

**Research Note :**

PARTICIPATION OF FARM WOMEN IN AGRI-HORTICULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN RURAL AREA OF DELHI

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Delhi is National Capital Territory and one of the biggest metropolitan city of our country. Soil of Delhi is sandy loam type and ground water mostly brackish. Due to dense population, vegetable demand is high but most of the farm women have small and marginal land holding. Farm women contribute significantly to agriculture and allied activities in the Delhi. They expend their energies in growing marginal crops from marginal lands with marginal resources. Various studies conducted in our country indicated that farm women contributed in all activities except ploughing, they are involved in all other activities in some form or the other. The present study was conducted to analyze the extent of participation of farm women in wheat, mustard, paddy and horticultural crops grown in rural peripheri of Delhi.

The study was carried out in two blocks of rural Delhi *i.e.* Najafgarh and Alipur which have cultivated land in NCT Delhi, where women participate in agriculture. A sample of 238 farm women representing small, medium and large farm families was selected from 4 villages of each block. A list of major operations to be performed in the wheat, mustard, paddy and vegetable crops was prepared and the farm women were asked to indicate the extent of participation in terms of self-participation, assistance and no participation. A score of 2, 1 and 0 was accorded to each category of participation. Based on the mean and standard deviation, the farm women were grouped as having "High", "Medium" and "Low" participation.

Socio-economic profile of respondents

The socio-economic profile of the farm women indicated that majority of them belonged to 26-52 years age group, had a family size ranging between 4-7 members and had about 15 years of experience in agri-horticulture related activities and

their annual income ranged between Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 1,10,000. Among respondents 40% stated they had no media contact with extension agencies, 55% of them had no media exposure and 45% of them had low awareness about state development programmes. The psychological characteristics indicated low to medium level of achievement motivation, medium creativity and low to medium rationality in decision making.

Table 1: Participation of farm women in different activities of farming.

Activity/ Crop	Wheat	Must ard	Paddy	Horti- cultural crops
Ploughing	0	0	0	0
Seed treatment	2	1	1	1
Sowing/transpl- anting	0	2	2	2
Irrigation	2	2	1	2
Weeding	2	1	2	2
Harvesting	2	2	2	2
Threshing	2	2	2	-
Winnowing	2	2	2	-
Post harvest operations	2	2	2	2
Marketing	0	0	0	0

Participation in farm activities

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the farm women had medium to high participation in wheat production activities. Self participation was found in seed treatment, irrigation, weeding, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, drying and storage. They did not perform sowing, ploughing, marketing and maintenance of agricultural implements. Mustard is grown in this area for oil purpose and its cake for animal feed. The participation of farm women was found to be high in sowing, irrigation, harvesting

and threshing. Moreover, post harvest operations were the exclusive domain of farm women irrespective of the farm size. Manju (2), Goyal *et al.* (1) and Waris (3) reported high participation of women in weeding, harvesting, threshing and post harvest operations. While in case of paddy participation of farm women was found high in transplanting, weeding, harvesting, threshing and drying/storage.

Similar to wheat, in mustard and paddy, participation of farm women was found high in sowing/transplanting, weeding, irrigation, harvesting, grading and packaging of horticultural crops. Participation in terms of assistance was found to be more in activities such as fertilizer application, seed & seedling treatment and spraying of pesticides. It was observed that though the farm women perform all major activities, marketing was not their domain. The reason for non participation in marketing may be social restriction on their mobility. Similar finding of high participation rate of women in weeding, drying and storage have been reported by Goyal *et al.* (1) and Waris (3).

Conclusion

Farm women participation to agri-horticulture

in rural Delhi is immense and based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that except ploughing they are involved in all other activities in some form or the other. It was observed that majority of farm women belong to the 26-52 years age group, the extension personnel may therefore, concentrate on technology transfer to this age group for quick dissemination and wide spread adaptation of improved and drudgery reduction technologies. It is also realize that rural farm women can work through local women's group and reach home bound women whose access to services and resources is restricted.

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