respondents **(n=100)**

Sr. No.	Attributes	Frequency	Percentage
1.	**Age**		
	20-30yrs	17	17%
	31-40yrs	63	63%
	41-50yrs	13	13%
	50-60yrs	7	7%
2.	**Education**		
	Illiterate	51	51%
	Primary	42	42%
	Secondary	7	7%
3.	**No. of years in farming**		
	<5yrs	30	30%
	5-10yrs	23	23%
	>10yrs	47	47%
4.	**Major occupation**		
	Farmer	53	53%
	Agriculture labourers	43	43%
	others	4	4%

Table 2: Information and practice about farm activities and tools and implements

Sr. No.	Activities	N	%
1.	Tillage	73	73%
2.	Seed bed preparation	82	82%
3.	Sowing	52	52%
4.	Planting	81	81%
5.	Weeding	62	62%
6.	intercultural operations	37	37%
7.	Harvesting	71	71%
8.	Threshing	63	63%
9.	Grading	46	46%
10.	Cleaning	52	52%
11.	Grading	32	32%
12.	Shelling	54	54%
13.	Dehulling	72	72%
15.	Peeling	52	52%

Table 3: Awareness of the drudgery reducing improved farm tools and implements

Sr. No.	Improved farm tools and implements	Aware		Unaware	
		n	%	n	%
1.	Seed treatment drum	13	13%	87	87%
2.	Seed drill	23	23%	77	77%
3.	Paddy drum seeder	11	11%	89	89%
4.	Rice transplanter	16	16%	84	84%
5.	Fertilizer broadcaster	21	21%	79	79%
6.	Conoweeder	32	32%	68	68%
7.	Groundnut stripper	42	42%	58	58%
8.	Cotton stalk puller	14	14%	86	86%
9.	Sugarcane stripper	16	16%	84	84%
10.	Fruit harvester	19	19%	81	81%
11.	Bhindiplucker	23	23%	77	77%
12.	Paddy winnower	31	31%	69	69%
13.	Twin wheel hoe weeder	21	21%	79	79%
14.	Hand ridger	22	22%	78	78%
15.	Manual dibbler	31	31%	69	69%
16.	Improved sickle	22	22%	78	78%

Table 4: Barriers towards usage of farm drudgery reduction tools by farm women

Sr. No.	Barriers	n	%
1.	Tools availability	43	43%
2.	Cost of the tools	52	52%
3.	Availability of credit	24	24%
4.	Ability and knowledge of using the tools	67	67%
5.	Availability of information and training to use the improved tools	84	84%

The study concludes very less percent of the farm women were aware of drudgery reducing tools and most of them were not aware of the new improved tools.

The barriers towards awareness and utilization of improved, drudgery reducing tools presented in the Table 4 pointed out that 43% of farm women felt tool availability of the tools as barrier, while cost perceived as barrier by 52% of them. 24% of the farm women perceived that they were not using the tools because of non availability of credit and 67% of the farm women perceived that lack ability/skill and knowledge about the utilization of the improved tools as barrier to its usage. Most of the farm women (87%) expressed availability of information and training to use the improved tools as major constraint.

Conclusion:

The development of drudgery reducing tools and implements for farm women is now a thrust area with scientists to change the age old situation of drudgery encountered by women working at farms. R and D institutions located in different parts of the country such as Central Institute of Agricultural Engineering (CIAE), Bhopal, ICAR-Central Institute for Women in Agriculture, Bhubaneswar, and All India coordinated research project on Ergonomics and Safety in Agriculture have taken a lead in this direction and developed drudgery reducing farm tools and equipment suitable for women workers. Awareness about drudgery reducing improved farm tools and implements, showed that respondents heard about few drudgery reducing tools.

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