

A STUDY OF MULTIPLE ROLES IN FARMS AND HOMES OF RURAL WOMEN OF FAIZABAD REGION OF U.P

Dr.Nirmala Singh
Associate Professor (Home Science))
Jwala Devi Vidya Mandir College,Kanpur

Abstract

Globally women constitute almost half of the human resource and are the pivot around whom the family the society and the whole humanity moves. The prosperity growth of nation is measured by the status and development of its women as they not only constitute half of its population, but also influence the growth of remaining half of the population. Since time immemorial women are found to be involved in farm production in addition to their sole responsibility of managing their homes.

On the basis of the literature reviewed and observations on women's multiple roles, it was found that Women made significant contribution in the home agriculture and allied sectors. Women's participation varies with income, size of family, geographic location, agricultural seasons stage of family life cycle and caste ,Women exclusively performed non-skilled drudgery prone agriculture and allied activities. Household work was exclusively considered as women's work. Women wage labourers are much higher in number than men .Women's economic contribution has been ignored.

Women are greatly burdened with multiple responsibilities of home, farm, animal care, reproduction and child rearing .The long house of work put in by women in fulfilling their multiple roles hardly leave any time for leisure and also have adverse affect on their health, mental and physical.

Key words: Rural Women ,Multiple role ,Farm,

Introduction:

Historians believe that it was women who first domesticated crop plants and thereby initiated the art and science of farming (Swaminathan, 1985). While men went out hunting in search of food, women started gathering seeds from the native flora and began cultivating these of interest from the point of view of food, feed, fodder, fiber and fuel. Women have played and continue to play a key role in the conservation of basic life support systems such as land, water, flora and fauna. Women play a significant and crucial role in agricultural development and allied fields, is a fact long taken for granted but also ignored. By and large they have remained "invisible workers". Because of low "visibility" of their contribution, they are not regarded as equal partners in the developmental process.

Women's contribution to agriculture whether it be subsistence farming or commercial agriculture, when measured in terms of the number of tasks performed and time spent, is greater than that of men. The extent of women's contribution is aptly highlighted by micro-study conducted in the Indian Himalayas which found that on an one hectare farm, a pair of bullock works 1,064 hours, a man 1,212 hours and a woman 3,485 hours in a year.

The picture of a farm woman is that of submissive, illiterate, ignorant and asset less female who has been trapped in webs of traditions and customs. Farm women hail from an area deficient in social input like primary and secondary education, drinking water and health services for physical development and social progress. The overburdened and undernourished rural women performing agricultural operations which involve drudgery and physical labour are not considered as worker. The status of farm women in general is much lower than that of their male counterparts largely because of the customary male dominance in the society, inherent shyness of farm women, lack of opportunities and very poor accessibility to modern technology (Singh and Bhattacharya, 1987).

They also defined farm women in Indian context as: a. Those poor, illiterate, ignorant widow land owner, landless female labourers wives and daughters of marginal and submarginal farmers and those from backward and down trodden communities with low economic status. Those women having no opportunity for migration to cities or semi urban places in search of livelihood and who have been trapped in the webs of traditions and customs with least amenities for physical education and social progress.

Women in Faizabad region of Uttar Pradesh are not only housewives but they perform multiple roles in agriculture, animal husbandry and home management. Women work for longer hours in agriculture, animal husbandry and homestead activities. Traditional implements were being used for farming by women.

Traditional system of collecting rural work statistics defines work in such a way that may exclude the contribution of women. Only paid labour work in the modern commercial sector may be counted while work done by women to provide food to family is omitted. Seasonal labour may not be included. In some instances tasks done only by women are excluded. As a result of such discrepancies, planners are left with an incomplete picture of women's involvement in agricultural development, animal husbandry, family and allied activities.

The research studies done so far have established the fact that the rural women, especially in the lower middle classes and in the sections below poverty line are forced to take up multiple roles in order to supplement the family earnings. They are rather pushed into taking up some income generating activities out of dire necessity of survival in rural settings.

Current database on women at all levels needed to be strengthened before relevant policies could be developed to benefit women toiling as farmers, farm workers or in non-farm jobs among land less rural population. Women at grassroots lack useful data to help them benefit from scientific advances and to protect themselves against the negative effects of development. There was a need of in

depth data investigation reflecting the multiple roles of women in agriculture, animal husbandry and homestead activities that are needed for policy decision. Generation of data is needed for development of women to help them to contribute effectively in their multiple roles. Keeping the above in mind a study that would bring to light the process involved in multiple roles taking by rural women is planned. The reasons leading to such processes and the factors

affecting these women to resort to multiple roles taking is necessary to understand the social issues involved. Such a study would also help to evolve a strategy to ameliorate the condition of rural women Hence the study entitled "A study of multiple roles in farms and homes of rural women of Faizabad region of U.P" was planned with an overall objectives of studying the involved social processes in multiple role taking by rural women.

Objectives :

1. To study the personal and socio-economic profile of respondents.
2. To find out the role perception and multiple role-taking by rural women in farm and home activities.

Review of literature :

Batish et al. (1998) reported that participation of rural women in agricultural activities was low except for dairy farming, bee keeping and rabbit farming. Along with their major role in household activities, rural women engage in different economic activities such as food processing (25%), needle work (25%), shawl weaving (10%), they do dari weaving (15%), chappal making (10%) and preparation of detergents (15%) to supplement family income. The major constraints reported were: marketing problems, transport, procuring raw materials, lack of technical knowledge and no loan facility.

Subrahmanyam (1999) reported that in Andhra Pradesh during 1997/98, demand for total labour increased by 16.2% (11 to 129 days/ha). This increase is due to female labour which increased by 84.8%. Male labor declined by 12.8%. Seed technology together with mechanization reduced the demand for male labour and increased the demand for female labour The data on family labour days in paddy cultivation in demand 1971/72 and 1997/98 show that there is no decline in female family labour, but hired labour increased sharply, indicating that there is no change in female participation on family farms. Paddy, cotton, chillies and sugarcane have high demand for labour. Sugarcane has the lowest female labour use. Farm size has a negative influence on total demand for labour.

Cherian et al. (2000) reported that women's participation was found very low in all the major cash crop production activities. All the women of landless families and some of the women of marginal farm families devote about 6-7 hours/day in agricultural operations. Women's independent participation in the activities which require technical know how and some scientific knowledge was also observed low like in seed selection, seed treatment, land preparation for nursery, land preparation for nursery, nursery raising, land preparation for transplanting, application of manure and fertilizers, water management, plant protection measures and harvesting etc. Regarding type of participation in farming a joint participation of female with male were found dominant

Gokhale (2001) revealed that farmers of Haneli tauca in Pune district of Maharashtra cultivated sugarcane serial crop and vegetable crop in both they seasons and wheat on Rabi reason on an average are 1.30 ha. As more than 2/3rd of manual work on the farms are done by rural women it is essential that are trained scientific agricultural practices

Sobha (2002) conducted a micro survey in drought prone Rayalaseema region of A.P. and revealed that notwithstanding the enormous burden of agriculture work shouldered by women and their on hand experience of

agriculture activities, they had little say in farm management, decision. Women here spent not only long hours on farm work but also an household work and child care everyday.

Gogoi and Bhowmick (2003) reported that in Assam, Kitchen garden is very much common in rural areas from time immemorial, different vegetables are grown throughout the year. Assamese women are actively involved in production of different crops. In production of vegetables too, women worker carries out a substantial volume of various activities. Women constitute a significant volume of available from labour and carry out various operation in production of vegetables. Major vegetables grown in Assam by women includes cabbage, cauliflower. Tomato, tuber crops and pulses etc.

Research Methodology:

The methodology chapter describes the methods and procedures followed in the studying the objectives of the present study. This chapter is devoted to the development of frame work for conducting and analyzing the study. The purpose of research methodology is to present the sampling techniques, research design adopted and analytical framework to be used for analysis of data in the study. The present study was carried out to study the multiple roles in farms and homes of rural women of Faizabad region of U.P.

Twenty five rural women were selected from each eight village as respondents from Faizabad region. Care was taken while selecting the women respondents that the selected women were performing multiple roles in farms and households. In all 200 women were selected as as respondents from eight villages.

A descriptive research design Was chosen for the study as all The variables of the study were described in detailed in order to get an in- depth insight of multiple roles of rural women in farms and home .

Method of data collection

The data were collected by personally interviewing the respondents and through observation technique. The schedules were filled in by the researcher herself. The data collection work was done through by the researcher after spending long hours with the families of respondents in order to make a realistic and in-depth analysis of the situation. Secondary data pertaining to the district and block area was collected from the documents available at district headquarters. Information was also collected from bulletins, research journals and other publications of government and non-government organizations.

Analytical framework :

After gathering necessary information the data were tabulated for further analysis and interpretation. Relevant statistical techniques were used in order to derived meaningful conclusions. The statistical techniques used for data analysis were frequencies, percentage, mean as per the need of the study.

Result and discussion :

The facts and findings of the study emerged from statistical and relational treatments of the collected data have been presented in this chapter. These are in concurrence with the objectives of the study and described under following subheads:

- 1 .Personal and socio-economic profile of rural women engaged in multiple roles
2. Role perception and multiple roles taking by rural women in farm and home activities

Personal and socio-economic profile of rural women engaged in multiple roles

Women's contribution to agriculture whether it be subsistence farming or economical agriculture-when measured in terms of the number of tasks performed and time spent, is greater than that of men. She plays a major role in traditional agriculture but not recognized as producer. It was observed that the work of all those women who participated in agricultural activities on their own fields was not acknowledged as direct participation but merely as an extension of domestic work.

Table 1: Distribution of rural women according to their age

N=200

Sl.No	Age group	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Young age group (25-35)	67	33.50
2.	Middle age group (35-55)	98	49.00
3.	Old age group (Above 55 Years)	35	17.50

The age of rural woman is important in deciding the kind of roles played by her. The data pertaining to age of women as presented in Table 1 revealed that majority of rural women (49%) were of middle age group ranging between 35-55 years. Among the total sample 33.5 per cent women were of young age group (25-35 years) and 17.50 per cent women were of old age group (above 55 years).

Table 3 Distribution of rural women according to their educational status**N =200**

Sl.No	Age group	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	12	06.00
2.	Can read and write only	37	18.50
3.	Up to primary school	52	26.00
4.	Up to middle school	49	24.50
5.	Up to high school	43	21.50
6.	Above high school	07	03.50

Education is the women's ability to read and write and the amount of formal education she possessed. Education possessed affects the decision making and participation of rural women in multiple roles in farm and home. The results pertaining to education of rural women as presented in Table 3 revealed that educational status of rural women was low in the area of study but illiteracy was found much among the women

Table 4. Frequency and percentage distribution of rural women according to their family type**N=200**

Sl.No	Age group	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Nuclear family	122.0	61.00
2.	Joint family	78.00	39.00
3.	Total	200.00	100.00

The results pertaining family type as presented in Table 4 revealed that there were more nuclear families (61.00%) as compared to joint family set up (39.00%). More of nuclear families were preferred by young generation and it was also observed that even older generation did not prefer to live with their children's families. The generation gap and its problems were the main factors responsible for more nuclear families. Another reason for more of nuclear families was might be that grown up children moved out of their houses for employment and settled out with their family (wife and children). They occasionally visited their native place. Therefore, more of nuclear families were found in area of study.

2 . Role perception and multiple roles taken by rural women in farm and home activities.

Women have always played multiple role for family betterment Women constitute half the human resource and contribute more than sixty per cent of the labour force in world agriculture. Since 1975 global concern for farm women has been voiced and it has been realized that farm women feed the world' as they are involved in different crucial stages of food production. Women are also greatly burdened with multiple responsibilities of home, animal, reproduction and child rearing etc. The long hours of work put in by women in fulfilling their multiple roles hardly leave any time for leisure and also have adverse effect on their mental and physical health. Despite tremendous contribution of women in world economy. the multiple roles of women were not properly recognized and thus they remain invisible inspite of their significant contribution. The majority of work done by women is considered as women's natural duty without pay. The social process is such that women's contribution is not counted in economic terms. The social process of role differentiation categorizes behaviour as masculine or feminine, by culture throughout the world. A person is born with a particular sex and learns the gender roles expected of that sex within their own society. In every society there is an ideology about men and women and their work: The society identifies

Women's work" and "men's work and allows a different set of rewards and benefits for men and women.

In many developing countries women's work in food production is viewed as a natural extension of the domestic role Women's work in home economics and social work is viewed as an extension and social work is viewed as an extension of home making role of the caring role. Women often have difficulty in moving into jobs which are traditionally considered as "male" jobs like commercial agriculture. Males are often ridiculed for taking on female tasks such as preparing a meal or caring for children or cleaning food grains or pulses.

The social structure itself is so arranged and patterned that its consequences lead to inequality between genders. Large propositions of women are cultivators and agricultural labourers They are also involved in allied activities However, the girl child is invisible traditionally, socially, financially and technologically in the several activities as evidenced by the larger proportion of women indicated in the census as marginal workers and labourers. The proportion of female works in agriculture has remained more or less the same from 1911-1981 .

In this context it is interesting to note that the record female participation rates varied across the states inversely with the influence of dominant patriarchal values except perhaps in Kerala For example, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Punjab and Haryana recorded female participation rates much below than the national average namely 22 per cent But the states

like Mizoram, Meghalaya and Manipur recorded much higher rate ie above 35 per cent that are not influenced by patriarchal values of the North. Also Maharashtra, which has undergone several social movements and is witnessing a different pattern development compared to Punjab and Haryana and had 33 per cent female work participation rate in 1991.

On the basis of the literature reviewed and observations on women's multiple roles, it was found that

- a. Women made significant contribution in the home agriculture and allied sectors.
- b. Women's participation varies with income, size of family, geographic location, agricultural seasons stage of family life cycle and caste
- c. Women exclusively performed non-skilled drudgery prone agriculture and allied activities.
- d. Household work was exclusively considered as women's work.
- e. Women wage labourers are much higher in number than men .
- f. Women's economic contribution has been ignored.
- g. Women are greatly burdened with multiple responsibilities of home, farm, animal care, reproduction and child rearing .
- h. The long house of work put in by women in fulfilling their multiple roles hardly leave any time for leisure and also have adverse affect on their health, mental and physical.

Conclusion :

Women carryout most of the task related to household as well as farm. Women actively participate in operations life field preparation, sowing the seeds, inter culture operation, weeding, harvesting, compost making, application of manure and fertilizers, cleaning of farm produce, processing, storage of seeds and food grains and direct marketing. In the consumption stage women have an important role as they cook and serve the food to family. These women ere also involved in looking after cattle, poultry, goatory, sheep, collecting fodder, preparing manure for the farm and carrying manure. Women manage cattle and completely look after them. Men took over the management and sale responsibility if the enterprise is on commercial basis where also the women had to provide labour for manual work. Women were playing a key role in performance of various tasks related to cattle management, feeding, milking, marketing of milk and milk product. Women as a group enjoy fewer advantage and work longer hours than man. Women's work and opinions are undervalued. It had been further observed that half of the women's work was unpaid and the other half was underpaid. Whatever work women do at home is unpaid and out side work is underpaid.

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