

PARTICIPATION OF FARM FAMILY WOMEN IN DAIRY AND POULTRY ENTERPRISES

Women play a crucial role in all societies. Agriculture is unique with the homestead system of farming in which a number of crops are grown along with livestock, poultry / fish production mainly for the purpose of satisfying the basic needs of farm family. According to Puri (1981), almost all tasks related with farm animals were predominantly carried out by wives and they took decisions in bringing fodder from the field, chaff cutting, preparing feed for cattle, bathing and cleaning cattle, cleaning the cattle shed and compost making. Singh and Chander (1983) also reported that women play a key role in performing the various tasks related with cattle management. In spite of their pivotal role in crop husbandry, animal husbandry etc., people in charge of formulating package of technologies, services and policy planning of rural areas tended to neglect the productive role of women. A study was undertaken to assess the nature and extent of participation of farm family women in dairy and poultry enterprises.

The study was conducted in three panchayats of Trichur District. A total of 150 female heads of family who are having dairy / poultry enterprises in their homestead were selected for the study. A well structured, pre-tested interview schedule was used and information collected. The nature of participation with respect of dairy and poultry enterprises was measured on a four point scale with scores of 0, 1, 2 and 3 respectively for 'no participation', 'supervisory only', 'jointly carrying out' and 'participation solely'. The extent of participation was measured quantitatively on a three point scale with scores of 2, 1 and 0 for participation 'to a greater extent', 'to some extent' and 'no participation' respectively. Similarly, the nature of participation in decision making was

measured on a four point continuum with scores of 0, 1, 2 and 3 for not at all, presence only, jointly carrying out, carrying out solely respectively. To study the extent of participation in decision making, a three point scale with scores of 2, 1 and 0 for 'always', 'sometimes' and 'never' respectively was used.

As evident from Table 1, majority of the respondents 'solely' participated in the operations like maintenance of cattle shed (54.7%), feeding of birds (56%) and hatching of eggs / chicks (54.7%). Similarly, majority 'jointly' participated in the care of sick animals (54.7%). Regarding their extent of participation, majority participated to a 'greater extent' in the care and management of milch animals (61.3%), maintenance of cattle shed (60%), feeding of animals (52%), preparation of milk and milk products (57.3%), care and management of poultry birds (60%), feeding of birds (52%), hatching of eggs / chicks (58.7%) and marketing of milk and eggs (50.7%). It is to be reckoned here that while handling sick animals, the help of the men-folk is inevitable. For applying medicines, feeding of medicines and such other operations, women will have to depend on men for physical help. Similarly, for taking animals to the veterinary hospitals, the assistance of men-folk is a must.

The results presented in Table 2 revealed that majority 'solely' participated in decision making areas like deciding the type of milk products to be made (56%), hatching of eggs (45.3%) and marketing of milk and eggs (48.7%). They 'jointly' participated in deciding the care of sick animals (50%). Considering their extent of participation, majority 'always' participated in deciding the time and frequency of milking (50%) and type of milk products to be made (52%). Similarly,

Table 1. Nature and extent of participation of farm family women in dairy / poultry enterprises (n = 150)

Sl. No.	Operations	Nature of participation								Extent of participation							
		Solely		Jointly		Supervision only		Not at all		Greater extent		Some extent		No participation			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	Care and management of milch animals	66	44.0	44	29.3	36	24.0	10	6.7	92	61.3	44	29.3	14	9.3		
2	Maintenance of cattle shed	82	54.7	27	18.0	32	21.3	9	6.0	90	60.0	32	21.3	28	18.7		
3	Feeding of animals	62	41.3	58	38.7	24	16.0	6	4.0	78	52.0	42	28.0	36	20.0		
4	Milking	58	38.7	44	29.3	32	21.3	16	10.7	72	48.0	51	34.0	27	18.0		
5	Care of sick animals	18	12.0	82	54.7	10	6.7	30	20.0	46	30.7	64	42.7	40	26.7		
6	Preparation of milk and milk products	65	43.3	15	10.0	30	20.0	40	26.7	86	57.3	48	32.0	16	10.7		
7	Care and management of poultry birds	66	44.0	40	26.7	14	9.3	30	20.0	90	60.0	48	32.0	12	8.0		
8	Feeding of birds	84	56.0	16	10.7	20	13.3	30	20.0	78	52.0	32	21.3	40	26.7		
9	Hatching of eggs / chicks	82	54.7	27	18.0	32	21.3	9	6.0	88	58.7	32	21.3	30	20.0		
10	Marketing of milk and eggs	71	47.3	49	32.7	20	13.3	10	6.7	76	50.7	42	28.0	32	21.3		

F - Frequency

Table 2. Participation of farm family women in dairy and poultry decision making (n = 150)

Sl. No.	Decision making areas	Nature of participation								Extent of participation							
		Solely		Jointly		Presence only		Not at all		Always		Some times		Never			
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
1	Decision regarding the variety / breed to be grown	42	28.0	40	26.7	28	18.7	40	26.7	35	23.3	75	50.0	40	26.7		
2	Decision regarding the care and management of cattle shed	64	42.7	50	33.3	36	24.0	0	0	72	48.0	68	45.3	10	6.7		
3	Deciding the type of feed to be used	40	26.7	48	32.0	32	21.3	30	20.0	45	30.0	56	37.3	49	32.7		
4	Deciding the time and frequency of milking	60	40.0	40	26.7	20	13.3	30	20.0	75	50.0	40	26.7	35	23.3		
5	Decision regarding the care of sick animals	40	26.7	75	50.0	35	23.3	0	0	40	26.7	90	60.0	20	13.3		
6	Decision regarding the type of milk products to be used	84	56.0	25	16.7	20	13.3	21	14.0	78	52.0	42	28.0	30	20.0		
7	Deciding the care and management of poultry birds	65	43.3	35	23.3	30	20.0	20	13.3	45	30.0	80	53.3	25	16.7		
8	Deciding the stage at which vaccination has to be adopted	27	18.0	65	43.3	30	20.0	28	18.7	34	22.7	66	44.0	50	33.3		
9	Decision regarding the hatching of eggs	68	45.3	22	14.7	40	26.7	20	11.3	67	44.7	25	16.7	58	38.7		
10	Decision with respect to marketing of milk and eggs	73	48.7	25	16.7	20	13.3	32	21.3	64	42.7	46	30.7	40	26.7		

majority participated 'sometimes' in deciding the variety / breed to be grown (50%), care of animals (60%) and care and management of cattle shed (53.3%). From time immemorial, women consider these areas as their own and decisions were taken in all these aspects. For

some aspects of animal care, they seek the advice of their husbands.

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