

RESEARCH NOTE

**Role Expectation of Rural Women in
Farm Management**

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INTRODUCTION

The social system sets values and norms of expected behaviour and role relationships to every individual. Ranking of individuals along different positions of the social ladder and of expecting them to perform roles appropriate to their social position is a characteristics of the society. It is obvious that all societies expect different behaviour from men and women and the behaviour of either sex cannot be anticipated without the knowledge of their role expectations.

With the farm family as the economic unit of rural community, women perform a variety of tasks both in the farm as well as in the home. This calls for completion of tasks in accordance with expectations. The present study, therefore, was undertaken with the main objective to ascertain the role expectation of rural farm women as perceived by themselves, their husbands and experts in major agricultural activities.

METHODOLOGY

Agriculture, dairy, poultry and pisciculture are in most important occupations of people in the district. Since this study was regarding the role expectation of rural

women in farm activities, this district was considered more suitable for investigation as the agricultural activities were varied and continuous for a major part of the year. Eight villages of Navsari taluka of the Val-sad district were randomly selected.

By using random sampling technique, 15 farm women, were selected from each village. The data on the role expectation were thus collected from the 120 farm women, 120 husbands of the same rural women and from 60 experts who were having rural experience, viz. 20 academicians from the Extension Education departments of Gujarat Agricultural University, 40 Extension Officers from the Department of Agriculture, Government of Gujarat and the Field Extension Officers of Navsari Taluka.

The four major role areas, namely: (1) Pre-sowing and sowing (2) Inter-cultivation (3) Harvest and post-harvest and (4) Allied agricultural roles, were taken as the role expectations of rural farm women. On the basis of these expected roles, an interview schedule for rural farm women and their husbands and questionnaire for experts were prepared. The scoring procedure was used to measure the role expectations of rural

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farm women on five point continuum i.e. most important, important, somewhat important, least important and not at all important role and the scores 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 were assigned them, respectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The mean scores of the role expectations of rural women as perceived by the experts, rural women and their husbands are presented in Table 1.

husbands. It was interesting to note that the experts expect the rural women to perform more work in all the four major role areas in comparison to the role expectations of rural women themselves or their husbands.

Further, to find out the significant differences, if any, between the role expectation of experts, rural women and their husbands, analysis of variance method was adopted. The results obtained by the

Table 1. Mean scores on major roles as perceived by the experts, rural women and their husbands.

Sr. No.	Major Roles	Experts (N=60)	Rural farm women (N=120)	Rural Husbands (N=120)
1.	Presowing and sowing	124.30	95.20	74.83
2.	Inter-cultivation	43.65	33.88	26.30
3.	Harvest and post-harvest	16-0.95	94.39	78.93
4.	Allied agricultural role	245.37	178.40	159.60
	Total	574.27	401.87	339.66

The total mean scores of role expectations of rural women in farm management by experts were 574.27, of rural farm women 401.87 and of rural husbands 339.66. The difference in role expectation mean scores between experts and rural farm women was 172.40, between experts and rural husbands was 234.61 and between rural women and their husbands was 234.61 and between rural women and their husbands was 62.21. The maximum mean score difference was between experts and the rural husbands and the minimum was between rural women and their husbands. Therefore, the experts expected the rural farm women to perform more work than was expected by their

method of analysis of variance are presented in Table 2.

The computed F value of analysis of variance (12.00**) between experts, rural women and their husbands regarding the role expectation of rural women in farm management was highly significant. Therefore, it could be concluded that there was significant difference in role expectation of rural women in relation to farm management activities as perceived by experts, rural women and their husbands.

The calculated critical difference (Table 2) was 19.50 and mean differences between experts, rural women and their husbands worked out (Table 1) were

Table 2. Role expectations of rural women as perceived by experts, rural women and their husbands by the method of analysis of variance.

Source of Variation	df	Sum of squares	Mean square (Variance)	F Value
Between groups	2	913500	456750	12.00**
With groups (error)	297	11300000	38048	
Total	299	12213500		

greater than the critical difference. It indicates that there were significant differences in role expectations between experts, rural women and their husbands. However, the difference in role expectation mean scores between rural farm women and their husbands was 62.21, which was the lowest mean difference in comparison to the mean differences between experts and rural women and between experts and husbands. It shows that, the rural husbands had better perception of the role expectation of rural farm women.

CONCLUSION

1. The experts expected the rural farm women to perform more work in all the four major role areas : (1) Pre-sowing and sowing (2) Inter-cultivation (3) Harvest and post-harvest and (4) Allied agricultural roles, in comparison to the role expectations of rural women themselves and their husbands.

2. The minimum difference in role expectation of rural farm women was observed between rural farm women themselves and their husbands and maximum difference was between experts and rural husbands. It was probably because of the fact that the rural husbands had an opportunity of observing closely the role

performance of their wives and hence could objectively assess the role expectations of rural women. The rural women expect more work to be done by them.

3. The significance difference in role expectation of rural women in farm management was noticed between experts, rural women and their husbands.

IMPLICATIONS

Rural women play an important role in rural economy of the country. Role expectation of rural women determines to a greater extent success or failure of several production programmes at village level which influence rural economy. The rural women with average or poor expectation could be given short duration training to improve their role expectation and thereby role performance in farm and other production activities. Also relevant printed information regarding the training programmes introduced could be developed and be made available to the rural women.

Furthermore, for bringing any type of changes in role expectation and role performance by rural women in farm management, the first task that will be needed to do, is to bring about appropriate change in the role expectation of rural women as perceived by their husbands.