

## RURAL WOMEN IN HOUSEHOLD PRODUCTION SYSTEM: SOCIO-PERSONAL PROFILE, CONSTRAINTS AND SUGGESTIONS WITH EXTENSION STRATEGIES

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### ABSTRACT

*Rural women are the invisible lifeline of the agrarian rural community. They are not only the pioneer of the home but they give incomparable contribution in agriculture also. To study the socio personal profile, constraints faced by rural women during their participation in household production system, suggestions to develop extension strategies, a study with ex post facto research design was conducted in three talukas named Vansda, Chikhali and Khergam of Navsari district. The interview schedule was prepared and pre-tested to collect the data. Total 120 respondents were surveyed through personal interview technique from their home, farm, office or any other workplace. Majority of the rural women were found in middle age groups belonged to joint and medium size of family, had education up to middle school level and medium level of farming experience with marginal size of land holding. They had medium level of social participation, extension participation, utilization of source of information with medium level of risk orientation, innovativeness, market orientation and self-confidence. It was found that the prescribed roles of women in society was perceived by the respondents as main constraint followed by Higher time consumption for household work, Child care and agricultural work at same time were increase work load, Poor educational background, Dominance of male members in family. Out of all suggestions to overcome the constraints mentioned by rural women, majority of them said that Transformation of society through awareness programmes on gender issues followed by Family members should give support and guidance, Due importance should be given to women in decision making, should be appointed that provide all the information about government schemes.*

**Keywords :** rural women, profile, participation, constraints, household production system

### INTRODUCTION

Rural women are the invisible lifeline of the agrarian rural community. They are not only the pioneer of the home but they give incomparable contribution in farming activities also. Even, to sustain the economic condition of household, they participate in non farming or income generating activities. The community is nothing without women .it is difficult to explain the situation, success of any community without considering the participation of rural women in progress of society. So, in this way rural women participate in household production system.

But, usually in India, there is statistical bias in under estimating the position of rural women in development. Women work for longer hours than men and contribute appreciably to household income, they are now not perceived as productive workers. They are silent workers who are struggling to complete her household responsibilities from sunrise to dusk. But, still, in the family, many a times, she is criticized for no longer being honest in her job. If the household members had to pay for the total family work and the free labour she affords in the small agricultural land of

the rural families, then her real well worth should have been realized. She does this day-in and day-out with compromising the household interest, but in very few families, she receives the recognize which she must get.

### OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study the profile of rural women
- (2) To determine the constraints faced by the rural women during participation in the household system
- (3) To seek the suggestions for developing the extension strategies

### METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Navsari district of south Gujarat region during the year 2018-2019. Out of six talukas of Navsari district three talukas Viz., Vansda, Chikhali and Khergam were selected purposively for the study. Two villages from each taluka were selected randomly. From one village twenty rural women as respondent were selected. Thus, total 120 respondents from three talukas were selected for study. Thirteen independent variables and one dependent

variable were chosen in light of objectives. The interview schedule was prepared and respondent were interviewed at their home, farm, office or any other workplace. The statistical tools i.e. frequency, rank, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient (r) were used to derive the inference.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Age

It was found that about half (49.17 per cent) of rural women belonged to middle age group followed by about one-third (37.50 per cent) and about one-sixth (13.33 per cent) belonged to young and old age groups, respectively. It can be concluded that majority of the rural women (86.67 per cent) were in middle to young age groups. It might be due to the reality that in rural society, rural women of middle to young age group possessed maturity and have had enough interest to take any challenge to do better for their family, considering the best course of action available. The finding is in conformity with those of Mishra, (2013), Patel *et al.*, (2015) and Bharali *et al.*, (2016).

### Education

The data in table 1 shows that about 35.83 per cent of rural women had education up to middle school level followed by 17.50 per cent had education up to primary school level. Further, it was found that about 6.67 per cent of rural women were functionally literate, 15.00 per cent were having education up to high school level and 10.83 per cent were illiterate. Only 14.17 per cent had college level education. It can be concluded that majority (50.83 per cent) of rural women had education up to middle school level to higher school level. The probable reason for this might be that rural women were living in villages and due to insufficient educational facilities available in their villages, they could not get higher education hence, and majority of rural women were educated only up to middle school. This finding was in conformity with the findings of Mishra, (2013) and Patel *et al.*, (2015).

### Type of family

The conducted study reveals that nearly 75.83 per cent of rural women belonged to joint family, while 24.17 per cent belonged to nuclear family. The findings indicate that they might be somewhat traditional bounded with their social system, side by side they were also well aware about the advantages of joint family system in livelihood management. The results also pointed out the facts that the joint family system is still prevailing in rural area. Joint family system is Indian culture. This finding was in conformity with the

findings of Bhati, (2014), Patel *et al.*, (2015), Paramguru, (2016) and Ku, (2017).

### Size of family

The conducted study reveals that 44.17 per cent of rural women had 7 to 8 members in their family followed by 20.83 per cent were having above 8 family members, 20.00 per cent had 3 to 4 family members and 13.33 per cent rural women had 5 to 6 family members. Only 1.67 per cent rural women had 1 to 2 members in their family. So, majority of the rural women (78.33 per cent) belonged to medium to large size of family. The probable reason for this might be that a greater number of rural women was living in joint type of family. This finding was in conformity with the findings of Raksha, (2014), Patel *et al.*, (2015) and Paramguru, (2016).

### Farming experience

**Table 1: Distribution of rural women based on their personal characteristics (n = 120)**

Components	Category	Frequency	Percent
Age	Young	45	37.50
	Middle	59	49.17
	Old	16	13.33
Education	College/Post Graduation	17	14.17
	Higher school	18	15.00
	Middle school	43	35.83
	Primary school	21	17.50
	Functionally literate	08	6.67
	Illiterate	13	10.83
Type of family	Nuclear	29	24.17
	Joint	91	75.83
Size of family	1 to 2	02	1.67
	3 to 4	24	20.00
	5 to 6	16	13.33
	7 to 8	53	44.17
	Above 8	25	20.83
Farming experience	Low (up to 1.48 score)	25	20.83
	Medium (1.49 to 20.23 score)	80	66.67
	High (above 20.23 score)	15	12.50

The data in table 1 reveals that 66.67 per cent of rural women had medium farming experience; whereas, 20.83 per cent and 12.50 per cent had less and high farming experience, respectively. It can be concluded that majority of rural women (79.17 per cent) were having medium to high farming experience. Majority of rural women belonged to medium to young age group, so that they had medium

to less farming experience as who came from agricultural background and used to join farming at younger age and started getting experience of farming. This led them to have medium farming experience. This finding was in conformity with the findings of Singh, (2011) and Mishra, (2013).

### Size of land holding

Table 2 shows that 49.17 per cent of rural women were having marginal size of land holding followed by small size of land holding (23.33 per cent), medium size of land holding (14.17 per cent) and large size of land holding group (13.33 per cent). It can be concluded that majority of rural women (72.50 per cent) possessed marginal to small size of land holding. The probable reason might be that rural women under the study area were living in joint family so that they have very little land entitlement on their names. This finding

was in conformity with the findings of Mishra, (2013), Maruthesha, (2014), Raksha, (2014), Bharali *at al.*, (2016) and Paramguru, (2016).

### Social participation

The conducted study in table 2 reveals that 75.83 per cent of rural women had medium social participation followed by low social participation (13.33 per cent) and high social participation (10.83 per cent). So, majority of the rural women (86.67 per cent) had medium to high level of social participation. The probable reason behind this result might be that most of the rural women were members in mahila mandal and sakhi mandal. Even some rural farm women were member of gram panchayat, farmers interest group etc. This finding was in conformity with the finding of Ku, (2017).

**Table 2: distribution of rural women according to their socio-economical characteristics**

(n = 120)

Components	Category	Frequency	Percent
Size of land holding	Marginal (up to 1.00 ha.)	59	49.17
	Small (1.01 to 2 ha.)	28	23.33
	Medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha.)	17	14.17
	Large (Above 4 ha.)	16	13.33
Social participation	Low (up to 4.1434 score)	16	13.33
	Medium (4.1434 to 10.3566 score)	91	75.83
	High (above 10.3566 score)	13	10.84

### Extension participation

The data regarding extension participation reveals that 66.67 per cent of rural women had medium extension participation, whereas 25.83 and 7.50 per cent of them had high and low extension participation, respectively. So, it can be concluded that majority of the rural women (92.50 per cent) had medium to high extension participation. The probable reason might be that majority 51 of rural women were member of ATMA group and sakhi mandal which have direct relation to department and university of agriculture. This finding was in conformity with the findings of Mishra, (2013) and Yavana, (2010).

### Source of information

The data presented in table 3 shows that more than 70.00 per cent of rural women were using source of information at medium level followed by 15.83 and 14.17 per cent of them were using source of information at low and high level, respectively. It can be concluded that majority of the rural women (84.17 per cent) had medium to higher utilization of source of information. The probable reason might be that majority of rural women were member of ATMA group and sakhi mandal which have direct relation to department and university of agriculture. This finding was in conformity with the findings of Mishra, (2013), Tripathi, (2007) and Singh, (2011).

**Table 3: Distribution of rural women according to their communicational characteristics**

(n = 120)

Component	Category	Frequency	Percent
Extension participation	Low (up to 1.94 score)	09	7.50
	Medium (1.95 to 12.38 score)	80	66.67
	High (above 12.38 score)	31	25.83
Source of information	Less (up to 18.43 score)	19	15.83
	Medium (18.44 to 43.81 score)	84	70.00
	More (above 43.81 score)	17	14.17

**Risk orientation**

The study reveals that 66.67 per cent of rural women were having medium level of risk orientation followed by 24.16 per cent and 9.17 per cent of them were having high and low level of risk orientation, respectively. It can be concluded that majority (90.83 per cent) rural women had medium to high level of risk orientation. The probable reason is that rural women of studied areas personally think that higher risk orientation leads to higher participation in various activities and they were well aware about the advantages of taking risks in the various activities for getting the higher economic benefits. This finding was in conformity with the findings of Dhanotiya, (2012) and Chandravadia, (2013).

**Innovativeness**

The study reveals that 78.33 per cent of rural women had medium level of innovativeness, followed by 15.83 per cent and 5.84 per cent of them had low and high level of innovativeness, respectively. So, it was found that majority (84.17 per cent) of rural women belonged to medium to high innovativeness categories. The reason might also be that rural women were ready to accept new ideas to some extent and they embraced the ideas wholeheartedly, if it was found beneficial by other rural women. This finding was in

conformity with the finding of Bharali *et al.*, (2016).

**Market orientation**

The data regarding level of market orientation of rural women revealed that 59.17 per cent of rural women had medium level of market orientation followed by 21.67 per cent had low level of market orientation and 19.16 per cent had high level of market orientation. So, it can be concluded that majority of the respondent (78.33 per cent) had medium to high level of market orientation. It was probably due to increased awareness about market information with varied available sources of market information among the villagers which provided rural women healthy environment for exchange of market information.

**Self confidence**

The data in table 4 reveals that 80.84 per cent of rural women had medium level of self-confidence followed by 13.33 per cent and 5.83 per cent had low and high level of self-confidence, respectively. So, it can be concluded that majority of the rural women (86.67 per cent) had medium to high level of self-confidence. The probable reason might be that middle level of education and good extension participation increase self confidence in rural women.

**Table 4 : Distribution of rural women according to their psychological characteristics** (n = 120)

Component	Category	Frequency	Percent
<b>Risk orientation</b>	Low (up to 2.23 score)	11	9.17
	Medium (2.24 to 4.72 score)	80	66.67
	High (above 4.72 score)	29	24.16
<b>Innovativeness</b>	Low (up to 8.42 score)	19	15.83
	Medium (8.42 to 13.03 score)	94	78.33
	High (above 13.03 score)	07	5.84
<b>Market orientation</b>	Low (up to 20.18 score)	26	21.67
	Medium (20.19 to 39.19 score)	71	59.17
	High (above 39.19 score)	23	19.16
<b>Self confidence</b>	Low (up to 3.92 score)	16	13.33
	Medium (3.93 to 7.48 score)	97	80.84
	High (above 7.48 score)	07	5.83

**Constraints faced by rural women during participation in household system**

Constraints play a vital role in participation in any activity and also give the consequences in their socio-economic. In the present study, it was measured by considering the all possible as well as common difficulties experienced by the rural women during participation in

household production system. The investigator had asked to mention their constraints faced while participating in all activities of major patterns. All enumerated constraints were summed up separately. The constraints relatively associated with one aspect were clubbed and converted into frequency and percentage and lastly rank was assigned. The classified data are presented in table 5.

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to constraints faced by them during participation in household system** (n = 120)

Sr. No.	Constraints	Freq.	Percent	Rank
1	Higher time consumption for household work	100	83.33	II
2	Dominance of male members in family	80	66.67	V
3	Child care and agricultural work at same time were increase work load	95	79.17	III
4	No permission to take decisions due to younger age	45	37.50	VIII
5	Poor educational background	82	68.33	IV
6	Prescribed roles of women in society	105	87.50	I
7	Lack of information about government schemes	44	36.67	IX
8	Lack of training for income generating activities	35	29.17	X
9	Lack of knowledge about farm accounting	52	43.33	VII
10	Lack of help in problem solving	60	50.00	VI

The data presented in table 5 clearly indicated that the prescribed roles of women in society (87.50per cent) was perceived by the respondents as main constraint and it is ranked first followed by Higher time consumption for household work (83.33per cent) ranked second, Child care and agricultural work at same time were increase work load (79.17per cent) ranked third, Poor educational background (68.33per cent) ranked fourth, Dominance of male members in family (66.67per cent) ranked fifth, Lack of help in problem solving (50.00) ranked sixth, Lack of knowledge about farm accounting (43.33par cent) ranked seventh, No permission to take decisions due to younger age (37.50per cent) ranked eighth, Lack of information about government schemes (36.67per cent) ranked ninth, Lack of training for

income generating activities (29.17per cent) ranked tenth. This finding agreed with the finding of Patel *et al.*, (2015).

#### **Suggestions by rural women for developing extension strategies**

In this presented study, all the rural women were requested to offer their valued suggestions for eliminating the constraints. They were requested to give their suggestions which they followed to overcome the constraints. The suggestions relatively associated with same aspect were clubbed and converted into frequency and percentage and lastly rank was assigned. These were presented in descending order. The data in this regard is presented in table 6.

**Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to suggestions given by them to overcome the constraints** (n = 120)

Sr. No.	Suggestions	Freq.	Percent	Rank
1	Due importance should be given to women in decision making	92	76.66	III
2	Transformation of society through awareness programmes on gender issues	102	85.00	I
3	More skill oriented training should be organized for rural women	50	41.67	VI
4	Training should be given about farm accounting	47	39.17	VII
5	Saving their time and energy spent on household work	72	60.00	IV
6	Training programmes should be organized by extension institute for regular update of improved agricultural technology	42	35.00	IX
7	Family members should allow to take decisions to younger rural women	45	37.50	VIII
8	Family members should give support and guidance	93	77.50	II
9	More female extension staff should be appointed that provide all the information about government schemes	57	47.50	V

The table 6 clearly revealed that out of all suggestions to overcome the constraints mentioned by rural women, majority of them said that Transformation of society through awareness programmes on gender issues(85.00%) and ranked first followed by Family members should give support and guidance (77.50%) ranked second, Due importance should be given to women in decision making (76.66%) ranked third, Saving their time and energy spent on household work(60.00%) ranked fourth, More female extension staff should be appointed that provide all the information about government schemes (47.50%) ranked fifth. More skill oriented training should be organized for rural women (41.67%) ranked sixth, Training should be given about farm accounting (39.17%) ranked seventh, Family members should allow to take decisions to younger rural women (37.50%) ranked eighth and Training programmes should be organized by extension institute for regular update of improved agricultural technology (35.00%) ranked ninth.

This finding agrees with the finding of Patel *et al.*, (2015).

**Proposed extension strategy to overcome the constraints**

Considering the constraint as limiting factor for individual development, the extension educationist advised to use the Situation Based Extension Approach (SBEA) to overcome the constraints and develop suitable strategy in effective way. The respondents were also consulted after determining the constraints with probable solutions to overcome. Considering the most five constraints and suggestions offered by the respondents and the experts, a situation-based extension strategy was worked out separately for each by using triangulation method of participatory approach. The proposed strategy was divided into five columns, covering the aspects like major constraints and suggestions from the respondents, technical options from the experts and proposed the strategy with its executing agency/ies. The information in this regard is presented in table 7.

**Table 7: Extension strategies to overcome the constraints**

Sr. No.	Constraints	Suggestions	Proposed strategy	Implementing agency
1	Higher time consumption for household work	Saving their time and energy spent on household work	Approach and Visit experts of home science, KVK, SSK	Line department, KVK, SSK, SHG
2	Lack of information about government schemes	More female extension staff should be appointed to provide information.	Approch to extension officer, agriculture officer	Line department, ATIC, taluka and district panchayat
3	Lack of knowledge about farm accounting and improved technology	Training should be given for farm accounting and improved technology	Training through ATMA and KVK	KVK, ATMA, line department
4	Dominance of male member in family	Transformation of society through awareness programme on gender issue	Approach and visit KVK, ATMA, ATIC	KVK, ATMA, Line department, ATIC
5	Lack of training for income generating activities	More skill oriented programme should be oriented	Regular training through ATMA, SHG, KVK	ATMA, SHG, KVK

**CONCLUSION**

The presented study revealed that Majority of the rural women were found in middle age groups belonged to joint and medium size of family, had education up to middle school level and medium level of farming experience with marginal size of land holding. Majority of the rural women had medium level of social participation, extension participation, and utilization of source of information. Majority of the rural women had medium level of risk orientation, innovativeness, market orientation and self-confidence. Out of different constraints, the prescribed roles of women in society was

perceived by the respondents as main constraint followed by Higher time consumption for household work, Child care and agricultural work at same time were increase work load, Poor educational background, Dominance of male members in family. While, out of all suggestions to overcome the constraints mentioned by rural women, majority of them said that Transformation of society through awareness programmes on gender issues followed by Family members should give support and guidance, Due importance should be given to women in decision making, should be appointed that provide all the information about government schemes.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors of the paper declare no conflict of interest

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