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Participation of women as per marital status in pre sowing / sowing activities

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Abstract

Women have a specific role in both rice production and post-harvest activities yet they often, do not receive proportionate social and economic benefits when improvements in the cultivation at the field level are initiated. No worthwhile change in any sphere is possible without considering the gender issues and without women and men accepting the change. To make women realize the change and contribute fully to the development in any field it is imperative to develop their potentiality by improving their knowledge, attitude and skills. Despite significance of women's role in agriculture development evidence throughout the developing countries shows that the women farming knowledge and skill levels remain very low. Among the key reasons for those is the lack of technical advice they receive on production and marketing, cultural practices and skills related training in farming technologies. In order to enhance the productivity system for small holder farmers, a careful assessment of gender and labour roles becomes essential.

Keywords: Women, Marital status, pre-sowing, activities.

1. Introduction

There is universal recognition that fruits and vegetables are important for food security. The productions of vegetables, processing and marketing are significant contributor to income security and nutritive diets of many households. Population growth and urbanization are creating demand for food and concern rising about malnutrition especially in peri-urban areas of developing countries. Women vegetable growers benefit mostly from the rising importance of agriculture both in developed and developing countries. Women in general play significant role in vegetable production compared to cereals. Vegetables score among the most widely grown crops in the developing countries. In terms of value of production, vegetables rank even higher than all other cereals. Moreover, vegetable production develops management and leadership skills among the women vegetable growers. A strong vegetable sector can lead to vibrant economic growth and opportunities, support agribusiness and related service industries, creating employment opportunities to farmwomen and youth, (Saikou E. Sanyang, *et al.*, 2009).

In Kashmir small scale farmers produce most of vegetables supply to the market but production periods are relatively short. Women farmers continue producing vegetables even though they sell at a low price in a perfect market. It has been seen that as compared to rice net revenue per hectare from vegetables is higher than cereals. Vegetable cultivation in the valley of Kashmir has a vast potential of improving the economic status of farming community especially women folk that is highly engaged in various activities involved in its cultivation (Baba, S.H. *et al.*, 2010).

Over the past few years development of woman has been receiving special emphasis, when in practice it is staggering due to various other facts like low literacy, restrictive, social structure predominance of patriarchal society, low exposure to growth opportunities etc. In extension activities the women are now the centre point and activities are being planned keeping her in focus. Her enlightenment will change the face of rural India. Several Programmes started at the National Centre for Women in Agriculture and Krishi Vigyan

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Kendras are right steps in this direction. Female farmers generally own fewer tools and equipment than men. New technology has often been developed without the consideration of women’s needs. Recently, research efforts have developed a number of machines specially aimed at women. These new machines include micro-rice mills, direct seeding equipment, trans-planters and threshing machines developed by IRRI and Cassava for Tropical Agriculture.

Extension services frequently fail to provide adequate information to women farmers by failing to recognize their specific needs. It is therefore important not to consider women farmers a homogenous category, sharing exactly the same constraints. There is need to recognize that there is considerable diversity in the issue itself because women include young, old, disabled, married and single, poor and relatively wealthy from minority and majority groups connected with influential power and relatively powerless groups. So the young unmarried women have to be approached differently by the extension services as compared to older or married women.

There can be no two opinions that the contribution of farm women in prospering the economic prospects of a farming family is much more than that of farm men. Keeping in view their extra burden of housekeeping and rearing of children very less base line data has been collected so far. To know the extent of involvement of farm women in agricultural activities without having exact idea about the degree of involvement of farm women, it is difficult to say much about their contribution to agricultural production, their problems and constraints and also the type of measures that need to be taken to improve their skills and efficiency for increasing productivity. An extension system, however strong it may be, will not have the desired impact unless it also reaches the women effectively, recognizes their role and transfer of technology that is suited to their needs and is consistent with their means. It is for the sake of nation to move the farm women community in the desired way through the approach of education and training so that the potential of farm women is absorbed for the improvement of agriculture and allied activities in broader sense.

It is in this background that the present study has been proposed in the District Ganderbal of Jammu and Kashmir with the following specific objectives:

- To find out the role performance of farm women in various agriculture and allied activities
- To find out the reasons for short comings and non-performance of certain expected roles of the farm women

2. Methodology

2.1 Selection of Sample: 200 farm women were selected on the following criteria:

- a. 200 farm women represent the said 20 villages.
- b. Each village is represented by 10 households on the basis of:
 - i. Land holding of more than 3 kanals.

- ii. Dealings in animal husbandry.
- iii. Vegetable cultivation.

The farm women were interviewed while working in their fields. A well-meaning survey questionnaire was framed, on the basis of the objectives. Respondents were interviewed and elaborate discussions were held with them. Based on these discussions, the questionnaires were filled.

2.2 Selection of variables

The variables were selected for the study under following two broad headings:

- A) Independent variables.
- B) Dependent variables.

(A) Independent variables

These variables are related to the general information of a farm women respondent: the inputs about the age, marital status, educational back ground, size of the family, annual income and the total possession of land(irrigated or un-irrigated).

(B) Dependent variables

These variables mostly include the farm related information about each respondent. These variables were incorporated in questionnaire as under:

- Time spent on the farm and allied activities related to agriculture.
- Role expected.
- Role performed.
- Knowledge about the farming.
- Type of role performed in agriculture and allied activities.
- Livestock holding and role performed.
- Role in vegetable cultivation and marketing.
- Decision making with respect to the adoption of improved agricultural practices.
- Decision making with regard to the implementation of crop, technologies available.
- Utilization of spare time.
- Type of income generating activity involved.
- Exposure to the crop technologies.
- Knowledge about the chemicals available to control the plant/animal diseases and fertilizers used to improve production.
- Participation in trainings/workshops organised by the line department.
- Whether recommended package and practices adopted.
- Whether any assistance received from the development departments.

Pre-testing was conducted on 10% (20 respondents) of the total sample to determine the suitability and validity of the questionnaire. In the light of the findings from the pilot study, certain modifications were made in order to make the tool more purposeful

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Participation of women as per marital status in pre sowing/sowing activities (N=200; row %age; Multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widowed		Number	Percentage
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Levelling of land	133	82.6	19	11.8	9	5.6	161	80.50
Ploughing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00
Removal of trash	153	82.7	21	11.4	11	5.9	185	92.50
Repairing of bunds/ and channels	56	86.2	3	4.6	6	9.2	65	32.50

Maintenance of Agricultural Tools/Implements	19	90.5	1	4.8	1	4.8	21	10.50
Preparation of Compost/FYM	156	82.1	23	12.1	11	5.8	190	95.00
Seed selection	136	85.5	12	7.5	11	6.9	159	79.50
Seed treatment before sowing	36	83.7	3	7.0	4	9.3	43	21.50
Sowing/Transplanting of seedlings	159	82.0	24	12.4	11	5.7	194	97.00
Thinning/Gap filling	156	82.1	25	13.2	9	4.7	190	95.00
Application/Spreading of fertilizers	130	80.2	25	15.4	7	4.3	162	81.00
Total		76.15		9.11		5.65		62.27

The data on participation by the respondents with respect to their marital status as per the table given is 62.27 percent in all the pre-sowing/sowing activities. 97 percent have participated in sowing / transplanting of seedling, 95 percent in thinning/gap filling and preparation of compost / FYM, 92.50 percent in the removal of trash, 81.8 percent in application / spreading of fertilizers, 80.50 percent in levelling of land, 79.50 percent in seed selection, 32.50 percent have

taken part in the repairing of bunds and channels, 21.50 percent in seed treatment before sowing and 10.50 percent in the maintenance of agriculture tools /implements.

The maximum participation of 76.15 percent has been recorded by the married women in the given set of activities followed by unmarried women with 9.11 percent and 5.65 percent by widows. The data indicates that married women are more involved in the pre-sowing /sowing activities.

Table 2: Participation of women as per marital status in post sowing activities (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widowed		Number	Percentage
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Weeding	159	82.0	24	12.4	11	5.7	194	97.00
Scaring of birds	155	82.4	22	11.7	11	5.9	188	94.00
Application of fertilizers	132	81.5	21	13.0	9	5.6	162	81.00
Plant protection measures	22	78.6	1	3.6%	5	17.9	28	14.00
Procurement	4	66.7	1	16.7	1	16.7	6	3.00
Storage and carrying of pesticides	59	86.8	5	7.4	4	5.9	68	34.00
Solution/ Mixture preparation of pesticides	8	100.0	0	0	0	0	8	4.00
Spraying/dusting/plant propagation	13	86.7	1	6.7	1	6.7	15	7.50
Manuring	150	82.0	22	12.0	11	6.0	183	91.50
Irrigation	160	82.1	25	12.8	10	5.1	195	97.50
Repair of field channel/ bunds	104	78.8	17	12.9	11	8.3	132	66.00
General inspection of the crops	143	80.3	24	13.5	11	6.2	178	89.00
Total		82.33		10.23		7.50		56.54

In post sowing activities all respondents whether married, unmarried or widows have taken part in all the given set of activities with 56.54 percent participation in the given sample of 200 respondents.

97.50 percent have participated in Irrigation, 97 percent in weeding, 94 percent in the scaring of birds, 91.50 percent in manuring, and 89 percent in general inspection of the crops, 81 percent in the application of fertilizers and 34 percent participation in the storage and carrying of pesticides.

The lowest participation on the part of respondents has been in the activities of spraying/ dusting / plan propagation, solution / mixture preparation of pesticides and procurement

in the ratio of 7.50 percent, 4 percent and 3 percent respectively.

The maximum participation of 82.33 percent in these activities has been by the married women, followed by unmarried respondents with 10.23 percent participation when the widows with 7.50 percent ratio are at the lowest participation level.

In overall picture married respondents have dominated most of the activities followed by the unmarried respondents. The lowest participation has been by the widows in the given set of activities of post –sowing.

Table 3: Participation of women as per marital status in harvesting (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widowed		Number	Percentage
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage		
Harvesting	164	82.4	24	12.1	11	5.5	199	99.50
Bundling	156	81.7	24	12.6	11	5.8	191	95.50
Hatch making	152	81.3	24	12.8	11	5.9	187	93.50
Threshing	158	81.9	24	12.4	11	5.7	193	96.50
Winnowing	161	82.1	24	12.2	11	5.6	196	98.00
Bagging	152	81.3	25	13.4	10	5.3	187	93.50
Weighing	139	81.8	22	12.9	9	5.3	170	85.00
Transporting of farm produce	123	82.0	19	12.7	8	5.3	150	75.00
Loading and unloading of straw	119	78.8	21	13.9	11	7.3	151	75.50
Loading and unloading of grains	110	77.5	21	14.8	11	7.7	142	71.00
Total		81.08		12.98		5.94		88.30

In harvesting operations married, unmarried and widows as per the data given in the above table with 88.30 percent have Expressed participation in the total sample of 200 respondents. 99.50 percent have participated in harvesting activity, 98 Percent in winnowing, 96.50 percent in thrashing, and 95.50 percent in bundling, 93.50 percent (each) in the activity of hatch making and bagging, 85 percent in the weighing activity.

The variation in the range of 71 percent to 75.50 percent has been reflected by the activities of loading / unloading of straw, transporting of farm produce and in the loading / unloading of grains. The married women with 81.08 percent have shown maximum participation in the given set of activities. The unmarried respondents are with 12.98 percent participation, the widows have shown 5.94 percent participation.

Table 4: Participation of women as per marital status in post- harvesting (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widowed			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Drying	164	82.0	25	12.5	11	5.5	200	100.00
Sorting	163	81.9	25	12.6	11	5.5	199	99.50
Packing	163	81.9	25	12.6	11	5.5	199	99.50
Milling	151	80.7	25	13.4	11	5.9	187	93.50
Dehusking	156	81.3	25	13.0	11	5.7	192	96.00
Grinding	151	81.2	25	13.4	10	5.4	186	93.00
Storage	154	81.9	24	12.8	10	5.3	188	94.00
Total		81.56		12.90		5.54		96.50

In the post-harvest operations all the respondents whether married, unmarried and widows have taken part in all the activities. In the given data 96.50 percent participation has been recorded in the given sample of 200 respondents. In drying activity 100 percent participation has been recorded followed by 99.50 percent (each) in the activity of sorting and packing. 96 percent participation has been recorded in

dehusking, 94 percent in the Storage and 93.50 percent in the milling. The married respondents with 81.56 percent have registered maximum participation followed by the unmarried respondents with 12.90 percent participation. Widows again in the given set of post-harvest activities have registered lowest 5.54 percent participation.

Table 5: Participation of women as per marital status in vegetable cultivation (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widows			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Land preparation	162	81.8	25	12.6	11	5.6	198	99.00
Application of manure	163	82.3	25	12.6	10	5.1	198	99.00
Weeding and Hoeing	160	81.6	25	12.8	11	5.6	196	98.00
Application of esticides/Fungicides	140	81.9	24	14.0	7	4.1	171	85.50
Harvesting	161	81.7	25	12.7	11	5.6	197	98.50
Grading	149	81.4	24	13.1	10	5.5	183	91.50
Marketing	39	68.4	17	29.8	1	1.8	57	28.50
Total		79.87		15.37		4.76		85.71

In the vegetable cultivation the married, unmarried and widow respondents alike have registered 85.71 percent participation in all the given set of activities out of the sample of 200 respondents. Maximum participation of 99 percent has been registered in the land preparation and application of manure, 98.50 percent in harvesting, 98 percent in weeding and hoeing, 91.50

percent in the grading and 85.50 percent in the application of pesticides / fungicides. The minimum participation in the given set of activities has been in the marketing with 28.50 percent. The married women have registered maximum participation of 79.87 percent followed by unmarried with 15.37 percent and widows with 4.76 percent participation.

Table 6: Participation of women as per marital status in animal husbandry (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widows			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Bringing & Chaffing the fodder	155	81.2	25	13.1	11	5.8	191	95.50
Health care of animals	150	80.6	25	13.4	11	5.9	186	93.00
Milking	163	82.3	25	12.6	10	5.1	198	99.00
Marketing of milk and milk products	100	80.0	19	15.2	6	4.8	125	62.50
Cleaning of shed and preparing of cow dung cakes	143	80.8	25	14.1	9	5.1	177	88.50
Total		80.98		13.68		5.34		87.70

87.70 percent participation has been registered by the respondents of all categories given in table II (2.6) in the operations of animal husbandry. 99 percent respondents have participated in milking, 95.50 percent in bringing and chaffing of Fodder, 93 percent in the health care of animals, 62.50 percent in marketing of milk and milk Products and 88.50 percent in the cleaning of sheds and preparing of cow dung cakes.

The participation of respondents as per the given data has been almost similar in most of the given set of activities except cleaning of sheds / preparing of cow dung cakes and the marketing of milk and milk products. Married women 80.98 percent have registered maximum participation while as the widows with 5.34 percent have registered the least participation in the animal husbandry activities.

Table 7: Participation of women as per marital status in household activities (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widowed			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Cooking	164	82.0	25	12.5	11	5.5	200	100.00
Attending of children	150	80.6	25	13.4	11	5.9	186	93.00
Caring of livestock	154	81.1	25	13.2	11	5.8	190	95.00
Meeting neighbours and relatives	158	82.7	25	13.1	8	4.2	191	95.50
Fetching of water	45	72.6	11	17.7	6	9.7	62	31.00
Collection of firewood and cow dung	62	72.9	17	20.0	6	7.1	85	42.50
Cleaning of house and washing of clothes	158	81.4	25	12.9	11	5.7	194	97.00
Pickle making	95	74.8	24	18.9	8	6.3	127	63.50
Total		78.51		15.21		6.28		77.19

Under the household set of activities the respondents of all the categories given in table II (2.7) have registered 77.19 percent participation in the given sample of 200 respondents. 100 percent engagement has been in cooking, 97 percent in cleaning of house and washing of cloths, 95.50 percent in meeting neighbours/relatives and 95 percent in the caring of

livestock, 93 percent in attending of children, 63.50 percent in pickle making, 42.50 percent and 31 percent in the collection of firewood / cow dung and in fetching of water. Married respondents have shown maximum involvement with 78.51 percent followed by unmarried respondents with 15.21 percent and widows with just 6.28 percent.

Table 8: Participation of women as per marital status in decision making (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widows			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Selection of Varieties	151	81.6	24	13.0	10	5.4	185	92.50
Choice of substantive crops	118	81.4	20	13.8	7	4.8	145	72.50
Livestock raising	148	81.3	23	12.6	11	6.0	182	91.00
Purchase of agrochemicals/Farm Machinery	53	94.6	3	5.4	0	0	56	28.00
Kind of farm produce to be sold	143	82.2	21	12.1	10	5.7	174	87.00
Marketing of Farm Produce	85	80.2	15	14.2	6	5.7	106	53.00
Total		83.55		11.85		4.60		70.67

A total of 70.67 percent of respondents have registered their involvement in all the activities related with the decision making. 92.50 percent respondents have shown their involvement in selection of varieties, 91 percent in the livestock raising, 87 percent in the kind of farm produce to be sold, 72.50 percent in the choice of substantive crops and 53

percent in the marketing of farm produce, 28 percent in the purchase of agro chemicals / farm machinery. In the overall picture of participation married respondents have recorded 83.55 percent followed by unmarried with 11.85 percent and 4.60 percent by widows.

Table 9: Participation of women as per marital status in non fulfilment of expected role (N=200; row %age; multiple choice)

Activity	Marital Status						Total	
	Married		Unmarried		Widowed			
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Not Applicable	135	80.8	23	13.8	9	5.4	167	83.50
Domestic work	25	86.2	2	6.9	2	6.9	29	14.50
Attending children	17	81.0	2	9.5	2	9.5	21	10.50
Personal health	15	100.0	0	0	0	0	15	7.50
Total		87.00		7.55		5.45		29.00

Towards the non-fulfillment of expected role 29 percent respondents have cited various reasons. 83.50 percent have held that there are no reasons which would check their participation.

14.50 percent hold domestic work responsible in non-fulfillment of their expected role, 10.50 percent hold the activity of attending on the children while as only 7.50 percent hold personal health ground responsible for their poor performance. The positive indication in the given data is that a big chunk of respondents carryout their work and fulfill their assigned role.

4. Conclusion

- The maximum participation of 76.15 percent has been recorded by the married women in the given set of activities followed by unmarried women with 9.11 percent and 5.65 percent by widows. The data indicates that married women are more involved in the pre-sowing /sowing activities.
- In post sowing activities all respondents whether married, unmarried or widows have taken part in all the given set of activities with 56.54 percent participation in the given sample of 200 respondents.
- The maximum participation of 82.33 percent in these activities has been by the married women, followed by unmarried respondents with 10.23 percent participation when the widows with 7.50 percent ratio are at the lowest participation level.
- In overall picture married respondents have dominated most of the activities followed by the unmarried respondents. The lowest participation has been by the widows in the given set of activities of post –sowing.
- In harvesting operations married, unmarried and widows as per the data given in the above table with 88.30 percent have expressed participation in the total sample of 200 respondents.
- The married women with 81.08 percent have shown maximum participation in the given set of activities. The unmarried respondents are with 12.98 percent participation, the widows have shown 5.94 percent participation.
- The married respondents with 81.56 percent have registered maximum participation followed by the unmarried respondents with 12.90 percent participation.
- Widows again in the given set of post-harvest activities have registered lowest 5.54 percent participation.
- The minimum participation in the given set of activities has been in the marketing with 28.50 percent.
- The participation of respondents as per the given data has been almost similar in most of the given set of activities except cleaning of sheds / preparing of cow dung cakes and the marketing of milk and milk products.
- Married women 80.98 percent have registered maximum participation while as the widows with 5.34 percent have registered the least participation in the animal husbandry activities.
- Under the household set of activities the respondents of all the categories given in table II (2.7) have registered 77.19 percent participation in the given sample of 200 respondents.
- Towards the non-fulfilment of expected role 29 percent respondents have cited various reasons. 83.50 percent have held that there are no reasons which would check their participation.

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