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Profile Characteristics of Farm Women with Reference to Knowledge Groups in Maheshwarammandal of Rangareddy District, India

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A B S T R A C T

The present study was conducted in Maheswarammandal of Ranga Reddy district, Telangana. A total of 120 farm women who engaged in farming were selected through purposive random sampling technique. The results revealed that majority (53.33%) of the farm women belonged to the age group of young age i.e., 18-35 years were married (86.67%) and 31.67% had completed their high school education and farm women were having below 10 years of work experience (38.33%). Majority (45%) of the farm women were having farming as their family occupation by holding medium level land size (35%) having their own lands (99%) and belonged to small families (84.17%) with less than three members in the family. It was observed that main crops cultivated in the selected locale by the farm women were cotton (87.50 %), cereals (79.17%), vegetables (76.67%) and flowers (66.67%). Less than cent per cent (81.67%) of the farm women were participating regularly in self-help groups by contacting community coordinator (68.33%) as their external personnel and received cent percent of source of information about farming from traditional knowledge and family members.

Introduction

In India, women were involved highly in farm activities as well as household activities which act as the obstacles for her to empower the farm activities. In performing different farm activities there are various farm tools and technologies which are not much known to the farm women. When there is no much knowledge about the new technologies in agriculture, the women faces problem in doing farm activities and have to depend on other external individual for support. The world is changing very fast pace were women require a platform to exchange their knowledge in every aspect of life seen i.e., society, agriculture, economy, livelihood etc. Information is essential for the development of knowledge in accordance to their livelihood and daily activities.

Bansal and Joshi (2018) revealed that seventy per cent of respondents belonged to young age group and 80 per cent were married and had farming (81%) as their main occupation. Nearly three fourth of the respondents (79-100%) didn't have any participation in other organization viz. Mahilamandal, zila Panchayat and taluk Panchayat. Kumawat (2017) also reported that 47 per cent respondents belonged to age group of 31-45 years. Majority of the respondents were married (88%) and illiterate (55%). Majority of the respondents (70%) belonged to the category of low socio-economic status. Dayya *et al.,* (2016) reported 89 per cent of the respondents had no organizational membership whereas, 11 per cent respondents were member of formal organization (SHGs).Thus, it is very important to study the profile characteristics of farm women to associate them into knowledge groups to empower women in agriculture with available sources.

Materials and Methods

Exploratory research design was adopted for the present study. A total of 120 farm women who engaged in farming were selected randomly from 6 villages of Maheswarammandal of Rangareddy district. Interview schedule was used for data collection. Frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used for analyzing the data by using MS excel.

Results and Discussion

Profile characteristics of farm women was collected under the following heads like age, educational qualification, marital status, size of family, type of family, family occupation, farm women occupation, land holding, cultivable land, work experience, main crop in cultivation, source of information about farming, organizational participation and frequency of contact with extension

personnel. The data was tabulated, presented and discussed below.

From the distribution of table, majority (53.33%) of the farm women fall under the age group of young age i.e. 18-35 years followed by 38.33 per cent middle age i.e. 36-50 whereas only few 8.33 per cent farm women are in the age group of above 50 years From this it is evident that in India, majority of the farm works are being done by women farmers only and majority of the farm women were in the age group of 18 years to 50 years who are actively involved in farming (Table 1).

It is clear from Table 2, maximum (31.67%) of the farm women had completed their high school education, followed by college education by 1/4th (24.17%) of the farm women while around small percentage of the farm women were having middle schooling (17.50%) and (13.33%) illiteracy education levels. Only 5.83 percent of the farm women had completed their graduation and above level of education.

From Figure 1, Highest (86.67%) percentage of farm women were married while nearly twelve percent (11.67%) of them were widows and only few (1.67%) were unmarried.

From Table 3, the results revealed that utmost (84.17%) of the farm women were belonged to small families with less than three members in the family, followed by medium families (10.83%) with 4 – 5 members in the family and only 5 percent of farm women were belonged to the large families viewing the lessening of joint and large families in now a day's societies.

From Figure 2, Greater part (90%) of farm women belonged to the nuclear families. Only 12 percentages are from joint families.

Table 4 depicts that majority (45%) of the farm women were having farming as their family occupation followed by the farming along with business (25.83%) and next mainly followed family occupation was farming along with service with 20.00 per cent while only farming with daily wage earnings was least (9.17%) taken up family occupation by the farm women showing their active involvement in farming in one or other ways.

From the distribution of Table 5 results revealed that farming was most engaged occupation by the good number (47.5%) of the farm women. Farming along with business was next followed occupation (22.50%) of the farm women and almost equal percentage of the farm women were engaged in only farming along with service (15.8 %) and farming cum daily wage earner (14.2%).

Table.1 Distribution of farm women by age in years N=120		
Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Young age (18-35)	64	53.33
Middle age(Between 36-50)	46	38.33
Old age (Above 50)	10	8.33
Total	120	
Mean$\pm$S.D	34.81$\pm$9.7	

Table.2 Distribution of farm women by educational qualification N=120		
Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Illiterate	16	13.33
Primary School	9	7.50
Middle School	21	17.50
High School	38	31.67
Intermediate	29	24.17
Graduation & Above	7	5.83
Total	120	
Mean$\pm$S.D	3.63$\pm$1.42	

Table.3 Distribution of farm women by family size N=120		
Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Small (less than 3 member)	101	84.17
Medium (4-5 member)	13	10.83
Large (7-9 member)	6	5.00
Total	120	
Mean$\pm$S.D	2.96$\pm$1.3	

Table.4 Distribution of farm women by occupation of the family

N=120

Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Farming	54	45.00
Farming and service	24	20.00
Farming and business	31	25.83
Farming and daily wage earner	11	9.17
Total	120	

Table.5 Distribution of farm women by occupation

N=120

Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Farming	57	47.50
Farming and service	19	15.83
Farming and business	27	22.50
Farming and daily wage earner	17	14.17
Total	120	

Table.6 Distribution of farm women by land holding

N=120

Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Landless	2	1.67
Marginal	23	19.17
Small	37	30.83
Medium	42	35.00
Large	16	13.33
Total	120	

Table.7 Distribution of farm women by work experience

N=120

Category	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
0-10 years	46	38.33
10-20 years	44	36.67
20- 30 years	24	20.00
Above 30 years	6	5.00
Total	120	
Mean±S.D	15.01±9.4	

Table.8 Main crop in cultivation		N=120
Crops	Yes F (%)	No F (%)
Cereals (paddy, maize)	95 (79.17)	25 (20.83)
Pulses (red gram dhal)	67 (55.83)	53 (44.17)
Flowers (Chrysanthemum, lily, jasmine and rose)	80 (66.67)	40 (33.33)
Vegetables (all types)	92 (76.67)	28 (23.33)
Cotton	105 (87.50)	15 (12.50)

Table.9 Source of information about farming		N=120
Sources	Yes F (%)	No F (%)
Traditional knowledge	120 (100.00)	--
News paper	32 (26.67)	88 (73.33)
Krishi Vignan Kendras (KVKs)	12 (10.00)	108 (90.00)
Agricultural University	30 (25.00)	90 (75.00)
Climate related agricultural counseling	--	120 (100.00)
Agricultural Extension Officer (AEO)	72 (60.00)	48 (40.00)
Television (TV)	98 (81.66)	22 (18.33)
Radio	35 (29.17)	85 (70.83)
Mobile phone	54 (45.00)	66 (55.00)
Family members	120 (100.00)	--
Neighbour's	114 (95.00)	6 (5.00)

Table.10 Percent distribution of farm women according to organizational participation

N=120

Organizational participation	Regularly F (%)	Occasionally F (%)	Never F (%)
Self Help Groups	98 (81.67)	16 (13.33)	6 (5.00)
Anganwadi centre	59 (49.17)	35 (29.17)	26 (21.67)
Mahila mandal	11 (9.17)	31 (25.83)	78 (65.00)
Gram Panchayat	34 (28.33)	62 (51.67)	24 (20.00)
Taluk panchayat	29 (24.17)	37 (30.83)	54 (45.00)
Zilla panchayat	24 (20.00)	34 (28.33)	62 (51.66)
Farmers Organization	26 (21.67)	43 (35.83)	51 (42.50)

Table.11 Distribution of farm women according to frequency of contact with extension personnel

N=120

Extension personnel	Regularly F (%)	Occasionally F (%)	Never F (%)
VLEW(61.67%)	34 (28.33)	74 (61.67)	12 (10.00)
Agriculture Extension Officer (AEO)	30 (25.00)	75 (62.50)	15 (12.50)
Extension officer	33 (27.50)	62 (51.67)	25 (20.83)
Farmers organizations	34 (28.33)	70 (58.33)	16 (13.33)
Community coordinator (SHGs)	82 (68.33)	30 (25.00)	8 (6.67)
Anganwadi Worker	70 (58.33)	33 (27.50)	17 (14.17)
University personnel	10 (8.33)	28 (23.33)	82 (68.33)
NGOs Personnel	14 (11.67)	20 (16.67)	86 (71.67)
Bank Personnel	46 (38.33)	53 (44.17)	21 (17.50)
Block personnel (VAO & VRO)	27 (22.50)	80 (66.67)	13 (10.83)

Figure.1 Distribution of farm women by marital status
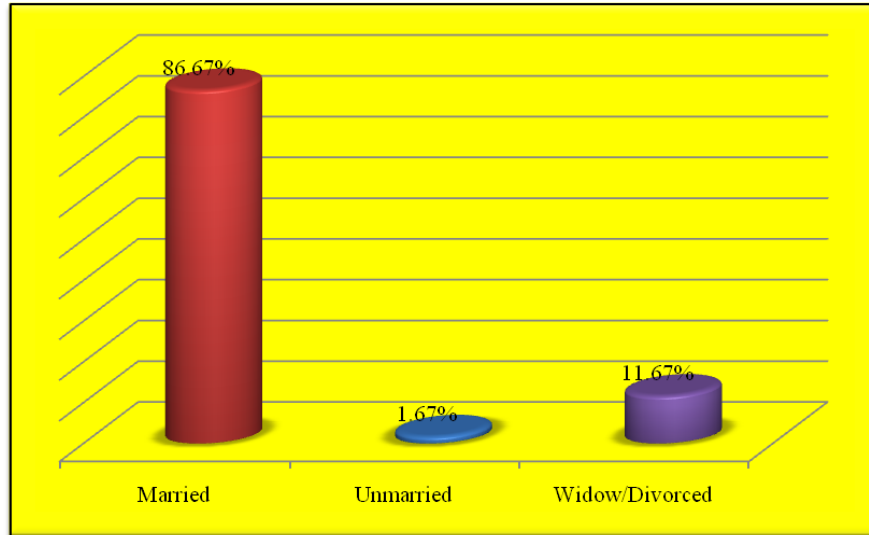

Figure.2 Distribution of farm women by family type
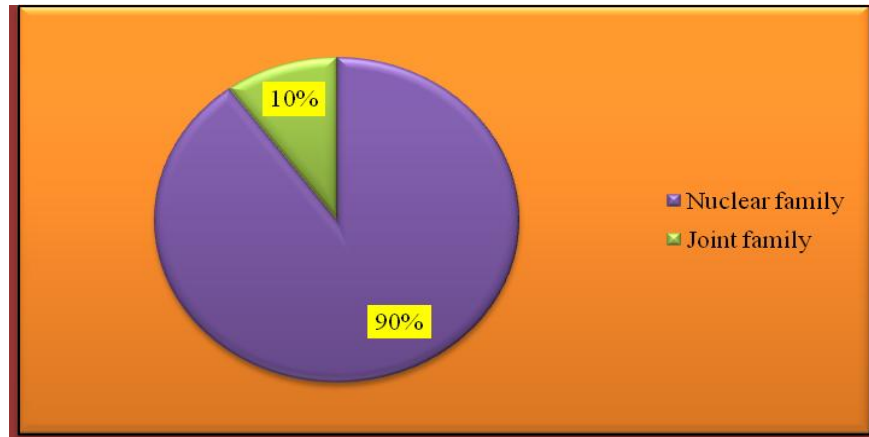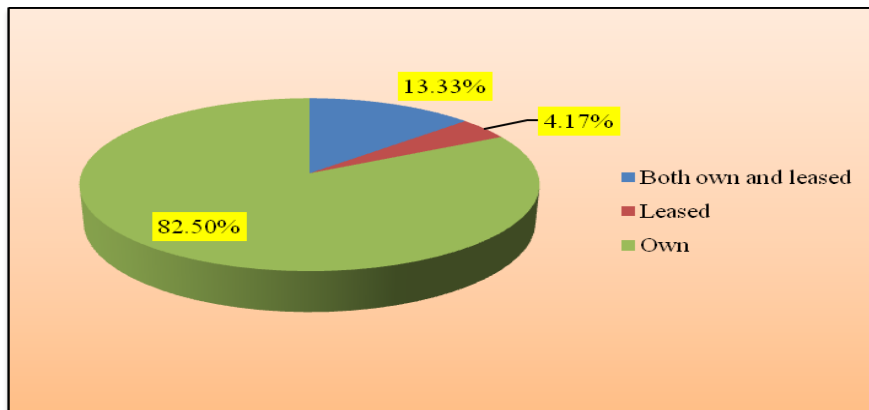

Figure.3 Distribution of farm women by cultivable land

It is clear from the table 6, 35 percent of the women farmers were holding medium level land size of farms followed by small (30.83%) land holdings. Only 13 percent (13.33%) of the farmers are with large land holding whereas land less farmers was only among small (1.67%) of the farmers.

According to cultivable land among the farmers, it was observed that highest number (99%) of farm women were having own lands while leased lands were found only among little amount of the farm women (4.17%) (Fig. 3).

With reference to work experience, majority (38.33%) of the farm women were having below 10 years of work experience and only five per cent of farm women were having above 30 years of work experience. Whereas 36.67 per cent of farm women were having 10-20 years of work experience whereas 20 per cent of farm women were having 20-30 years of work experience (Table 7).

Table 8 depicted that the main crops cultivated in the selected locale by the farm women. It disclosed that cotton was the major crop grown (87.50%) by the farm women followed by cereals (79.17%) such as paddy and maize. Vegetables (76.67%) and flowers (66.67%) were next following grown crops while pulses (55.83%) were the less grown crops by farm women evidencing the shortage of irrigation waters in the region.

Table 9 indicated that cent percent of source of information about farming was received through traditional knowledge and family members followed by Neighbour's (95%), television (81.66%), agricultural extension officer (60%), mobile phone (45%), radio (29.17%), newspaper (26.67%), agricultural university (25%) and Krishivigyankendras (10%).

Table 10 indicates that the regularly participating farm women in different organizations. A little less than cent per cent (81.67%) of the farm women were participated in self-help groups followed by anganwadi centre (49.17%), gram panchayat (28.33%), taluk panchayat (24.17%), farmers organization (21.67%), zilla panchayat (20%) and mahila mandal (9.17%).

With reference to frequency of farm women contacts with external personnel, majority of the farm women contacted with external personnel were community coordinator (68.33%) and anganwadi worker (58.33%) whereas occasionally contacted farm women were block personnel (66.67%), agriculture extension officer (62.50%), VLEW (61.67%), Farmers organizations (58.33%) and Extension officer (51.67%) (Table 11).

From the study, it was concluded that majority of the farm women were married and belonged to young age group with high school education and with below 10 years of work experience. Majority of the farm women were having farming as their family occupation by holding medium level land size having their own lands and belonged to small families with less than three members in the family. It was observed that main crops cultivated in the selected locale by the farm women were cotton, cereals, vegetables and flowers. Less than cent per cent of the farm women were participating regularly in self-help groups by contacting community coordinator as their external personnel and received source of information about farming from traditional knowledge and family members.

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