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Behavioural Pattern of Rural Women in Vegetable Production

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Abstract: The study was conducted in Mangaon Block of Raigad district in Maharashtra to ascertain behavioural pattern with respect to women participation and decision making in vegetable production. Total 80 houses having land for vegetable cultivation were selected and one female respondent from each house were interviewed. The data were collected personally through structured interview schedule. Data collected included the extent of participation and decision making of women in various activities of vegetable production. Study revealed that in vegetable cultivation various intervention points are addressable. Women were involved in operations such as cleaning of land, sowing of seed, transplanting of vegetable nursery, hoeing and weeding, scaring of birds and rodents, harvesting and processing of vegetable and storage of seed. Non participation of women in various operations was due to more fatigue, requirement of more muscle power, lack of knowledge and awareness with respect to decision making. It was observed that women played only supportive role and less participation of women in decision making could be attributed to customs, traditions, social barrier, their illiteracy, ignorance and less participation in extension programmes. Women' education, technical training and adequate extension facilities can create a positive impact leading to increase in agricultural production.

Key Words: Rural women, Participation, Vegetable production.

INTRODUCTION

Vegetable cultivation has become highly commercialized but still there is a wide gap between current production and potential productivity. With the view to achieve a high level of production, it is not only enough to develop farm innovations but is

also necessary to transfer the latest technology from the research system to ultimate users i.e. farmers and farm women. Women play a significant and crucial role in vegetable production. It is most unfortunate that the role of women and their contribution in farm activities are yet to be recognized. Although

they perform almost all the activities in farm buy by and large they have been remained as invisible workers. Vegetable cultivation in Raigad district has a vast potential of improving the economical status of farming community. It has been observed that in a farming family, the participation of women in decision making as well as in the implementation and management of farm planning was very poor, although the contribution towards total land and labour is significant. Therefore, the study was carried out to determine the extent of women participation in different activities and the role in decision making, in vegetable cultivation so that suitable interventions can be planned and undertaken in future.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Raigad district of Maharashtra state in the year 2013-14. Out of fifteen blocks, Mangaon Block was selected and from that block 10 villages were selected. A total of 80 women respondents were selected from 10 villages of Mangaon block. A structured schedule was used to collect the data by personal interview method. The data collected included information related to different farm activities and decision making used for vegetable production. The data were processed, tabulated and presented in the form of table.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic characteristics

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents were presented in table 1. The majority (57.50%) of the respondents belonged to middle age group followed by young age (25.00%) and old age (17.50%) group. It was also revealed that majority (61.25%) were educated up to fifth class followed by illiterate (27.5%) and only 11.25 per cent were having middle and above level of education in the study area. Regarding family status, it was found that majority (72.50%) belonged to nuclear family followed by joint family (27.50%).

The most of the respondents (76.25%) had land holding size less than 1 ha., whereas, 13.75 per cent respondent possesses 1 to 2 ha. land and 10.00 per cent were landless.

Table 1
Socio economic characteristics of farm women in vegetable production

(N=80)

Sr. No.	Parameter	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young (< 25 years)	20	25.00
		Middle (26-50 years)	46	57.50
		Old (> 50 years)	14	17.50
2	Education	Illiterate	22	27.50
		Primary	49	61.25
		Middle and above	09	11.25
3	Type of family	Nuclear	58	72.50
		Joint	22	27.50
4	Land Holding	Landless	08	10.00
		Marginal (< 1 hectare)	61	76.25
		Small (<1-2 hectare)	11	13.75
5	Main occupation	Agriculture	48	60.00
		AH	04	5.00
		Agriculture + AH	27	33.75
		Service	01	1.25
6	Annual income	Low (below 40,000)	16	20.00
		Medium (Rs. 40,000–80,000)	61	76.25
		High (above Rs. 80,000)	3	3.75

It was also revealed that agriculture was the main occupation of 62.50 per cent respondents followed by 33.75, 5.00 and 1.25 per cent in agricultural and animal husbandry, animal husbandry and service professions, respectively. Further, the data revealed that majority (76.25%) of respondents were from middle income group (Rs. 40,000/- to Rs. 80,000/-) followed by low income group (20.00%) and only 3.75 per cent were high income group. In this situation income from livestock production play a major role for their subsistence in such type of rural area.

Participation of women in vegetable production activities

The data indicates in Table 2 that different activities performed by female were cleaning of land, sowing of seeds, transplanting of vegetable nursery, hoeing and weeding, scaring of birds, rodents and animals and harvesting. In vegetable processing, cent percent

women showed their participation. These findings were in agreement with those reported by Anuradha *et al.* (2016) and Baba *et al.* (2010). Above eighty per cent of women involved in nursery management and fertilizer application, while 40.00, 26.25 and 21.25 per cent participated in marketing, raising vegetable nursery, marketing and irrigation, respectively.

Low participation in plant protection (10.00 %) and storage of seed (7.5%) was due to lack of awareness and knowledge. Whereas non participation of women in ploughing was due to hard labour, Similar case has been reported by Srivastava and Singh (2011) for their study in Ballia. Non participation in various agricultural activities was due to drudgery faced in operations by farm women.

Table 2
Participation of women in various activities of vegetable Production

		(N=80)	
Sr. No.	Activities	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Land preparation		
	Ploughing	0	0.00
	Cleaning of field	80	100.00
	FYM application	12	15.00
	Forming ridges and furrows	10	12.50
2.	Pre sowing and sowing operations		
	Seed treatment	10	12.50
	Sowing of seed	80	100.00
	Plant treatment	5	6.25
	Raising vegetable nursery	32	40.00
	Nursery after care	72	90.00
	Transplanting of vegetable nursery	80	100.00
3.	Intercultural operations		
	Irrigation	17	21.25
	Hoeing and weeding	80	100.00
	Fertilizer application	70	87.50
	Pesticide and weedicide application	8	10.00
	Scaring of birds rodents and animals	80	100.00
4.	Harvesting and post harvesting operations		
	Vegetable harvesting	80	100.00
	Storage of seed	6	7.50
	Marketing	21	26.25
	Vegetable processing	14	17.50

Role of women in decision making

The data in Table 3 indicated that, women's role in decision making was highest (57.50%) in fertilizer selection and application and vegetable processing followed by 41.25 per cent participation in selling of vegetable produce. In the areas of selection of

Table 3
Decision making of women in different operations of vegetable Production.

		(N=80)	
Sr. No.	Operations	Frequency	Per cent
1	Land selection	28	35.00
2	Selection of crops to be grown	32	40.00
3	Method of cultivation	15	18.75
4	Selection of farm machinery and its implementations	14	17.50
5	Varietal selection	8	10.00
6	Fertilizer selection and application	46	57.50
7	Choice of irrigation	21	26.25
8	Sale of vegetable produce	33	41.25
9	Storage of seed	30	37.50
10	Vegetable processing	46	57.50

crops to be grown (40.00 %), storage of seed (37.50%), land selection (35.00%), choice of irrigation (26.25%), method of cultivation (18.75%), selection of farm machinery and its implementations (17.5%) was lower. The study further revealed that women has most time played only supportive role. Less involvement of women in decision making could be attributed to customs, traditions, social barrier and illiteracy, ignorance and less participation in extension programmes. These findings were in conformation of Anuradha *et al.* (2016) and Baba *et al.* (2010) for their study in Jammu Kashmir.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that in vegetable production on commercial scale, women behavioural pattern with respect to participation was found more prominent in sowing of seed, transplanting of vegetable nursery, hoeing and weeding, scaring of birds and rodents, vegetable harvesting and processing. With respect

to decision making, women played only supportive role most of the time. Women' education, technical training, adequate extension facilities for women can create a positive impact leading to a increase in agricultural production and betterment of rural families.

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