

Decision making pattern and risk orientation of farm women in members and non-members of dairy co-operatives in western U.P.

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Abstract

The present study was conducted to find out the decision-making pattern and risk orientation of farm women in members and non-members of dairy co-operatives in western U.P. The study was based on primary data collected by survey from 125 members and 125 non-members families of dairy farm women by personal interview method from selected respondents. An analysis of data revealed that the findings indicate that farm women have a more dominant role to play in decision making in rural families. Women in MDC system had most involvement in decision making process of milk products making followed by management, healthcare, feeding, green fodder production, breeding and least involvement in marketing. Similar pattern was also observed in NMDC system. Similarly marketing segment had least involvement of farm in decision making process. Maximum number of respondents in MDC (56.80%) and NMDC (53.60%) had medium level of risk orientation. Risk orientation was also found to be positively and associate with productivity of milch animals.

Keywords: women, members, non-members, decision making, dairy

Introduction

Dairy occupation is well knit to agricultural system and has become an integral part of rural economy. It has emerged as a potential source of gainful employment for the rural poor. Women are playing a pivotal role both in agriculture and dairying. The contribution of women in agriculture is roughly estimated to be about 50-60 percent. In many places, the entire livestock management is looked by women.

They help in farm operations, take their animals on distant lands for grazing, look after the sale of milk, if necessary, by taking it to the market and in addition, perform the functions related to house management. Decision-making is regarded as the cognitive process resulting in the selection of a belief or a course of action among several alternative possibilities. Every decision-making process produces a final choice; it may or may not prompt action. It is the process of identifying and choosing alternatives based on the

values and preferences of the decision-maker. Decision-making ability can be regarded as a problem-solving activity terminated by a solution deemed to be satisfactory. It is therefore a process which can be more or less rational or irrational and can be based on explicit or tacit knowledge. When trying to make a good decision, a person must weigh the positives and negatives of each option, and consider all the alternatives. For effective decision making, a person must be able to forecast the outcome of each option as well, and based on all these items, determine which option is the best for that particular situation. Risk orientation is defined as the expression of a preference for a risky versus certain outcome and depends upon the probabilistic framing of gains and losses as well as an individual's status-quo position relative to expected gains and losses. Risk orientation can be thought as the tolerance for risk. Ehrlich and Maesta (2010) as state that risk orientation is "one's general degree of comfort with facing uncertain gains or losses". Dairy farmers with low-risk orientation may be less tolerant of such risk. Women's active involvement in decision making is considered essential for rapid economic

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development of the country (Chayal *et al.*, 2013). Rural women contribute a share of more than 75 per cent in animal husbandry operations like feeding, milking and sale of milk (Upadhyay and Desai, 2011). Farm women mostly engaged in agricultural and dairy related activities to support their family income and meet the educational need of their children. Women roles in decision making in animal husbandry, dairy and other economic productive activities are very significant. They contribute 69 per cent of labor required for these activities. In rural areas both the husband and wives join the decision making on the matters like family obligation related aspect. Women perform the task of collecting fodder, collecting and processing dung, preparing the cooking fuel, livestock management and production, milking and controlling over livestock and its products. Mulugeta and Amsalu (2014) stated that although rural women played a proactive role in livestock management and household decisions, their contributions were neglected and their decision-making power is still restricted. Increasing the capacity of rural women is a necessary step toward allowing them equal right and power with men. Keeping in view the above points the present study was undertaken with the objectives to find out the decision making pattern and risk orientation of farm women in members and non-members of dairy co-operatives in western U.P.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Ghaziabad district of western Uttar Pradesh. The data were collected through personal interview schedule administered on randomly selected. The 125 dairy farm women from MDC (Members Dairy Co-operative) purposively selected in four villages from the block covered under Ghaziabad Dugdh Utpadak Sahakari Sangh Limited (GDUSL). Then MDC list was categorized into four groups i.e. 26 women from landless (LL), 42 from marginal farmers (MF), 45 from small farmers (SF) and 12 from medium large farmers (MLF) were selected proportionately from the whole list. Similarly, 125 dairy farm women from NMDC (Non-Members Dairy Co-operative) purposively selected in four villages from the block not covered under GDUSL. Then NMDC list was categorized into four groups i.e. 22 women from landless, 45 from marginal farmers, 38 from small farmers and 20 from medium large farmers were selected proportionately from the whole list. The final selection of 250 women respondent was made for the study. The research data

were collected from selected respondents. The respondents were contacted at their homes and interview schedule was translated to local language i.e. Hindi. It referred to the extent of participation in decision-making process by farm women about the tasks associated with dairy animal production in which the family is engaged in. Through the structured schedule, the decision-making pattern of the family was measured on each role segment separately viz. feeding, breeding, management, healthcare, milk products making, and marketing and green fodder production. In the present study, the risk orientation of the respondents was measured with the help of risk preference scale developed by Supe (1969). He defined risk preferences as the degree to which a person is oriented towards risk and uncertainty and has the courage to face the problems in farming. The scale consisted of six items. The items were rated in five-point response categories ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. There were four positive items and two negative items in the scale. The scores given for positive items were: strongly agree - 7, agree - 5, undecided - 4, disagree - 3 and strongly disagree - 1. Reverse order of scoring was followed for negative items. Respondents were categorized according to their orientation to take risks to adopt dairy innovations scores as High (Mean + SD), Medium (Mean + SD) and Low (Mean - SD). Data thus generated were analyzed by different statistical methods including percentage were also applied for better interpretation of the results.

Results and Discussion

Involvement of farm women in decision making

The involvement of women in decision making in various dairy farming activities indicate the women's interest and awareness in them. Table 1 revealed that about one-third of the decisions regarding overall activities of dairy farming were taken by farm women above and independently 50 percent decisions in MDC and 52.52 percent in NMDC regarding overall activities were taken by male head of the family. 12.03 percent of respondents in MDC and 10.73 percent in NMDC reported that decisions are taken jointly while only 4.99 percent in MDC and 5.58 percent in NMDC reported that decisions are taken collectively by all members of the family. Rank order analysis found that women in MDC system had most involvement in decision making process of milk products making followed by management, healthcare, feeding, green fodder

Table 1: Profile and rank order analysis of decision making pattern by farm women in activities of dairying in MDC and NMDC villages. N=250

| Activities /Task | MDC | | | | | NMDC | | | | |
|-------------------------|------------|----------|-------|-------------|------------|------------|----------|-------|-------------|------------|
| | Women only | Men only | Both | All members | Rank order | Women only | Men only | Both | All members | Rank order |
| Feeding | 32.88 | 39.44 | 20.48 | 7.20 | IV | 33.28 | 42.88 | 17.36 | 8.10 | IV |
| Breeding | 23.04 | 60.48 | 11.36 | 6.40 | VI | 20.48 | 62.56 | 7.04 | 9.76 | VI |
| Management | 40.24 | 44.48 | 10.16 | 5.12 | II | 33.60 | 50.24 | 10.64 | 5.52 | III |
| Healthcare | 34.88 | 53.44 | 7.36 | 4.32 | III | 35.20 | 51.20 | 8.64 | 4.64 | II |
| Milk Products making | 53.86 | 41.86 | 1.39 | 2.92 | I | 53.86 | 42.66 | 1.86 | 1.60 | I |
| Green fodder production | 23.76 | 67.15 | 4.28 | 2.64 | V | 23.76 | 70.32 | 3.72 | 1.94 | V |
| Marketing | 21.28 | 43.20 | 29.20 | 6.32 | VII | 18.88 | 47.76 | 25.84 | 7.52 | VII |
| Overall | 32.85 | 50.00 | 12.03 | 4.99 | | 27.00 | 52.52 | 10.73 | 5.58 | |

All figures are in percentage

Table 2: Frequency distribution of respondents according to risk orientation.

N=250

| Category | Villages | Level of risk orientation | | | Total |
|----------|----------|---------------------------|------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| | | <31.00 Low | 31.00- 38.50 Medium | >38.50 High | |
| LL | MDC | 10(8.00) | 9(7.20) | 7(5.60) | 26(20.80) |
| | NMDC | 16(12.80) | 4(3.20) | 2(1.60) | 22(17.60) |
| MF | MDC | 4(3.20) | 26(20.80) | 12(9.60) | 42(33.60) |
| | NMDC | 8(6.40) | 28(22.40) | 9(7.20) | 45(36.00) |
| SF | MDC | 5(4.00) | 30(24.00) | 10(8.00) | 45(36.00) |
| | NMDC | 7(5.60) | 25(20.00) | 6(4.80) | 38(30.40) |
| MLF | MDC | 2(1.60) | 6(4.80) | 4(3.20) | 12(9.60) |
| | NMDC | 4(3.20) | 10(8.08) | 6(4.80) | 20(16.00) |
| Total | MDC | 21(16.80) | 71(56.80) | 33(26.40) | 125(100.00) |
| | NMDC | 35(28.00) | 67(53.60) | 23(18.40) | 125(100.00) |

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to total.

production breeding and least involvement in marketing. Similar pattern was also observed in NMDC system except management at rank second slides to rank third and health care raise from rank third to second. Similarly marketing segment had least involvement of farm in decision making process. The findings indicated that generally, the segments in which most of the activities are to be performed indoors, the farm women have a more dominant role to play in decision making in rural families and in segments where immediate or instant monetary inputs or outputs are involved, male head of the family or livestock owner tend to dominate the decision-making process. These findings were in consonance with Shendare *et al.*, (2007) and Gayatri *et al.*, (2011).

Risk Orientation

The level of risk orientation influences the time which a farmer takes in passing through the decision-making process of adopted a technology into his farming system. There is a strong tendency on the part of the farmers to mitigate the production risks at farm level by adapting appropriate technology. Table 2 indicates that among all categories 26.40 percent of respondents from MDC system. 18.40 percent from NMDC system were highly oriented towards encountering risks. Maximum number of respondents in MDC (56.80%) and NMDC (53.60%) had medium level of risk orientation. 16.80 percent of respondents in MDC and 28 percent in NMDC villages showed low risk

Table 3: Differences in mean scores of risk orientation of rural woman involved in dairying

| Variable | MDC | | NMDC | | 't' value |
|------------------|------------|-------|------------|-------|-----------|
| | Mean Score | SD | Mean Score | SD | |
| Risk Orientation | 35.80 | 5.186 | 34.25 | 5.406 | 2.301** |

**Significant at 5% level of significance

orientation level. In the study area, rural women having high level of economic motivation and risk orientation adopted more number of dairy farm technologies and achieved higher level of productivity in their milch animals.

Differences in mean score of risk orientation

In order to test the significance of difference in the mean score of risk orientation between MDC and NMDC systems the 't' value was calculated. Table 3 revealed significant ($P < 0.05$) difference was observed in risk orientation of rural women between MDC and NMDC system.

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