KNOWLEDGE AND DECISION-MAKING PATTERNS OF FARM WOMEN IN TELANGANA (PEDDAPLLI DISTRICT), India

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Peddapalli district of Telangana, India. The paper mainly focuses on the respondents (farm women) knowledge analysis and decision-making patterns in their profession (agriculture). For the research purpose, an interview schedule was prepared and answers were taken by personal contact. The variables selected for the study are dependent variables mainly focusing on knowledge and decision-making. Therefore, the results revealed that majority of them had level of knowledge (93.33 per cent) on agricultural activities, and majority of the women are actively taking decisions in agriculture activities like seasons of growing (79.17 per cent), time of manuring (70.83 per cent), and use of pesticides (74.17 per cent) respectively.

Keywords: Farm women, knowledge, decision-making patterns.

INTRODUCTION

Women are major source of labor in the agricultural sector and their economic importance influences the performance of the whole economy. Women's role in agriculture did emerge slowly but their performance is mostly recorded as the helping hands. First, women operate smaller farms than men do, second; these farms produce lower yields than those operated by men, this is because women are having a fewer or limited access to fewer inputs and resources, ranging from fertilizers and tools to extension and credit. In farming communities women are the main custodians of knowledge on crop varieties. Still there is underperformance due to the priority given less to the women in decision-making. Though women have better knowledge they are given less priority due to the gender gap prevailing in decision-making patterns and participation levels in agriculture.

Understanding the decision patterns and participation is very complex. Decision patterns of women are majorly group discussions or at least family as a whole. Fortunately, women are involved in almost all of the agriculture activities from pre-sowing to post-harvesting but still, they have a

negligible role in taking decisions in all these activities. Due to this, the majority of the women in India are treated as dependent women on men. But the due fact is that they are not given enough importance in the decision-making process at the farm or the home. In most cases, women tend to deny taking decisions or participating in the decision-making process. It is been said that women work for one-fourth of the activities but their role in decisions is not even one-third of their participation.state here the study goal

METHODOLOGY

The study has been carried out in the Peddapalli district of Telangana state. The purpose of choosing this region is that it is more familiar to the researcher and further interest is shown to know the activity participation of women in the study area. The study was conducted in the Ramagundam Mandal and Ramagiri Mandal of Peddapalli district, Telangana. Considering the objectives, two Mandals were purposively selected to calculate the participation levels of women in the peddapalli district. The maximum and minimum populated Mandals are Ramagundam and Ramagiri respectively. The selection of villages is done by the random selection method. Therefore, the data and status of women are taken according to the individual respondent information. After selecting the villages, a list of all the families in respect of the presence of agriculture and dairy activities was taken from the Agriculture Block office present in the Mandal office. From this list, 120 respondents are chosen randomly from both the Mandals with four villages each.

The two variables are analyzed as per the following method.

i. Knowledge

To measure the knowledge levels of the farm women in the selected villages, a questionnaire is developed from which the frequency of knowledge levels of women. Therefore, some of the questions relating to cropsare asked, and depending on the answers they give, the right answers are scored “one” and the wrong answers are scored “two”.Make a table of your questionnaire list

To find out the level of knowledge, the overall score for each respondent is calculated and respondents are categorized into three groups. Based onthe overall score, each respondent is scored as follows:

i. Low level of knowledge

ii. Medium level of knowledge

iii. High level of knowledge.

The frequency and percentage of respondents in each category i.e. low, medium, and high are calculated.

ii. Decision-making pattern

The Decision-making pattern is calculated on the list of considering all the family members like father, mother, brother, sister, self, and husband. Scores are given to each of them through which the proportion of women's participation in decision-making is calculated by taking out the frequencies and percentages of each of them.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Knowledge analysis of farm women

In this context, respondents were asked several questions about various crops. To know their knowledge level of agriculture, a proper questionnaire was prepared and arranged according to their ease.

Table 1.1 Knowledge analysis of the respondents

n = 120

S. No	Questions Raised On	f	%
1.	Kharif Crop	120	100
2.	Rabi Crop	120	100
3.	High Yielding variety of Rice	120	100
4.	2 Vegetables of Kitchen Garden	117	97.50
5.	1 Insect of Paddy	115	95.80
6.	1 insect of Cotton	116	96.67
7.	1 Insect of Chili	117	97.50
8.	1 Disease of Paddy	116	96.67
9.	Insecticide	116	96.67
10.	Fungicide	116	96.67

11.	Disease of Pomegranate	81	67.50
12.	Paddy Seedling Transplanted Time	117	97.50
13.	Manure in Land Preparation	115	95.83
14.	Top Dressing in Rice	115	95.83
15.	Any Micronutrient	96	80.00
16.	1 Disease of Cow	118	98.33
17.	Seed/Cutting Procedure	109	90.83
18.	1 Productive Chili	117	97.50
19.	Most Deficient Nutrient	86	71.67
20.	Efficient Cattle Breed	102	85.00

f = frequency, % = percentage

Majority of the respondents have answered correctly aboutthe basic knowledge and common crops grown in their areas. They have answered 100 per cent correct about Kharif crop, Rabi crop, high yielding variety of crop, then about 97.50 per cent about the vegetables, and so on

Table 1.2 Distribution of respondents according to the level of knowledge in agricultural production

n = 120

S. No	**Category**	**f**	**%**
1.	Low Level (below 19.00)	00	0.00
2.	Medium level (19.1 -23.75)	112	93.33
3.	High level (above 23.76)	08	06.67
	Total	**120**	**100.00**

Mean = 21.43, SD = 2.32. f = frequency, % = percentage.

Table 1.2 shows that a maximum number of respondents were having a medium level of knowledge (93.33 per cent), the least were having higher level respondents (6.67 per cent) and none were having a low level of knowledge.

2. Study on decision-making pattern of family members in agriculture.

Based on the decision-making pattern, respondents were asked several questions about each of the activities including cultural practices of agricultural crops. The results were drawn according to the answers given by the respondents and each columns was made involving the father, mother, brother, sister, herself, and husband subjectively. Decision patterns in various agricultural activities were taken into consideration like crops to grow, seasons of growing, use of the variety, time of sowing, time of manuring, type of fertilizer and manuring, use of pesticides, harvesting, and marketing etc.

Table 2. Decision-making pattern of family in agriculture activities

Activities	**Father**	**Mother**	**Brother**	**Sister**	**Self**	**Husband**
Crops to Grow	14 (11.67)	01 (00.83)	24 (20.00)	0.00	49 (40.83)	32 (26.67)
Seasons of Growing	02 (01.67)	04 (03.33)	0.00	0.00	**95 (79.17)**	19 (15.83)
Use of Variety	01 (00.83)	0.00	0.00	0.00	59 (49.17)	60 (50.00)
Time of Sowing	09 (07.50)	02 (01.67)	01 (00.83)	0.00	31 (25.83)	77 (64.17)
Time of Manuring	05 (04.17)	02 (01.67)	0.00	0.00	**85 (70.83)**	28 (23.33)
Type of Fertilizer Manuring	03 (02.50)	03 (02.50)	0.00	0.00	45 (37.50)	69 (57.50)
Use of Pesticides	04 (03.33)	02 (01.67)	0.00	0.00	**89 (74.17)**	25 (20.83)
Harvesting	03 (02.50)	04 (03.33)	0.00	0.00	39 (32.50)	70 (58.30)
Marketing	19 (15.83)	06 (05.00)	04 (03.33)	0.00	56 (46.67)	35 (29.17)

Frequency is shown and the percentage is in parenthesis.

Table 2 reveals that respondents have taken decisions in agriculture activities like seasons of growing (79.17 per cent), time of manuring (70.83 per cent), and use of pesticides (74.17 per cent) respectively.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

1. Majority of the respondents have answered correctly aboutthe common crops grown in their areas. They have answered all the questions correct about Kharif crop, Rabi crop, high yielding variety of crop.
2. Maximum number of respondents were having a medium level of knowledge, the least were having higher level respondents and none were having a low level of knowledge.
3. Majority of the decisions in agriculture activities like seasons of growing, time of manuring, and use of pesticides were taken by women respectively.

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