

PROFILE OF WOMEN TRAINEES IN LIVESTOCK FARMING

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted on the profile of rural women of Erode district on various aspects of livestock farming during the on-campus training programmes. The results revealed that majority of the rural women were middle aged, educated up to primary level and reared maximum number of sheep and goat. Majority of them were actively involved in farm activities and maximum number of trainees were interested to start backyard poultry farming.

Keywords: Rural women, Profile, Training, Livestock farming.

INTRODUCTION

Livestock farming is an important source of income among rural household. Most of the work related to livestock farming are looked after by rural women but their knowledge about the technology related to various aspects of livestock farming is very low. In the implementation of development programmes, special role for women beneficiaries are increasingly being identified. This effort requires special emphasis on training of women beneficiaries (Parthasarathy *et.al.*, 2006 and Sarala Gopalan, 1992). The main objective of this training programme was to motivate rural women to select the feasible Animal Husbandry practices so as to engage themselves in their free time to earn certain amount of income for their family.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the present study, the training programmes were conducted for rural women on Animal Husbandry practices and value added products at Veterinary University Training and Research Centre, Erode. Accordingly the transfer

of technology work was carried out for ten batches consisting of 30 rural women in each batch. Thus, in total 300 participants were selected mainly from Self Help Groups.

The duration of the course was 5 days and the syllabus includes dairy, sheep, goat, poultry and backyard poultry husbandry practices namely breeding, feeding, health and management, preparation of value added meat and milk products and fodder production. The training included classroom teaching with audiovisual aids, video lesson, method demonstration and field visits.

Data on characteristics of rural women *viz.* age group participation, educational status, marital status, livestock farming, practicing and non-practicing farm women, preference towards livestock management and production were collected from the participants. On completion of the training programme feedback analysis was obtained from each group and the data was tabulated and interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of rural women

participants according to their characteristics are presented in Table 1 and Figures 1 to 6.

Among 300 participants 89 participants (29.7%) were of 20-30 years of age, 95 participants (31.7%) of 30-40 years of age, 84 participants (28.0%) of 40-50 years of age and 32 participants (10.6%) of 50-60 years of age groups, respectively (Figure 1) and this might be due to interest among young and middle age groups of rural women which were in consonance with the findings of Ravikumar *et al.* (2006).

In these rural women trainees 87 participants (29.0%) had primary level of education and about 71 participants (23.7%) of them were illiterates (able to write their names only), while the remaining 59 participants (19.7%), 44 participants (14.6%), 32 participants (10.7%) and 7 participants (2.3%) were belonged to the middle, high, higher secondary and collegiate levels of education, respectively (Figure 2). This is in accordance with the findings of George *et al.* (1991), Kumaravel and Krishnaraj (2005) and Ravikumar *et al.* (2006). The result revealed that education of women trainees had positive effect on the imbibing of improved livestock farming practices.

Out of the 300 trainees from 10 batches of training programme 267 women (89.0%) were married, 25 unmarried women (8.3%) and 8 were widows (2.7%) (Figure 3).

In the overall view, the rural women reared maximum number of sheep and goat (1519) followed by backyard poultry (670) cattle and buffalo (568) and dog and cat (65), respectively (Figure 4). Among the 300 rural women, 289 respondents (96.3%) had agriculture and other allied activities as their main occupation with animal husbandry as their subsidiary occupation, the remaining 11 respondents (3.7%) were not rearing any livestock and not involved in any type of farm activities (Figure 5). This is in line with the findings of Kumaravel and Krishnaraj, 2005, Maheswaran, 1993 and Taneja,

1998

Majority of the respondents i.e. 182 women were (60.7%) interested to start backyard poultry farming. Sixty three trainees (21.0%) gave preference to dairy farming and 55 trainees (18.3%) gave preference to sheep and goat farming (Figure 6). All the women trainees purchased and feed oil cakes as well as compounded concentrate feed rather than compounding a feed mixture using locally available feed ingredients. Among the 300 trainees, only one fourth of the women trainees cultivated green fodders on their plots. This could be due to lack of awareness on the benefits of green fodder cultivation.

All the women trainees preferred to breed their animals by artificial insemination rather than resort to local breeding bulls and they knew that optimum efficiency of artificial insemination could be achieved only if proper heat detection was carried out and importance of feeding colostrums to the neonatal young ones. Majority of the respondents in this study knew that livestock should be dewormed regularly. This could be due to literacy rates as well as the intensive efforts of various governmental organizations in providing training and its associated technologies as a package.

Majority of the women studied did not adopt timely vaccination against foot and mouth disease, blue tongue disease, sheep pox and ranikhet disease. None of the women trainees knew the ideal time for post calving insemination. Mastitis was the most important problem affecting dairy animals. Post calving insemination time and mastitis are the important factors affecting the productivity of dairy animals.

Family labor and the unpaid work of women in all farm and non-farm activities shall be recognized and accounted for in Gross domestic product. All policies, research and evaluation activities of the state shall take note of such

domestic and non-domestic activities supporting the agricultural sector. Women agricultural workers shall be encouraged to undertake collective activities in non-farm sectors such as animal husbandry and other activities through training programmes and promotional schemes.

CONCLUSION

The present study could be concluded that majority of the rural women participants were middle age group with primary level of education, had agriculture as their main occupation with animal husbandry as their subsidiary occupation and maximum number of trainees were interested to start small scale backyard poultry, dairy, sheep and goat farming, respectively. The training has made tremendous change and interest among the trainees to gain more knowledge probably due to usage of method demonstration, audio visual aids and also they own different livestock species such as dairy, sheep, goat and poultry, they could easily understand and remember the technologies taught in the training. Further, this training if conducted frequently, would increase the level of knowledge, which in turn reflects into better livestock farming and management and ultimately increases livestock production.

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Fig 1

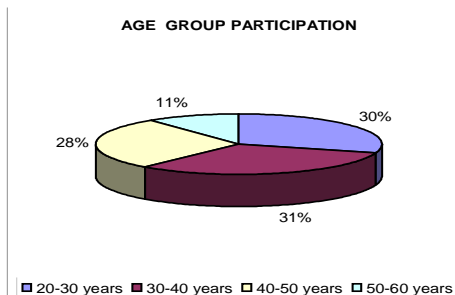


Fig 2

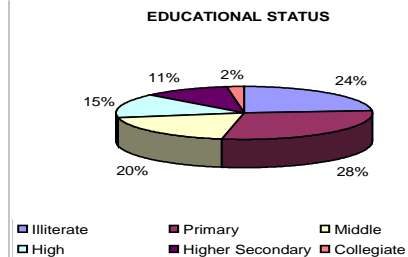


Fig 3

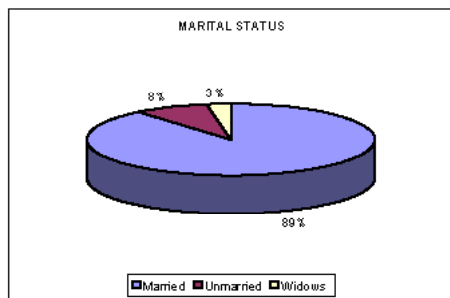


Fig 4

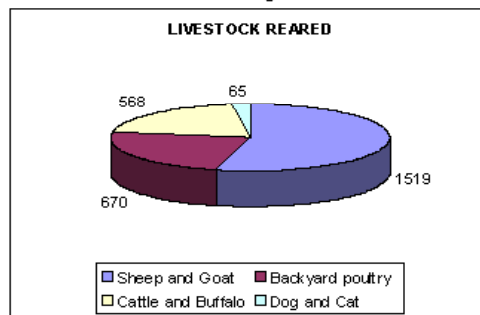


Fig 5

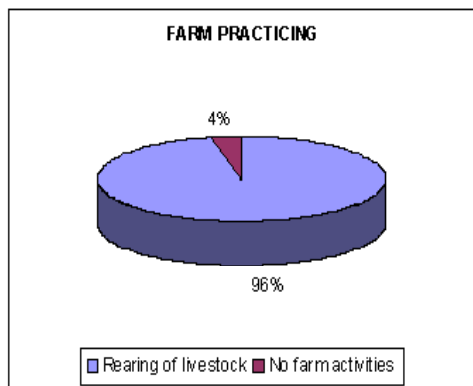


Fig 6

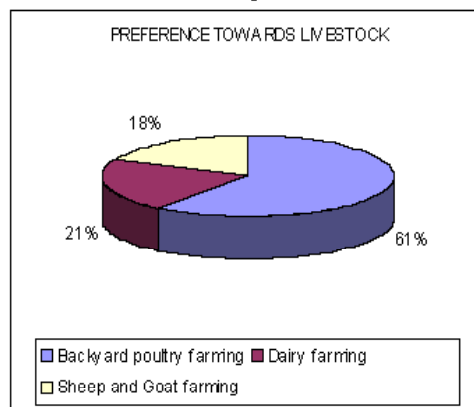


Table 1**Personal characteristics of rural women participants**

Sl.No.	Variable	Classification	Participants	
			Number	Percent
1.	Age (years)	20-30 years	89	29.7
		30-40 years	95	31.7
		40-50 years	84	28.0
		50-60 years	32	10.6
2.	Education	Illiterate	71	23.7
		Primary	87	29.0
		Middle	59	19.7
		High	44	14.6
		Higher Secondary	32	10.7
		Collegiate	7	2.3
3.	Marital status	Married	267	89.0
		Unmarried	25	8.3
		Widows	8	2.7
4.	Livestock owned	Sheep and Goat	1519	--
		Backyard poultry	670	--
		Cattle and Buffalo	568	--
		Dog and Cat	65	--
5.	Practicing farm women	Rearing of livestock	289	96.3
		No farm activities	11	3.7
6.	Preference towards livestock	Backyard poultry farming	182	60.7
		Dairy farming	63	21.0
		Sheep and Goat farming	55	18.3