Existing knowledge of farm women on rice production technology

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ABSTRACT

Women are the backbone of agricultural workforce also and make essential contributions to the agricultural and rural economies in all developing countries. Compared to men, farm women are generally involved in a wider range in crops, livestock and agro-based activities. She share abundant responsibilities to perform wide spectrum of duties both at home and outside the home. She plays a significant role in agricultural development and allied fields.. Despite their importance to agricultural production, agricultural development programes are usually targeted at men. Women are generally by-passed in development efforts. A study was conducted in three agro-climatic zones of Assam to study the socio-economic status of farm women and to find out the Existing knowledge of farm women on rice production technology. A multistage purposive cum random sampling design was followed. Altogether 1,200 farm women were included as sample of respondents. Data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule The findings reveals that 52.60 % of farm women belonged to low socio-economic status. Majority (61.17%) of farm women had low level knowledge.

Key words **:Knowledge , farm women and rice production.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Women constitute nearly one half of the world's population having enormous potential and they are the builder and moulder of any nation's destiny. In the history of human development, women were as important as man. In fact, the status, employment and work performed by women in society is the indicator of a nation's overall progress. Without the participation of women in national activities, the social, economical or political progress of a country will stagnate. A woman is the nucleus of the family, she share abundant responsibilities to perform wide spectrum of duties both at home and outside the home. She takes care of the children and members of the family, their health, orientation and education and attends to various income generation activities. She manages all the household matters, looks after the family assets, produce agricultural crops, manages livestock and works for almost 14-16 hours a day.

Women are usually employed in most difficult field operations like sowing, transplanting, weeding, intercultural operations, harvesting, threshing and agro- processing. It can be seen that mechanization and modernization of agriculture have led to increased agricultural productivity and decreased drudgery, but mechanization has occurred for activities usually carried out by men, women continue to toil in labour intensive chores. The crucial importance of women's contribution to food security is widely recognized. Yet they faced with a number of constraints for participation in agriculture such as, there are (i) discrimination in wages, low wages for women, (ii) gender based technology, training and extension services, (iii) women have limited access to modern technical *viz.*, credit, training and to other facilities etc. (Rath *et al.*, 2007). Thus the important contribution made by women of Assam in agriculture, provides the necessary basis and justification for the present study with the following objectives:

- To study the socio-economic status of farm women .
- To find out the Existing knowledge of farm women on rice production technology.

2.MATERIALS AND METHODS:

Sample and sampling procedure

The study was conducted in three agro-climatic zones of Assam state in India : Upper Brahmaputra Valley Zone, Central Brahmaputra Valley Zone and North Bank Plain Zone. A multistage purposive cum- random sampling design was followed. From each selected agro-climatic zone two districts, (total six) were selected purposively. Again from each selected district one sub-division (total six) were selected purposively considering the involvement of farm women in agricultural activities.

From each selected sub-division two blocks total (twelve) were selected purposively. From each selected block four villages were selected randomly. Thus 48 villages were selected for carrying out the study. From each selected village 25 farm women, (total 1,200) were selected randomly.

Variable and its measurements
Socio-economic status
This refers to the position of the respondent in society and was determined by various social and economic variables such as caste, land holding, education, type of house, main family occupation, family type, family size, material possession and organizational membership of farm women. The socio-economic status of farm women were measured by the socio-economic scale developed by (Trivedi,1963) with slight modification. On the basis of score obtained by the farm women they were categorized into the 3- three categories: Low with score range below X- Sd, medium with X-Sd to X+Sd and high with above X+Sd.

Existing knowledge of farm women on rice production technology English and English (1958) defined knowledge as a body of understood information possessed by an individual. They further explained that knowledge is that part of a person's information which is in accordance with established fact.

In the present study, knowledge refers to the amount of detailed information possessed by farm women on rice production technology. Here the Farm women's responses were recorded on a three point continuum as know thoroughly, know somewhat and not known and scored as 3, 2 and 1.

On the basis of score obtained by the farm women they were categorized into the 3 categories :

Category	Score Range
Low	Below ($\overline{X}$ - Sd)
Medium	$\overline{X}$ -Sd to $\overline{X}$ +Sd
High	Above $\overline{X}$ +Sd

Statistical analysis
A pre-tested interview schedule was used for getting the complete and desired information. The collected data were coded, tabulated and analyzed by using appropriate tests and techniques. The statistical techniques along with their uses were:

Percentage: It is a fraction expressed with 100 as its denominator. It is used to any set of data for comparison.
Mean: It is the arithmetic average and was used to measure the type of the observation as a whole. The mean for all the readings were worked out as mentioned below.

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum X}{n}$$

Mean

Where, $\sum X$ = Summation of item values
N = Number of item

Standard deviation: To find out the extent of variability shown by the variables, i.e., the dispersion of the variables around the mean, standard deviation (SD) was used. The formula is mentioned below:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(xi - \overline{x})^2}{n-1}}$$

Where, d = Standard deviation
n = Total number of respondent
x_i = Variables of the study
$\overline{x}$ = Mean of the distribution

3.RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic status of farm women
Majority 55.08 per cent of farm women of the study areas belonged to middle age group i.e. 30-40 yrs. Large majority (91.66%) of farm women were married. 44.75 per cent of farm women belonged to general caste. 41.33 per cent of farm women belonged to the category of marginal farmer. 38.50 per cent of farm women had education upto middle school. 46.42 per cent farm women had mixed type of house. 46.50 per cent of the farm women's family occupation was farming. Majority (77.89%) of farm women belonged to nuclear family. The data reveals that majority (63.95%) of farm women belonged to small family. Cent per cent of farm families possessed hoe and hand tools, followed by desi plough (99.08%) and bullock (98.25%). Majority 60.91 per cent of farm families possesses two wheelers. 87.08 per cent of farm families possess mobile followed by television (70.42%). Large majority (95.42%) of farm families possess traditional chullah. 64.09 per cent of farm women were member of one organization. 52.60 per cent of farm women belonged to low socio-economic status.

Existing knowledge of farm women on rice production technology
Knowledge is one of the important components of behaviour and plays an important part in covert or overt behaviour of an individual. A knowledgeable person is capable of clear and balanced thinking. She/he is able to take right decisions at the appropriate time. The results of the existing knowledge of the farm women on rice production technologies have been presented in Table 1

The table reveals that majority (61.17%) of farm women had low level knowledge followed by medium level knowledge (26.92%) and high level of knowledge (11.92%). The low level of knowledge may be due to the fact that farm women had no exposure to training on rice production technology. These findings are in line with the findings of Singh and Singh (1981), Govind *et al.* (1991), Bhople and Patki (1992) and Kaur and Mahajan (1993).

Table 1. Existing Knowledge of farm women on rice production technology

Sl. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	S.D	C.V
1.	Low < 7.58	734	61.17			
2.	Medium 7.58 to 12.46	323	26.92	10.02	2.44	24.35
3.	High > 12.46	143	11.92			

CONCLUSION

The findings presented in this study show that farm women belong to low socio-economic status. Majority (61.17%) of farm women had low level knowledge on rice production technology. Thus the extension service should be more gender sensitive when organizing extension activities at different levels, so that women farmers have full and appropriate access to extension meetings, demonstrations, field days and trainings to increase their technological knowledge.

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