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Factors affecting the involvement of rural women in dairy farming

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Abstract
Dairy farming is one activity which can play a pivotal role in making rural women financially empowered. Rural women have been involved in dairy farming since ages. This activity can give financial benefits throughout the year. To plan developmental programmes for rural women in this field, it becomes imperative to understand the factors affecting the involvement of rural women in dairy farming. It was with this view that the study was undertaken. Research methodology included the application of coefficient of correlation and multiple regression. It was found that type of family, size of family, number of children, caste and innovation proneness were consistently, strongly and negatively affecting all the four activities under consideration. The independent variables of caste in fodder harvesting, collection and transportation, education and family size in fodder chaffing, innovation proneness in distribution of fodder and number of children in shed cleaning, caused significant variations in the involvement of rural women in these dairy farming activities.

Keywords: Dairy farming, rural women, involvement

1. Introduction
Rural women besides performing household work and crop farming activities, have been engaged in animal husbandry and dairy farming activities in our country. Besides this is the only activity which is carried out throughout the year whereas crop production and employment are seasonal activities for these rural women. This is the task which many women find interesting and rewarding except few big landlords who have employed servants to take care of the cattle. As a matter of fact a large number of livestock related tasks viz., harvesting, transporting and chaffing of fodder, feeding of the animals, cleaning of the cattle sheds, filling of the manure pits, preparation of milk products etc. are all done by rural women. (Kashyap, 1988) [1]
Empowering women in general and rural women in particular is the need of the hour. Making them financially independent is one aspect of empowerment. Dairy farming by rural women helps them financially, therefore it is important to increase the involvement of rural women in dairy farming. With this view in mind the study has been undertaken with the following specific objective:
i) To find out the factors affecting the involvement of rural women in dairy farming.

2. Research methodology
The study was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state. The simple random sampling technique was adopted for selection of villages and ultimately the selection of the respondents. A list of development blocks in Hisar district was prepared. Two blocks viz., Block –I and Block – II were randomly selected. For the selection of villages, a list of all the villages in the two blocks was obtained from respective block offices. From the list of villages so prepared, one village from each block was randomly selected. A list of the households engaged in raising of dairy animals was prepared. Out of this list 50 respondents from each village were selected. So a total of 100 respondents were taken for the study. Independent and dependent variables were selected for the study. The data was collected with the help of interview schedule. Correlation coefficient was employed to find out the relationship of the dependent variable with the independent variable. Multiple regression was carried out to give the prediction equation with the help of which the value of dependent variable may be predicted for given value of independent variables.

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3. Results and discussion
3.1 Zero- order correlation and multiple regression of independent variables with involvement of rural women in dairy farming
3.1.1 Fodder harvesting, collection and transportation
The data revealed that the involvement of rural women was negatively related with age (r = -0.7318), education of respondents (r = -0.4244), family education status (r = -0.7536), type of family (r = -0.9584), size of family (r = -0.7159), number of children (r = -0.8315), caste (r = -0.8819), and innovation proneness (r = 0.9411).

The age of the homemaker had a strong negative correlation with involvement of rural women in the activity of fodder harvesting, collection and transportation, as the age increases they tend towards activities which are less tiring. Family education status showed a strong negative correlation with the above said dairy farming activity, because with increase in educational level comes a pride which might make them think that these are lowly activities and women from their families should not perform them. Family type and family size, number of children was also seen to be highly negatively related with this activity as when there are joint families and more members in the family, work gets distributed and there is less share of work to an individual member. Respondents belonging to higher caste showed less involvement in this activity because as caste increases the women tend to remain indoors and as such do not carry out work outside home. Innovation proneness was also strongly and negatively related with this dairy farming activity as they could find alternative ways of carrying out this work and reduce their involvement.

Multiple regression with eight independent variables showed that they accounted for 94 percent variation in the involvement of rural women in fodder harvesting, collection and transportation. The calculated 'F' value was 5.77, significant at 0.05 level of probability. The variable of caste contributed significantly to the variation in involvement in the above said activity.

Table 1: Fodder harvesting, collection and transportation N = 100

Sr. no.	Independent variables	Value of 'r'
1	Age	-0.7318*
2	Education	-0.4244*
3	Family education status	-0.7536*
4	Family type	-0.9375*
5	Family size	-0.7159*
6	Number of children	-0.8315*
7	Caste	-0.8819*
8	Innovation proneness	-0.9411*

Significant at 0.05 level

3.1.2 Fodder chaffing
When zero order correlation was carried out for this activity it was found that age (r = -0.5822), education of respondents (r = -0.2892), family education status (r = -0.5250), type of family (r = -0.6943), size of family (r = -0.7600), number of children (r = -0.8081), caste (r = -0.7155), and innovation proneness (r = 0.6530). (Table-2)

It was observed that socio-personal variables like family type, family size, number of children and innovation proneness were strongly but negatively correlated with the dairy farming activity of fodder chaffing. Innovation proneness might expose them to electrical fodder chaffer. This is an electrical instrument and might keep women away from it and thus reducing their involvement in this dairy farming activity.

Seventy six percent of variation in the involvement of rural women in the activity of fodder chaffing was caused by eight independent variables. The variable of education and family size made significant contribution in the involvement of fodder chaffing activity. The calculated 'F' value was 1.55, not significant at 0.05 level of probability

Table 2: Fodder chaffing N = 100

Sr. no.	Independent variables	value of 'r'
1	Age	-0.5822*
2	Education	-0.2892*
3	Family education status	-0.5250*
4	Family type	-0.6943*
5	Family size	-0.7600*
6	Number of children	-0.8081*
7	Caste	-0.7155*
8	Innovation proneness	-0.6530*

Significant at 0.05 level

3.1.3 Preparation of concentrate
The data in the table revealed that the socio personal variables like age (r = -0.8591), education of respondents (r = -0.5885), family education status (r = -0.9477), type of family (r = -0.6942), size of family (r = -0.7333),number of children (r = -0.7744), caste (r = -0.6684), and innovation proneness (r = -0.7620) were negatively correlated with the dairy farming activity of preparation of concentrate. (Table-3)

All the socio-personal variables except education of respondents showed high negative correlation with this activity. Multiple regression revealed that 76 percent of variation in involvement was caused by independent variables. The calculated 'F' value was 3.45, significant at 0.05 level of probability.

Table 3: Preparation of concentrate N = 100

Sr. no.	Independent variables	value of 'r'
1	Age	-0.8591*
2	Education	-0.5885*
3	Family education status	-0.9477*
4	Family type	-0.6942*
5	Family size	-0.7333*
6	Number of children	-0.7744*
7	Caste	-0.6684*
8	Innovation proneness	-0.7620*

Significant at 0.05 level

3.1.4 Distribution of fodder
The data in the table showed that the activity of distribution of fodder to the animals was negatively correlated with the following socio-personal variables viz., age (r = -0.8757), education of respondents (r = -0.5680), family education status (r = -0.9477), type of family (r = -0.7754),size of family (r = -0.7447), number of children (r = -0.7999), caste (r = -0.7443), and innovation proneness (r = -0.8486). (Table-4)

All the independent variables except education of respondents showed a strong correlation with this dairy farming activity. It is clear that as the age of the respondent increases, size of family and number of children in the family increases and the dairy farming work gets distributed resulting into less involvement of rural women.

Multiple regression results revealed that 94 percent of variation was caused by independent variables. The calculated 'F' value was 1.69, not significant at 0.05 level of probability. Innovation proneness was found to cast significant variability in the involvement of rural women in this activity.

Table 4: Distribution of fodder N = 100

Sr. no.	Independent variables	value of 'r'
1.	Age	-0.8757*
2.	Education	-0.5680*
3.	Family education status	-0.9477*
4.	Family type	-0.7754*
5.	Family size	-0.7447*
6.	Number of children	-0.7999*
7.	Caste	-0.7443*
8.	Innovation proneness	-0.8486*

Significant at 0.05 level

3.1.5 Shed Cleaning
Results of zero order correlation with the activity of shed cleaning showed that all the independent variables viz., age (r = -0.7514), education of respondents (r = -0.4319), family education status (r = -0.7840), type of family (r = -0.9535), size of family (r = -0.7082), number of children (r = -0.8097), caste (r = -0.8836), and innovation proneness (r = 0.9751), were negatively correlated. The relationship was highly but negatively correlated except education of respondent which showed negative correlation. (Table – 5) Multiple regression with the aforesaid activity showed that the independent socio-personal variables caused 98 percent variability in the involvement in the shed cleaning activity. The p-value of number of children indicates that this is a significant predictor of variability in dependent variable of shed cleaning. However the 'F'-value of 1.07 is not significant at 0.05 level of probability.

Table 5: Shed cleaning N = 100

Sr. no.	Independent variables	value of 'r'
1.	Age	-0.7514*
2.	Education	-0.4319*
3.	Family education status	-0.7840*
4.	Family type	-0.9535*
5.	Family size	-0.7082*
6.	Number of children	-0.8097*
7.	Caste	-0.8836*
8.	Innovation proneness	-0.9751*

Significant at 0.05 level

4. Conclusion
Dairy farming is one of the many tasks which are performed by rural women. This is an activity which can help women in becoming financially independent and thus become empowered. Therefore it is imperative to find out the factors affecting the involvement of rural women in dairy farming, so as to increase their involvement in this cash yielding activity. Four activities viz., fodder harvesting, collection and transportation, fodder chaffing, preparation of concentrate and distribution of fodder were considered for the purpose of this research paper. It was found that type of family, size of family, number of children, caste and innovation proneness were consistently, strongly and negatively affecting all the four activities under consideration. Therefore, these socio personal independent variables should be taken into consideration while planning dairy farming programmes for women. The independent variables of caste in fodder harvesting, collection and transportation, education and family size in fodder chaffing, innovation proneness in distribution of fodder and number of children in shed cleaning, caused significant variations in the involvement of rural women in these dairy farming activities.

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