



Decision Making Ability of Women Entrepreneurs Involved in Dairy Farming

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ABSTRACT

Empowerment of women is fundamental for the progress of the country. Women play an important role in the socio-economic development of the country and in India they play a dual role. Women of the present day has extended her foot in every sphere and excelled through the same. They have broken the boundaries restricted to the house-hold work and the prejudice that women are homemaker and that they cannot compete with men. Women have increased their participation in economic activities especially in dairy farming activity as a as manager, decision makers and skilled workers. Therefore the study was planned to assess the decision making ability of the women entrepreneurs involved in dairy farming. This study was conducted in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh and a total of 120 women respondents were selected for study. Decision making ability of the respondents in dairy enterprise was studied under six subheads feeding, viz., breeding and management, health care, marketing and processing and miscellaneous activities. The response was collected by using a pretested structured interview schedule. The result shows that majority of respondents had decision making ability in feeding practices *i.e.*, 68.18 per cent, 52.71 involved in breeding practices, 60.08 per cent involve in management practices, 57.92 per cent involved in health care, 61.46 per cent involved in marketing practices, 42.33 per cent involved in miscellaneous practices as insurance of dairy animals, advantage of dairy schemes *etc.* Though much of work of dairy farming is carried out by women but extension efforts and capacity building programmes are not generally designed for greater involvement of women and extending benefits to them. Therefore training module for scientific dairy farming can be formulated especially for women to improve their efficiency.

Key words: Dairying, Decision making, Entrepreneur, Women.

INTRODUCTION

Women, constitute about half of the total population and play an important role in the socio-economic development of the country. In India their dual role constitute of producers of goods and services as well as their domestic chores, wives and mothers-yet their contribution to economic development has been neglected. Women of the present day has extended her foot in every sphere and excelled through the same. They have broken the boundaries restricted to the house-hold work and the prejudice that women are homemaker and that they cannot compete with men. Social and economic scenario of India has undergone a huge change and women are seen as the engines of the growing Indian economy. Women despite of inadequate education, proper facilities and with other problems, plays an active part toward contributing to the socio-economic growth by engaging themselves in various activities such as agriculture, livestock rearing, handicrafts, weaving *etc* and gain additional income (Jadoun, 2019). Of the major rural enterprises, dairy enterprise has been regarded as an important instrument of economic and social change and supplement to the income and employment to rural women through milk production and processing of milk for product

preparations (Deepanka *et al.*, 2021). A woman plays an important role in dairy enterprises as manager, decision makers and skilled workers in spite of that, her hard work is mostly been unpaid and their considerable involvement or contribution in dairy production is either underestimated or ignored. The knowledge and skill of women in dairy occupation as well as their participation in day-to-day decision making certainly affects their efficiency, work and development of dairy enterprise in total (Ogdand and Hembade (2014). Therefore by considering these facts it was felt necessary to determine the extent of participation of farm women in decision making during dairy occupation activity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh (having highest population of cattle and buffalo and leading the list of milk produced in the country) which is purposively selected for the study. Mathura district is known by many old names and are derived from their physical characteristics related to animals, *i.e.*, Brij means a herd, the constant means of a nomadic tribe; Gokul means a herd of kine; Goverdhan means a rearer of kine. These examples speak

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volumes about this area that animal husbandry has been their way of livelihood and one of the most important occupations. Ex post facto research design was used for the present study as the phenomena has already occurred. A total of 120 women respondents from four randomly selected blocks, selling more than 50.00 percent of the produced milk supplying milk for more than 150 days in a year for the respondents for the study. The state had around 5.00 Lakh women led enterprises comprising 5.99% of total women entrepreneurs in India (Sixth Economic Census, 2014). Decision making ability of the respondents refers to the decision taken by them pertaining to practices related to dairy farming. Decision making ability of the respondents in dairy enterprise was studied under six subheads feeding, viz., breeding and management, health care, marketing and processing and miscellaneous activities. The responses were classified under not consulted, consulted and alone categories and the scores of 0, 1 and 2 were allotted respectively. Primary information was collected by using a pretested structured interview schedule. After duly recording their judgments, the statements were considered for the analysis by calculating their weighted mean scores (WMS).

Weighted means score =

(Actual score obtained for the statement)

Max possible actual score obtained for the statement

The weighted means score of the statement was calculated and the statements were ranked accordingly. The collected data was analyzed with help of suitable statistical test on the basis of mean weighted scores and ranking.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results presented in Table 1 reveals that majority of respondent had adequate decision making ability in feeding practices (68.18%) marketing and processing practices (61.46%) as well as management practices (60.08%) respectively.

It can be visualized from Table 2 that farm women in the study region play a significant role in decision making related to feeding practices of dairy animals as Dairy animal feeding is normally performed by rural women. It was observed that the extent of participation is higher for practices like which green fodder to fed (90.83%), time and amount of fodder chopping (74.58%) and amount of colostrums feeding to calves (72.92%). The study of Ogdand and Hembade (2014) revealed that feeding and watering were done by women therefore out of 25 dairy farmers 23 (92%) women dairy farmers were engaged in feeding and watering the dairy animals.

Participation of rural women in decision making of breeding activities (Table 2) of dairy animals was limited. The results indicate that women had a higher decision making in aspects like treatment of animal with reproductive disorders and age of service in case of heifer. Reproductive disorder among farm animals is the great economic problem

and they have a direct impact on reproductive performance of dairy animals (Meena *et al.*, 2015). It was also seen that other breeding activities like AI as well as natural service in dairy animals sometimes require the animal to be taken outside the home, which is one the reason for less participation of women in this type of activity. It was also observed that social participation and higher use of mass media have positively and significantly contribution in effecting the participation of farm women in decision making (Lad *et al.*, 2012).

Management of dairy animals is one of the most essential activity and which is performed internally by every household making the women to make higher decision in this aspect. The participation of women in all types of

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to pooled decision making ability. (n=120)

Category	WMS	Rank
Feeding	68.18	I
Breeding	52.71	V
Management	60.08	III
Health care	57.92	IV
Marketing and processing	61.46	II
Miscellaneous	42.33	VI

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to decision making ability. (n=120)

Variables	WMS	Rank
Feeding practices		
Quantity of concentrate to be fed	62.92	V
Mineral mixture are to be fed	60.42	VI
Frequency of feeding mixture	44.17	VII
Green fodder to be fed	90.83	I
Quantity of crop residue to be fed	68.75	IV
Colostrum feeding to calves	72.92	III
Fodder chopping	74.58	II
Breeding practices		
AI in dairy animal	47.50	V
Natural service in dairy animals	50.42	III
Bull selection in case of natural service	55.83	II
Treatment of animal with reproductive disorders	57.08	I
Pregnancy diagnosis	48.33	IV
Age of service in case of heifer	57.08	I
Management practices		
Type and number of animal to be kept	71.25	III
Disbudding of calf	45.00	IX
Animal are to be kept in open or in shed	62.50	VI
Shed to be pucca or kutcha	66.25	IV
Colostrum to be fed to newborn calf	63.75	V
Shed to be disinfected or not	51.25	VIII
Number of times animal are to be milked	77.08	I
Time of milking	72.08	II
Drying of dairy animal	60.00	VII
Maintenance of farm records	31.67	X

management decision were found significantly higher. Management practices includes when (71.25%) and the number of times animals to be milked (77.08%) and housing of animals. It was also seen that management and feeding of newborn calves, women are often the primary care givers. The plays a cooperative as well as accommodative role for the practices like disbudding of calf and drying of dairy animal (Paul *et al.*, 2015).

It was observed a healthy contribution of women in decision making (Table 3) related to health practices and taking care of the sick animals. This indicates strong feelings for the animals and they give of their time and attend the sick animals. Women play a significant role in livestock health care like disinfection of shed, vaccination of animals and protection from extreme weather were ranked first, second and third respectively. Bhanotra *et al.*, (2015) in her study also stated that women's participation was relatively high in activities like care of new born calf and care of sick animals. Therefore women should be trained on topic like compounding balanced feed using locally available ingredients for feeding during pregnancy and on health care issue (Jadav *et al.*, 2014).

Earning money from dairy farming and contributing to their family expenses is helping the respondents to build their confidence. Women's participation in decision making related to selling of surplus milk and its processed product and type of milk product to be made is to the extent of 64.58 and 62.08 percent. It was felt that selling milk is the most important means by which rural women can earn money. Although the decision pertaining to sale of milk are jointly with their family members, it is still a good sign for women members who gained the power of involvement in decision

making regarding economic aspects of dairy farming. But the study of Paul *et al.*, (2015) reveals that decision regarding sale of milk was done by male counterpart. While processing of milk was performed by women, the probable reason could be that product making from milk is an activity in which the women alone is usually involved, since these activities are considered the day to day routine work of farm women. The result of Patel *et al.*, (2017), clearly indicates that taking decision regarding preparation of milk products was the total affair of the farmwomen. The data in respect of decision making of the women in miscellaneous activity of dairy farming were presented in Table 3. It was observed in the study area that male members play a major role in taking about decision for the practices like Insurance of dairy animal, health check-up and taking the advantage of dairy scheme, thus less participation was there from the women. Aswar *et al* (2012) also state that the Indian farm women have medium participation in all the agriculture related activities.

CONCLUSION

Dairy enterprise has been regarded as an important socio economic instrument to supplement the income and employment to the women through their active participation. Women generally contribute more labour inputs in areas of fodder cutting, watering, cleaning of animals and their sheds *etc.* The results about Decision making ability of the respondents in dairy reveals that majority of respondents had adequate decision making ability in feeding practices (68.18%) marketing practices (61.46%) and management practices (60.08%) respectively. Women, through participation in small-scale dairy farming are able to exert more control over resources which is helping to increase their consciousness and economic levels and thereby making a significant contribution to the well-being of the family. Though much of work of dairy farming is carried out by women but extension efforts and capacity building programmes are not generally designed for greater involvement of women and extending benefits to them. Therefore training module for scientific dairy farming can be formulated for women to improve their efficiency.

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Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to decision making ability. (n=120)

Variables	WMS	Rank
Health care practices		
Vaccination to be done	60.83	II
First aid treatment to dairy animals	50.00	V
Treatment of sick animal	54.58	IV
Disinfection of animal shed	61.25	I
Protection of animal from extreme weather	57.92	III
Selection of personnel for veterinary care	32.46	VI
Marketing and processing of milk		
Quantity of milk to be used for home	59.17	IV
Surplus of milk and its processed product to be sold	64.58	I
Type of milk product to be made	62.08	II
Selection of milk marketing channel	60.00	III
Miscellaneous		
Insurance of dairy animal	24.45	III
Taking loans and other credits	26.62	II
Regular health check with certificate	34.84	I
Advantage of dairy scheme	22.68	IV

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