

LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN LIVESTOCK FARMING ACTIVITIES

N. Narmatha¹, V. Uma², L. Arun³ and R. Geetha⁴

Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension,
Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal.

ABSTRACT

Livestock enterprise provides employment and economic support to rural families who are landless and those possess some land. Many of the important tasks in animal husbandry activities are performed by women besides fulfilling their responsibilities as home makers. The crucial role of women in agriculture and allied activities has however been grossly under estimated and undervalued. Hence this study was conducted with an objective to study the role of women in livestock enterprise. The study was conducted among 50 farm women practicing livestock farming in Namakkal block of Namakkal district. Data were collected using structured interview schedule. In the participation, actual doing of the work was more in management (85.5%), feeding (79.66 %), health care (68.66%) and breeding (61.32%). But their actual participation was very low in marketing, selection of livestock enterprises, availing credit facilities and record maintenance.

Key words: Participation, Women, Livestock Enterprise

INTRODUCTION

The prosperity and growth of a nation depends on the status and development of its women, as they not only constitute nearly half of its population, but also positively influence the growth of remaining half of the population. Livestock enterprise provides employment and economic support to rural families who are landless and those possess some land. Many of the important tasks in animal husbandry activities are performed by women besides fulfilling their responsibilities as home makers (Randhawa and Chandra, 1993). Sanwan et al. (1996) reported that there is a distinct sphere of participation between

males and females in farm and dairy sector, the men were the planners and women implemented the activity. The crucial role of women in agriculture and allied activities has however been grossly under estimated and undervalued. Hence this study was conducted with an objective to study the role of women in livestock enterprise.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted among farm women practicing livestock farming in Namakkal block of Namakkal district. A sample size of 50 respondents was selected by applying simple random sampling technique. Data were collected

1. Associate Professor and Head, 2. Assistant Professor, 3&4 Postgraduate Scholars, Department of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Extension, Veterinary College and Research Institute, Namakkal – 637 002

using structured interview schedule. Role of women in livestock rearing was categorized under six domains viz, breeding, feeding, health care, management, marketing and miscellaneous. In this study, the activities of women in livestock rearing were classified into actual doing and supervision. Livestock rearing activities that are performed by the farm women themselves are classified under actual doing. Supervision includes the monitoring of activities that are performed by the farm workers or labourers. Percentage analysis was carried out to

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A cursory glance into Table 1 revealed that majority of the respondents were middle aged (74.00 per cent) followed by old (20.00 per cent) and young (6.00 per cent). Their educational status reveals that most of the farm women had education upto high school (48.00 per cent) followed by middle school (20.00 per cent), collegiate (12.00 per cent), primary school level (12.00 per cent) and illiterate (8.00 per cent). Nuclear family was seen among 92.00 per cent of the respondents. In the occupational status 64.00 per cent of the respondents earn income through livestock sector alone followed by livestock and agriculture (20.00 per cent) and 16.00 per cent earned income through other enterprises. An overwhelming majority of the respondents had an experience of 5 to 10 years in livestock farming.

Role of women in livestock enterprise is analysed and presented in Table 2. It reveals that majority of the respondents were actually doing the livestock farming activities than just supervising. Further, the actual doing of the work was more in management domain (85.5%) followed by feeding domain (79.66%), health care domain (68.66%) and breeding domain (61.32%) whereas the supervision role was high in marketing domain (29%) and miscellaneous (17.32) domain. This might be due to the fact that the males are engaged in the field

oriented/ outside work. Hence the women are held responsible for the care and management of animals.

In breeding domain, care of animal during parturition and post parturition (94%) and selection of breeding method (72%) were carried out by the women, but the supervision (74%) is more in selection of breed than the actual doing (20%). Women are involved mainly in management, feeding and health care aspects and less involved in outside activities, hence they have less contact with progressive farmers and officials, might be the reason for low level of involvement in selection of breed.

In feeding domain, the actual doing was high in feeding and watering (100%), mixing of concentrate feed (90%), chopping of straw (88%), grazing animals (82%) and fodder collection (68%). As far as the selection of concentrate feed is concerned almost equal participation was noticed in actual doing (50%) and supervision (48%).

The involvement of women in actual doing was high in care of new born (98%), care of sick animals/poultry (98%), administering medicine (88%), taking animals to the hospital (74%) in health care activities. But the actual doing in vaccination and deworming, deticking and delicing was low, whereas about 45% of the women were involved in supervision of these activities. Skill is necessary to carry out these activities might be the reason for low level of actual doing.

Almost all the management activities viz., identification of sick animals/birds (94%), Cleaning of animals & shed (90%), Cleaning of farm utensils (88%), Milking/egg collection (70%) were actually carried out by women. The actual doing of women in marketing was low but the supervision role was high in marketing of live animals (82%) and marketing of livestock products (52%). Generally men are involved in the marketing aspects due to outside

exposure and contact might be the reason for low level of actual doing of women in marketing.

Nearly half of the respondents involved in actual doing and supervision of the miscellaneous activities except record maintenance. The respondents expressed that they were not maintaining the records. Further the respondents were unaware of the importance of maintaining records due to their low level of education might be the reason for low level of actual doing.

CONCLUSION

The results of present study indicated that the farm women contributed in livestock farm activities in addition to their routine household duties. Majority of the farm women were middle aged and had high school education. Majority of respondents were in nuclear family and had small family size. The managerial activities were actually done by women. Cent per cent actual doing was noticed in feeding and watering. The activities like care of new born, care of sick animals / poultry, identification of sick animals/birds and care of animals during parturition and post parturition were also actually done by women. High level of supervision was noticed in marketing of live animals

and selection of breed. It could be concluded that actual doing by women are more in activities related to caring of animals and less in outdoor activities like marketing and selection of animal. Capacity building in the activities like deworming, delicing, deticking, record maintenance, marketing, availing credit facilities, selection of enterprise and breed would improve their involvement in livestock enterprise due to improved skill in the above activities.

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Table 1**Personal profile of the respondents**

n = 50

| S.No | Variables | Classification | Frequency | Percentage |
|------|------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1 | Age | Old | 10 | 20.00 |
| | | Middle | 37 | 74.00 |
| | | Young | 3 | 6.00 |
| 2 | Education | Illiterate | 4 | 8.00 |
| | | Primary | 6 | 12.00 |
| | | Middle school | 10 | 20.00 |
| | | High school | 24 | 48.00 |
| | | Collegiate | 6 | 12.00 |
| 3 | Nature of Family | i) Family Type | | |
| | | Nuclear | 46 | 92.00 |
| | | Joint | 4 | 8.00 |
| | | ii) Family Size | | |
| | | Small | 42 | 84.00 |
| | | Large | 8 | 16.00 |
| 4 | Occupational status | From livestock alone | 32 | 64.00 |
| | | Livestock + agriculture | 10 | 20.00 |
| | | Others | 8 | 16.00 |
| 5 | Livestock farming experience | Low | 10 | 20.00 |
| | | Medium | 5 | 10.00 |
| | | High | 35 | 70.00 |
| 6 | Annual income | Low | 34 | 68.00 |
| | | Medium | 11 | 22.00 |
| | | High | 5 | 10.00 |

Table 2**Domain wise performance of respondents**

| S. No. | Domain | Actual doing (%) | Supervision (%) | Total participation (%) |
|--------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Breeding | 61.32 | 34.66 | 95.98 |
| 2 | Feeding | 79.66 | 19.32 | 98.98 |
| 3 | Health care | 68.66 | 19.66 | 88.32 |
| 4 | Management | 85.5 | 10.5 | 96.00 |
| 5 | Marketing | 29 | 67 | 96.00 |
| 6 | Miscellaneous | 17.32 | 26 | 43.32 |

Table 3
Item wise performance of respondents

| S. No. | Activities | Actual doing (%) | Supervision (%) | Total participation |
|----------------------|---|------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Breeding | | | | |
| 1 | Selection of breed | 20 | 74 | 94.00 |
| 2 | Selection of breeding method | 72 | 24 | 96.00 |
| 3 | Care of animals during parturition and post parturition | 94 | 4 | 98.00 |
| Feeding | | | | |
| 4 | Feeding and watering | 100 | 0 | 100.00 |
| 5 | Chopping of straw | 88 | 12 | 100.00 |
| 6 | Grazing animals | 82 | 18 | 100.00 |
| 7 | Fodder collection | 68 | 30 | 98.00 |
| 8 | Selection of conc., feed | 50 | 48 | 98.00 |
| 9 | Mixing of conc., feed | 90 | 8 | 98.00 |
| Health care | | | | |
| 10 | Care of new bom | 98 | 0 | 98.00 |
| 11 | Care of sick animals/poultry | 98 | 0 | 98.00 |
| 12 | Taking animals to hospital | 74 | 22 | 96.00 |
| 13 | Vaccination and de worming | 34 | 42 | 76.00 |
| 14 | Deticking and delicing | 20 | 48 | 68.00 |
| 15 | Administering medications | 88 | 6 | 94.00 |
| Management | | | | |
| 16 | Cleaning of animals & shed | 90 | 8 | 98.00 |
| 17 | Milking/egg collection | 70 | 24 | 94.00 |
| 18 | Cleaning of farm utensils. | 88 | 8 | 96.00 |
| 19 | Identification of sick animals/birds | 94 | 2 | 96.00 |
| Marketing | | | | |
| 20 | Marketing of live animals | 16 | 82 | 98.00 |
| 21 | Marketing of live stock products | 42 | 52 | 94.00 |
| Miscellaneous | | | | |
| 22 | Selection of livestock enterprises | 20 | 30 | 50.00 |
| 23 | A vailing credit facilities | 26 | 26 | 52.00 |
| 24 | Record maintenance | 6 | 22 | 28.00 |