

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

Personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of farm women

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SUMMARY : The international development community has recognized that the agriculture is an engine of growth and poverty reduction in countries where it is the main occupation of the poor. But the agriculture sector in many developing countries is underperforming, in part because women, who represent a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy through their roles as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs, almost everywhere face more severe constraints than men in access to productive resources. The analysis of personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of the women revealed that majority of them were middle age, has primary education, were married, had agriculture as major occupation, belonged to nuclear families of medium size, had medium experience in farming, dairying, goat rearing and poultry management had medium social participation, medium information seeking behaviour, small land holding, medium annual income and medium achievement motivation.

KEY WORDS :

Farm women

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The international development community has recognized that the agriculture is an engine of growth and poverty reduction in countries where it is the main occupation of the poor. But the agriculture sector in many developing countries is underperforming, in part because women, who represent a crucial resource in agriculture and the rural economy through their roles as farmers, labourers and entrepreneurs, almost everywhere face more severe constraints than men in access to productive resources. Efforts by national government and the international community to achieve their goals for agricultural

development, economic growth and food security will be strengthened and accelerated if they build on the contributions that women make and take steps to alleviate these constraints.

The prosperity and growth of a nation depends on the status and development of its women, as they not only constitute nearly half of its population, but also positively influence the growth of the remaining half of the population.

Multi-dimensional role of women:*Agriculture :*

Sowing, transplanting, weeding,

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irrigation, fertilizer application, plant protection, harvesting, winnowing, storage etc.

Allied activities:

Cattle management, fodder collection, milking, goat rearing, poultry farming, sericulture, sheep rearing, bee keeping etc.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

Ahmednagar and Solapur district of Maharashtra state was purposively selected for the present study due to it has maximum area under agriculture and allied occupation. The ex-post-facto research design was used for the study. This design was considered appropriate because we are studying the phenomenon that has already occurred. It is a systematic empirical study in which the researcher does not have any direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred. Two tehsil from each district namely

Rahuri and Rahata from Ahmednagar district and Malshiras and Pandharpur from Solapur district was selected randomly for present investigation as having maximum area under agriculture and allied occupation. From each selected tehsil. Five villages were selected randomly. Total 20 villages were selected for present study. A sample of 10 farm women from each village, making a total sample of 200 farm women respondents was selected.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

Age:

It was observed from the Table 1 that, the 52.50 per cent of the respondents were from middle age group, followed by young age group (32.00 %) and old age group

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age group

| Sr. No. | Age group (years) | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Young (Upto 35) years | 64 | 32.00 |
| 2. | Middle (36 to 55) years | 105 | 52.50 |
| 3. | Old (56 and above) years | 31 | 15.50 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Table 2 : Distribution of the respondents according to their level of education

| Sr. No. | Level of education | Number of respondents(200) | Percentage |
|---------|--|----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Illiterate | 18 | 09.00 |
| 2. | Can read only | 20 | 10.00 |
| 3. | Can read and write | 25 | 12.50 |
| 4. | Primary (Upto IV std.) | 46 | 23.00 |
| 5. | Secondary education (V to X std.) | 63 | 31.50 |
| 6. | High Secondary education (XI std., XII std. and diploma) | 19 | 09.50 |
| 7. | Graduate | 09 | 04.50 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Table 3 : Distribution of the respondents according to their marital status

| Sr. No. | Marital status | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|----------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Unmarried | 09 | 04.50 |
| 2. | Married | 151 | 75.50 |
| 3. | Divorce | 09 | 04.50 |
| 4. | Widow | 31 | 15.50 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

(15.50 %).

The present findings are in line with the findings of Hasan *et al.* (2016).

Education:

The analysis of the results presented in Table 2 revealed that, the 31.50 per cent of the respondents had secondary education followed by 23.00 per cent of the respondents having primary education. Furthermore it was observed that 12.50 per cent can read and write and 10.00 per cent of the respondents can read only. The present findings are in line with the findings of Hasan *et al.* (2016).

Marital status:

It refers to whether the respondents are married or not. The observations with regards to marital status of the respondents are shown in Table 3.

The data presented in Table 3 showed that, the majority (75.50 %) of the respondents were married. The similar percentage (04.50 %) of the respondents

belonged to unmarried and divorce category whereas 15.50 per cent of the respondents was widow. The present findings are in line with the findings of Gandoroli (2013).

Major occupation:

The data pertaining to the major occupation of farm women are presented in Table 4. It is evident from the table that, the majority (63.00 %) of the respondents major occupation was agriculture whereas 18.50 per cent of the respondents major occupation was dairy farming. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood and almost all the respondents are engaged in it. The above findings are in line with those of Gandoroli (2013).

Family type:

The data presented in Table 5 showed that, the majority (69.00 %) of the respondents were from nuclear type of family, while remaining 31.00 per cent of the respondents had joint type of family. Findings of the present study are in line with Gandoroli (2013).

Table 4 : Distribution of the respondents according to the major occupation

| Sr. No. | Category | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Agriculture | 126 | 63.00 |
| 2. | Dairy farming | 37 | 18.50 |
| 3. | Goat farming | 18 | 09.50 |
| 4. | Poultry farming | 10 | 05.00 |
| 5. | Service | 5 | 02.50 |
| 6. | Labour | 3 | 01.50 |
| 7. | Other | 1 | 00.50 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Table 5 : Distribution of the respondents according to the family type

| Sr. No. | Family type | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Nuclear | 138 | 69.00 |
| 2. | Joint | 62 | 31.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Table 6 : Distribution of the respondents according to the size of family

| Sr. No. | Family type | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Small (Upto 4) | 42 | 21.00 |
| 2. | Medium (5 to 7) | 138 | 69.00 |
| 3. | Large (8 and above) | 20 | 10.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Mean = 5.95

SD = 1.67

Size of family:

The data furnished in data in Table 6 revealed that, the majority of the farm women (69.00 %) had medium size of family (5-7 family members) whereas about 21.00 per cent of the respondents had small size of family (upto 4) and 10.00 per cent had large size of family (8 and above family members). The findings of the present study are in line with Adisa and Akinkunmi (2012).

Experience in farming:

It was observed from the Table 7 that, the majority (64.00 %) of the respondents had medium level of experience in farming followed by 24.00 per cent of the respondents had low level of experience in farming and 12.00 per cent of the respondents had high level of experience in farming. The result of present study are consistent with the result of Fabiyi *et al.* (2007).

Social participation:

It was observed from the Table 8 that, the majority (62.50 %) of the respondents had medium social participation followed by 23.50 per cent and 14.00 per cent of the respondents had low and high social participation, respectively. The findings are in line with

those of Deshmukh (2016).

Information source utilization:

It is noticed from the Table 9 that, the majority (63.50 %) of the respondents had medium information source utilization followed by 27.50 per cent of the respondents had low and 09.00 per cent respondents had high information source utilization. The findings of present investigation are in line with those of Chouhan (2016).

Land holding:

Land fragmentation is a continuous process in rural areas. In each generation land is fragmented within family members. Hence, majority of the respondents are observed in marginal to small land holding *i.e.* 35.00 per cent and 49.00 per cent, respectively. The remaining 11.50 per cent and 04.00 per cent of the respondents had medium to large land holding, respectively. The above findings are in line with those of Gandoroli (2013).

Annual income:

It can be inferred that, the present study that, the majority (64.50 %) of the respondents had medium annual income. Majority of the respondents are engaged in

Table 7 : Distribution of the respondents according to the farming experience of agricultural activities

| Sr. No. | Experience in farming | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Low (Upto 6) | 48 | 24.00 |
| 2. | Medium (7 to 14) | 128 | 64.00 |
| 3. | High (15 and above) | 24 | 12.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Mean = 10.34

SD = 4.73

Table 8 : Distribution of the respondents according to the social participation

| Sr. No. | Social participation | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Low (Upto 3) | 47 | 23.50 |
| 2. | Medium (4 to 8) | 125 | 62.50 |
| 3. | High (9 and above) | 28 | 14.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Mean = 6.23

SD = 3.25

Table 9 : Distribution of the respondents according to the level of information source utilization

| Sr. No. | Information source utilization | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Low (Upto 21) | 55 | 27.50 |
| 2. | Medium (22 to 37) | 127 | 63.50 |
| 3. | High (38 and above) | 18 | 09.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Mean = 29.47

SD = 8.40

farming and the yields of the crops are influenced by climate change, natural disaster, market policies, fluctuation in market rate etc. Hence, majority (64.50 %) of the respondents had medium annual income. The above findings are in line with those of Hasan *et al.* (2016).

Achievement motivation:

It was observed from the Table 12 that, the more than fifty (53.50 %) of the respondents had medium level of achievement motivation followed by 35.50 per cent and 14.00 per cent of the respondents had high and low achievement motivation, respectively. The above findings are in line with those of Bhargyalaxmi *et al.* (2003).

Implications:

– In order to improve women's work efficiency, Government and extension worker should plan and execute need based training programmers.

– Make coverage for social security and the legal protection of rural women workforce, particularly women

heads of household labour, given women in mentioned region who have participation in agricultural activities and spend a lot of time, but they do not have any support from government agencies.

– Efforts should be made to make the male of our society sufficient open minded to accept the ability of the women in the field of planning and managing in case of farm related activities.

– The analysis of personal, socio – economic and psychological characteristics of the women revealed that majority of them were middle age, has primary education, were married, had agriculture as major occupation, belonged to nuclear families of medium size, had medium experience in farming, dairying, goat rearing and poultry management had medium social participation, medium information seeking behaviour, small land holding, medium annual income and medium achievement motivation. Hence, considering these characteristics of farm women, all possible efforts should be made to encourage the farm women for accelerating active participation in agricultural activities and allied occupation.

Table 10 : Distribution of the respondents according to their land holding

| Sr. No. | Land holding | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Marginal (Upto 1 ha) | 71 | 35.50 |
| 2. | Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha) | 98 | 49.00 |
| 3. | Medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha) | 23 | 11.50 |
| 4. | Large (Above 4.01 ha) | 8 | 04.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Table 11 : Distribution of the respondents according to their annual income

| Sr. No. | Annual income | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Low (Upto 183679) | 43 | 21.50 |
| 2. | Medium (183680 to 288294) | 129 | 64.50 |
| 3. | High (288295 and above) | 28 | 14.00 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Mean = 235986.90

SD = 52308

Table 12 : Distribution of the respondents according to their level of achievement motivation

| Sr. No. | Achievement motivation | Number of respondents (200) | Percentage |
|---------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| 1. | Low (Upto 27) | 22 | 11.00 |
| 2. | Medium (28 to 35) | 107 | 53.50 |
| 3. | High (36 and above) | 71 | 35.50 |
| | Total | 200 | 100.00 |

Mean = 31.08

SD = 4.55

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