

# “Empowering rural women in India through sustainable dairy farming to Economic Independence”

**Prof. Sathyanarayana**

Assistant Professor of Economics  
Government First Grade College Sunkalbidari-581115

## **Abstract:**

Women are essential to the success of the dairy industry. They provided feed for the animals, milked the cows, separated the various dairy products from the milk, cared for the cattle at home, wove, cleaned the shelters, and learned about better practices for raising and caring for livestock and preventing livestock diseases. And therefore, women must get their fair portion of livestock income. Women's contributions to rural livestock production cannot be discounted; hence, there is an immediate need to market their activity and provide training to the women for raising cattle. Women put in an average of 8.3 hours each day to cover all aspects of dairy production. The present paper attempts to understand the role of women in dairy farming and the constraint which are in the development of dairy farming as well.

**Key Words:** Consumption pattern, Dairy farming, Biodigesters grazing, Subsidized price.

## **Introduction:**

Diary farming, as it is commonly known and practiced across the globe, entails the breeding, feeding, and management of cattle (cows and buffaloes), as well as the production, handling, and sale of milk and milk products on a satisfying and profitable basis. In the past, diarying was seen as the best of the cultivators' ancillary industries since it allowed farmers to work and make money year-round. One-fourth of the population, made up of newborns and children, can't survive without milk, and there is no recognized alternative. However, times and perspectives have changed. Diary farming has shifted from being seen as a side business to a full-time career that guarantees a growing income as the economy has developed, relieving agriculture of its once-dominant role. Diary farming has expanded into new realms as a result of the current situation, with a focus on higher output achieved via technological advancements and improved management. Indian culture has always included diarying. To this day, milk and dairy products remain staples in our diet. Diary farming's contributions to Animal Husbandry are the largest and most far-reaching in terms of the number of jobs it has created and the amount of money it has brought in. Since the NDDB (National Dairy Development Board's) operation flood program began in 1970, the Indian dairy sector has significantly changed.

The advancement of agriculture and animal husbandry is greatly helped by the contributions of women. Women in India do the majority of animal-related tasks; however, their contributions are rarely recognized. This may be done safely and securely inside the comfort of one's own home. There is a clear gender divide in agriculture, with women doing all manual labour and males handling equipment and draught animals.

Diary farming was discussed as a possible answer to the widespread problem of unemployment, particularly in rural regions. Women are essential to the administration of animals, farms, and households. In addition to improving rural women's economic standing, a thriving dairy husbandry business provides them with a

reliable secondary source of income. Collecting and cultivating fodder, grazing the animals, feeding and hydrating them, cleaning the animals and the shed, milking, and selling the milk are the main components of diary farming. In addition, family members don't have to give up potential income-generating activities to participate in the surgeries since they may be spaced out and done at their own leisure.

### **Objectives of the study:**

- ❖ To Understand the role of women in diary farming
- ❖ To realize the socio-economic impact of diary farming
- ❖ To Utilize the source of bio digesters

### **Methodology:**

The present paper is based on secondary sources of data collection and relevant literature collected from books, journals, newspapers and websites. The theories of social change provide room for socio-economic transformation.

### **Gendered division of labour in dairy farming**

Dairy farming in India and other countries like Kenya predominantly involves women taking primary responsibility for milking and animal care. Milking is a time-consuming activity, often done twice daily in the early mornings and evenings. Women must also feed, water, and clean the animals and manage their health. Despite their outsized contributions to the sector, women dairy farmers face significant challenges. They lack access to land, livestock, financial resources, and technology, hindering their productivity and income potential. They do not have the authority to decide on dairy extension services that can improve productivity and milk quality, marketing opportunities, financial services, and other considerations. They are often excluded from decision-making within households and dairy cooperatives, limiting their control over resources and income. Their work is often seen as an extension of domestic work, and the time poverty resulting from the long hours they spend on dairy farming leaves little time for leisure, education, or other activities.

Despite bearing the heavily labor-intensive tasks of milking and caring for the animals, women dairy farmers in India and Kenya do not own the cattle or the land. Since cattle and land are often used as collateral to access financing, women are inherently denied access to financing options. These challenges faced by women dairy farmers call for targeted gender-intentional initiatives that rectify these disparities, address their specific challenges, and foster an environment that acknowledges and values their significant contributions.

In the rural district of Kolar in Karnataka, India, dairy farmer Muniratnamma kicks off her day early to feed and milk her cows. Once she collects the milk, her husband takes it to the local dairy cooperative. She then cleans the shed, collects the dung, and gathers it in a heap near her house. Before leaving to work on their sericulture (silkworm rearing) farm, she cooks for her family. She relies on firewood or liquified petroleum gas (LPG) for kitchen fuel. Due to the high cost and difficulty of transporting LPG, Muniratnamma often resorts to collecting firewood, taking up more of her time during the day. She must also carefully manage her LPG use to ensure it lasts one to two months, restricting her cooking time and food choices.

### **Need for Diary Farming:**

Farmers may get started with the common cows they already have or buy cows inexpensively at local markets, so there is no need for a large initial investment in order to get this business going. Diary cows in the area are resilient and may be kept by people without land if they have access to agricultural wastes. Because diary farming does not need great physical exertion, it is accessible to rural households without requiring them

to make significant changes to their lifestyle. The technology is straightforward, and the majority of the populace is already proficient in its use. Now, indigenous methods exist to deal with unsold excess milk, and local markets have a healthy demand for milk. Women have a lot of room to grow the dairy industry into a profitable company that pays off reliably all year round. To cover unexpected expenses, many people may sell their crossbred cows, which can fetch anything from Rs10,000 to Rs15,000. There are several benefits associated with dairy farming, not the least of which is the creation of jobs and financial stability. Animals use these byproducts as food and provide farmers with compost and biogas. These mixed farms are great for the environment because of the way they recycle nutrients. Biogas lessens people's need to utilize wood as a primary heating source. Stall feeding helps to protect our forest and pasture resources, and proper dairy husbandry practices and better breeds may make it more common.

### **Dairying an Instrument of Social and Economic Change:**

Women in India hold the majority of the national milch animal herd, making up around 70% of the industry. These ladies often care after a small herd of milking animals, consisting of little more than two cows or buffaloes. Agricultural by-products and waste items make up the bulk of the animals' diets. Women are more likely to enter the field of dairying when they have access to modest plots of land. Income from dairying is reliable and consistent throughout the year. These women may often create enough extra revenue from one or two milk cows to stop the vicious cycle of subsistence agriculture-related debt. Unlike crop farming, which only yields revenue at the end of the season, dairy farming provides a more consistent flow of money to families throughout the year.

Diary farming also serves as a kind of income insurance against the risk of crop failure due to factors like drought or pests. It has been shown that food assistance may be utilized as an investment in developing the sort of institutional infrastructure that can bring about national dairy growth via the successful Indian dairy development scheme Operation Flood.

One of contemporary India's most successful developmental initiatives, India's dairy industry has received international attention. Milk production is abundant in the Indian states of Gujarat, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. The nation has seen a 17.1% yearly increase in dairy sector productivity, with the state of Gujarat taking the lead with a 23.5% share of the market (17.2 percent). About half of all milk is taken directly as liquid, while another 34% is consumed as butter milk separated milk (butter and ghee). Inadequate domestic milk prices brought about by cheap imports from developed dairying countries discourage investment in dairying on the part of domestic farmers. This hinders initiatives to enhance productivity, such as breed development, fodder production programs, and the production of high-quality feed.

### **Results and Discussions:**

#### **Constraints in management of dairy enterprise**

The term "constraints" describes the difficulties dairy farmers have while striving to follow accepted animal husbandry practices. These constraints may be categorized as follows: situational, financial and technological constraints.

- ❖ **Situational constraints:** consists of a lack of milk due to local breeds' poor milk output, an absence of fresh forage, a shortage of water supply, and a lack of storage space for the milk that is produced.

❖ **Financial constraints** include delays in milk payment, insufficient funds, absence of a credit facility, high prices for concentrate and other feeds, high prices for high-yielding breeds of animals, and expensive prices for medications.

❖ **Technical constraints:** includes not having enough information on how to prevent and manage illness, not having access to artificial insemination, not having access to veterinarians when they're needed, and not having veterinary hospitals. Not having enough information on how to produce clean milk and providing enough habitat for dairy animals are other important obstacles to the growth of the dairy industry.

Most women do not know how to turn their milk into value-added goods, not even their traditional milk products; therefore, they do not benefit economically from milk sales. The number of dairy cooperative societies in India is low and inconsistent. This means that milk-producing mothers are not compensated fairly. High milk production costs and a lack of bank financing facilities for dairy animals also act as barriers to entry for the dairy industry.

### Remedies Required

To strengthen the dairy farming following initiatives are essential

- ❖ So that farmers may sell their milk for a fair price, the government and the milk federation need to take remedial action for the development of cooperative organizations at the local level. In addition, the dairy development department has to organize skill-oriented long-term training programs for the creation of value-added milk products so that farmers may earn higher rates for their raw materials (milk).
- ❖ In order to make high-quality milk products, the Dairy Development Department must provide extensive, career-focused training for its employees. The local bank could assist rural women to start dairy businesses by making low-interest loans and incentives available.
- ❖ With the help of scientists, the animal husbandry department should implement a vaccination/deworming/health care program to increase women's awareness of the significance of routine vaccination, deworming, and health care for dairy animals, and should also run a training program to educate milk producers in the study area on the benefits of and methods for achieving cleaner milk production.
- ❖ Governments must take the necessary steps to reduce the excessive fees charged by government employees, such as veterinarians, for their services.
- ❖ Educators in the fields of veterinary medicine, animal husbandry, and dairy development at the district level, as well as scientists, need to spread the word about the.

### Conclusion :

The government must subsidize the feed cost for the dairy industry since it helps rural women better their standard of living. Furthermore, the government should set aside space for cultivating fodder or grass so that grazing land doesn't decline. Moreover, a reliable distribution system for milk should be established to guarantee a reasonable price.

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