

Socioeconomic profile of women dairy farmers of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to describe the socioeconomic conditions of rural women with emphasis on livestock ownership, income from livestock, milk yield, scientific orientation, market orientation and economic motivation towards dairying whose numbers have been increasing rapidly in recent past. The study thus aims to discuss the profile of women dairy farmers of Bikaner district of Rajasthan. The results revealed that majority of the respondents possessed local breed cow Rathi, had low socio economic status, medium market orientation (72%) with 49 per cent of having medium scientific orientation and 45 per cent with high economic motivation.

Key words: Economic motivation, market orientation, scientific orientation, Socio-economic status.

Rural women constitute an important component of Indian society. They besides being active participant in home and farm activities have been traditionally and predominantly engaged in dairying activities. They are engaged in feeding, breeding, management, health care and other operations related to dairying. In fact dairy and rural women complement each other. They are the backbone of agriculture production system. Even then they suffer from being both economically and socially invisible. Rajasthan being a leading milk producing state, unlike income generated from crop production, which is seasonal in the state, dairying, is a source of a stable income bringing in cash on a daily basis and providing livelihoods security. This gives small farmers and women in particular an important economic incentive to adopt dairying for their livelihoods. And as women are the ones engaged in dairying activities a careful study of

the socio economic conditions of women dairy farmers is a prerequisite for the suitable design and successful implementation of any entrepreneurial programme. The purpose of this study is to analyze the socio economic profile of women dairy farmers, who have been engaged in dairying related activities since time immemorial.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in five villages viz. Kharbara, Garabdesar, Dudiwali, Mahajan and Ladera of randomly selected Lunkaransar Panchayat Samiti of Bikaner District, Rajasthan. A list of rural women involved in dairying and possessing at least three milch animals (so as to draw a representative sample) was prepared with the help of Patwari for all the five selected villages. From each list 20 rural women were then selected randomly, thereby making a total sample of 100 respondents. Data were collected with the help of personal interview schedule. Frequency and percentage were used for analysis of the data statistically.

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To calculate socio economic status, scientific orientation, market orientation and economic motivation the maximum score from the scale was divided into three equal intervals in order to make three categories of low, medium and high categories respectively. (In response to comment AE4 to AE7)

S.No.	Categories	Score range
1.	Socio economic status	
	• Low	Below 30
	• Medium	30-50
	• High	Above 50
2.	Scientific orientation	
	• Low	0-4
	• Medium	5-8
	• High	9-12
3	Market orientation	
	• Low	0-2.66
	• Medium	2.67-5.34
	• High	Above 5.34
4	Economic motivation	
	• Low	0-4
	• Medium	5-8
	• High	9-12

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the present study an attempt was made to chalk out the present status of women dairy farmers. Thus, their livestock possession, income received from milk and milk yield was studied.

Livestock Possession : Table 1 portrays that most of the respondents (96%) possessed Rathi cows which was a local breed. Only 17 per cent of the respondents had cross breed cows namely Holstein Friesian. Local buffaloes (Murrah) were possessed by nearly 21 percent of the respondents.

Table 1. Livestock possession by the respondents n = 100.

S. No	Livestock possession	f/%
1	Local cows (Rathi)	96
2	Cross/Improved cows (HF)	17
3	Local buffaloes (Murrah)	21
4	Cross/ Improved buffaloes	0

Milk yield: The data in Table 2 reveal the average milk yield per day of the milch animals as reported by the respondents. It is evident that maximum number of respondents (42%) had milk

yield in the range of 27-42 liters per day, whereas 39 per cent were in the range of 1-26 liters/day and 19 per cent were in the range of 53-80 liters/day. On an average the respondents reported 25-30 litres/ day. But despite of this heavy yield, they incurred less profit, due to lower rates by cooperatives and private dairies.

Table 2. Average milk yield of the milch animals n = 100

S.No.	Milk Yield	f/%
1	1- 27 liters/day	39
2	27-52 liters/day	42
3	53-80 liters/day	19

Income from milk: The respondents were asked about the income they received per month by selling milk. Perusal of the data in the Table 3 show that maximum respondents (42%) earn monthly income between ₹ 5001- ₹ 10000 by selling milk, followed by 39 per cent earning up to ₹ 5000 in a month and 19 per cent earning in the range of ₹ 10001 - ₹ 15000 in a month. Low procurement rates of milk and difficulty in selling milk outside the village were found to be the reasons for low income besides possessing large herd size.

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents on the basis of their income from milk n = 100.

S. No.	Income from milk	f/%
1	Up to ₹ 5000/month	39
2	₹ 5001 - ₹ 10000/month	42
3	₹ 10001 - ₹ 15000/month	19

Further an effort was made to gather information regarding extension contact and trainings received by the respondents. It was found that the respondents had no extension contact and they did not receive any sort of trainings related to dairy.

Scientific orientation, market orientation and economic motivation were studied as factors that influence the rural women farmers' entrepreneurial behavior towards dairying.

Scientific orientation : To judge the degree to which the rural women are oriented towards the use of scientific method in dairy enterprise, their scientific orientation was measured. Glance

at Table 4 reveals that nearly half of the respondents (49%) had medium level of scientific orientation whereas low and high scientific orientation was found in 22 per cent and 29 per cent respondents, respectively. The findings are in line with Patel (2005) and Kaur *et al.* (2007) who revealed that more than half of the respondents had medium level of scientific orientation. This can be attributed towards their medium cosmopolitanism, as they interacted with informal as well as a few formal sources regarding what to adopt in dairying.

Market orientation : The extent to which the rural women are oriented towards sale of milk and milk products for better price based on analyzing various prevailing infrastructure and market intelligence was measured in terms of their market orientation. The results from Table 4 indicate that majority of the respondents (72%) had medium market orientation whereas low and high market orientation was found in 10 per cent and 18 per cent respondents, respectively. Study showed that most of the women themselves were involved in selling of milk and were quite aware of market prices.

Table 4. Distribution of the respondents according to their scientific and market orientation and economic motivation n = 100.

S. No.	Item	f/%
A	Scientific Orientation	
	Low	22
	Medium	49
	High	29
B	Market Orientation	
	Low	10
	Medium	72
	High	18
C	Economic Motivation	
	Low	15
	Medium	40
	High	45

Economic Motivation: It refers to the occupational success in terms of profit maximization and the relative values an individual place on economic ends. A critical perusal of the data furnished in Table 4 reveal that 45 per cent of the respondents had high level

of economic motivation followed by medium (40%) and low categories (15%) of economic motivation.

The study showed that despite having a good herd size of milch animal, practicing dairying since years, rural women faced problem of lower procurement rates and less marketing facilities. It was clearly seen, that majority of the rural women belonged to lower socio economic status.

Socio economic status : On the basis of scores obtained by the respondents in different aspects of socio- economic status scale, the respondents were categorized as having high, medium and low socio-economic status. Data in Table 5 point out that majority of the respondents (63%) were from low socio-economic status whereas 34 per cent respondents had medium socio economic status and only 3 per cent were from high socio economic status. Similar findings were reported by Lahoti *et al.* (2012). Socio-economic status was calculated on the basis of characteristics such as education, land holding, livestock ownership and dwellings, organizational memberships and possession of household and agricultural assets.

Table 5. Distribution of the respondents according to their socio-economic status n = 100

S. No.	Socio Economic Status	f/%
1	Low	63
2	Medium	34
3	High	3

CONCLUSIONS

As per the results it can be concluded that skill oriented and managerial trainings through entrepreneurship development programme should be provided so as to transform rural women into entrepreneurs from mere milk sellers. Problem of low procurement rates should be addressed by establishing fixed rates based on the cost of milk production, so as to provide remunerative price for milk and encourage intensive dairy activities in the rural area. Extension agencies should encourage Cooperatives and SHG approach as a solution, among the rural women, rather than selling individually.

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