

## Rural women in integrated farming system-A critical appraisal

■ P. Sumathi

Department of Agricultural Extension, Sugarcane Research Station, Melalathur, VELLORE (T.N.) INDIA

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### ABSTRACT

The study was taken up in Dharmपुरi district. Two villages in each taluks were chosen randomly. The samples were drawn by using proportionate random sampling technique. Thus a total sample size was 100 respondents. The data were collected through interview schedule using statistical tools. The findings of the study revealed that in agriculture about three fourth of the respondents perceived and expressed their desire for training in post harvest operations, marketing, plant protection and preparatory cultivation. All the respondents (100%) needed training in preparation of kitchen garden, vegetable seed production, grafting and pot mixture preparation. About 75 per cent in flower cultivation and post harvest processing(65%) in horticulture. In dairy farming, cent per cent of them needed training in purchase of animals, maintenance of cattle shed and processing of milk. Among other areas in protection of animals (75%)and marketing(68%) and feeding of goats(52%). All of them preferred training in protection of birds and marketing of eggs in poultry farming. In the case of goat rearing also needed in protection and marketing aspects. More than two third of them needed training in silkworm rearing cocoon production Majority of them (65%) opted for training during crop season and in their village . this might be due to the reason that they can immediately use the training content during the training season itself.

## INTRODUCTION

Integrated farming system is one of the potential approaches for small and marginal farmers. In general these category of farmers are resource poor and lower economic sustainable dependent on only one or two inefficient enterprises. In farming system, soil health, economic sustainability and employment generation are more concern for successful system. Farming system approach is one of the approaches where in the risk in dealing with single component which can be minimized and at the same time the productivity per unit area per unit time can be sustainability enhanced through effective recycling. Crop husbandry, the selection of crops and cropping system to a particular location depends on the adaptability and sustainability yield potential. Instead of mono crop of high intensive crop go for double cropping or intercropping. The various enterprises that could be included in farming system are crops, dairy, poultry, fish, goat, pig, sericulture, mushroom cultivation, agro-forestry etc. with combination of field crops and horticultural crops viz., fruits,

vegetables, plantation crops enhance the farm income. The plantation / agro-forestry plants managed significantly for fuel wood and economic returns were tamarind, drumstick, jack fruit etc. The selection of each enterprise on the basis of contribution to the total net income it should contribute at least 10 per cent of the total and not more than 50 per cent to the total.

Agriculture, the back bone of Indian economy is basically a family enterprise in which woman has active participant. She is a cultivator, co-operator, labourer and contribution to farm and family income. In order to increase the agricultural productivity farmers and rural women should be helped to acquire more scientific knowledge and skills to bring the new technologies to farm. Singh (1986) claimed that training alone can bring the effective communication. The women in the family also have equal share in the farm operations and decision making about the involved enterprise. Under this juncture, it is imperative to know the capabilities of women in the skills acquired to play a substantial role in farming and what they need.

## METHODS

This study was taken up in Dharmapuri district based on the maximum area under rainfed culture. Two villages in each of the selected Talukas were chosen randomly. The samples were drawn by using proportionate random sampling technique. Thus, a total sample size was 100. The data were collected with the help of a well structured interview schedule and analysed using the statistical tools.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads:

### Agriculture:

In agriculture, about three fourth of the respondents expressed their desire for training in post harvest operations (78%), marketing (75%), plant protection (78%) followed by preparatory cultivation (62%). After cultivation, harvesting was the needy area by half of the respondents (55%). Remaining respondents did not prefer, training in agriculture. This may be due to the fact that agriculture is being practised over year by their families (Table 1).

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Preparatory cultivation	62
2.	Plant protection	78
3.	harvesting	55
4.	Post harvest operations	78
5.	Marketing	75

### Horticulture:

All the respondents (100%) needed training in preparation of kitchen gardening, vegetable seed production, grafting and preparation of pot mixture. About 75 per cent of the respondents needed training in flower cultivation followed by post harvest processing (65%) in these enterprises, most of them needed training since they were all new techniques (Table 2).

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Kitchen gardening	100
2.	Vegetable seed production	100
3.	Grafting	100
4.	Preparation of pot mixture	100
5.	Flower cultivation	75
6.	Post harvest operations	65

### Dairy farming:

It is evident from Table 3 cent per cent of the respondents needed training in purchase of animals, maintenance of cattle shed and processing of milk. Among other areas of training needs were marketing (73%), protection of animals (68%) and feeding of animals (52%).

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Purchase of animals	100
2.	Maintenance of cattle shed	100
3.	Processing of milk	100
4.	Marketing	73
5.	Protection of animals	68
6.	Feeding of animals	52

### Poultry farming :

All the respondents preferred training in poultry farming and marketing of birds/eggs. The other areas in which the respondents needed training were eggs for hatchuring (82%) purchase of birds (78%), maintenance of eggs (62%) and feeding of birds (35%). Some of them (more than 30%) had not felt training need in poultry farming since they were intensively practicing agriculture (Table 4).

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Purchase of birds	78
2.	Maintenance of eggs	62
3.	Hatchuring	82
4.	Feeding of birds	35
5.	Protection of birds	100
6.	Marketing of birds/eggs	100

### Goat rearing:

Table 5 clearly indicates that about three fourth of the respondents reported that they need training in protection and marketing of goats. About half of them felt the need of training in purchase of goat followed by feeding of goats(32%).

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Purchase of goats	52
2.	Feeding of goats	32
3.	Protection of goats	78
4.	Marketing	75

### Sericulture:

More than half of the respondents needed training in picking of leaves for silkworm rearing, cocoon production and marketing while more than third in mulberry cultivation. The

remaining respondents had not preferred training owing to lack of family labour, high cost of hired labour, with risk involved in maintenance this cost of hired labour (Table 6).

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Picking of leaves for silkworm rearing	62
2.	Cocoon production	58
3.	Mulberry cultivation	38
4.	Marketing	55

#### Preferred training places by rural women:

Further majority of the respondents (85%) preferred training in their villages (Table 7). The Panchayat union office and research stations were preferred by 10 per cent and 5 per cent of the respondents, respectively as the place for training. This may be due to the fact that farm women do not want to move out of their villages due to their preoccupied commitments in their home and in the farm. More over they might have felt that the training offered in their own situation would be more realistic applicable to their own background and resources. This might be the reason for their option of training in their own villages.

Sr. No.	Places	Percentage (%)
1.	Their village	85
2.	Panchayath union office	10
3.	Research stations	5

#### Preferred training by rural women:

Majority of the respondents (58%) opted for training during crop season. About 30 per cent of the respondents preferred training before crop season while 12 per cent after crop season (Table 8). These farm women who had opted training for during crop season might be the reason that they can immediately use the training content during the training season itself.

Sr. No.	Activity	Percentage (%)
1.	Crop season	58
2.	Before crop season	30
3.	After crop season	12

#### Conclusion :

The different components of farming system viz., crops, dairy, poultry, goat, sericulture etc. serves as an efficient sources for sustained farm income throughout the year. Apart from income, it also improves employment generation, socio-

economic status, soil health and productivity. The risk bearing capacity of small and marginal farmers managed through integration of these enterprises, these encourage subsistence farming rather than commercial farming. Women's access to land use, control and entitlement is important to improve their participation in extension services. Extension staff should be able to appropriately identify women's needs and constraints, and opportunities and ensure that extension services meet their requirements. Women's participation in extension activities will strengthen rural development strategies and food security at national and world levels. Rural women participate enthusiastically in many farm operations. So, small farm based IFS model should envisage the rural women to participate / involve in agriculture and allied sectors (crops, livestock, poultry, sheep and goat rearing and sericulture).

In future, research strategies must take into account the needs of farm women, the delivery of appropriate and economically viable technical advice for improving farm women's efficiency to produce food crops, cash crops, agro-forestry, animal health and processing methods of farm products. Extension programmes should acknowledge the important role of women as natural resource managers. Hence, there arises the need to identify the areas in which rural women need training through the conduct of on farm trials, working in multi-organizational partnership in research and extension, group formation, rural women clubs and the development of leadership skills.

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