

Managerial Abilities of Women Headed Households

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Abstract

This study attempts to understand the profile of women headed households and the relationship between personal variables and managerial abilities of farm women. A sample of 270 women headed households were drawn for the study covering Telangana, Rayalseema and Coastal region of Andhra Pradesh. The study reveals that education, self confidence and participation of women in SHGs and extension activities have significant positive relation with managerial efficiency. The study recommends that women headed households should be given priority in extension activities of ongoing schemes for providing them opportunities to sharpen their managerial skills. Special management modules could be developed for training these women which will enhance their self confidence and managerial abilities and help them become more productive. Extension programmes with a combination of rational and creative approach to problem solving and decision making will have potential for providing a conceptual framework, upon which the programmes can be based, for developing the managerial efficiency of these women headed households, say the authors.

Introduction

Management ability of a farmer is a crucial determinant of the returns he/she obtains from a farm. It is concerned with the organization and deployment of the resources into farm activities - Land, Capital and Labour and above all the ability and skill of the individual farmer. The studies conducted on management role of farm women have revealed that socio economic status, material possession, land holding, caste have shown direct effect on the role performance of rural women in descending order (Lakshmi Devi, 1988). It was also found that women's limited access to resources and knowledge reduced women's role in agricultural and crop management decision making. Migration of rural men leaving the women at home, increases the women farmers contact with the market and thereby allows them some control over the expenditure and finances (Tom, 1996).

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In the recent past, the occupation of men in off-farm activities in semi-urban and urban areas across the country has forced women to take the lead and make decisions regarding farm and home activities. In addition, widowhood, remaining single, after she has been deserted by her husband, male members being engaged in some job outside the village etc. were some of the reasons for women taking up the role of management of the farm and home. In view of this background a study on “Women Headed Households and their Managerial Abilities”, was conducted in Andhra Pradesh, with the following objectives.

Objectives

- To understand the profile of women headed households
- To study the relationship between the personal variables and managerial abilities of the farm women

Methodology

A sample of 270 women headed households were selected for the study covering Telangana, Rayalseema and Coastal region of Andhra Pradesh. Using a multi-stage random sampling procedure, 27 villages, distributed in 9 mandals, in 3 districts, in 3 regions of the state have been covered under the study. From each of the selected villages, a sample of 10 households headed by women were identified, thus making the total sample 270. The primary data was collected using a pre-tested questionnaire through personal interview method. The data was analysed using both average and percentages. To assess the levels of self-confidence and innovativeness of the sample women, the standard deviation was marked, based on which 3 categories i.e., low, medium and high level were fixed using the mean $\pm$ SD. To understand the relationship between the socio economic parameters and the management attributes, correlation analysis was also attempted.

Findings:

Profile of the sample:

Age: Majority of the women were in the age group of 50 and less.

Literacy: About 85.93 per cent of women were illiterate and only 14.07 per cent were literate.

Marital Status: Sixty eight percent were widows, nearly 18 per cent were deserted women and 13 per cent were married and the husband was present.

Type of family: Nuclear family constituted 97 per cent in the sample.

Size of the family: Families with five members and less constituted 97 per cent.

Farm experience: Majority of the women have farm experience of 15 years and less.

Land size: The average land size worked out to be 1.82 acres. Overall 86.5 per cent of the land area operated was owned by sample women and about 16 per cent was leased in land and 2 per cent was leased-out land.

Family Income: Overall sample household income was estimated at Rs.16,622, about 67 per cent income was obtained from their own farms, while the balance of 33 per cent was obtained from other sources, other than the farm.

Social Participation: Out of 270, only 180 women were part of some social organization or the other. Out of this, 117 are members of SHG and the remaining are members in some religious group, Mahila Mandal etc.

Innovativeness: Majority of the women had medium level of innovativeness.

Self Confidence: Only 14 percent had high level of self confidence. Around 25 per cent have exhibited medium level and 60 per cent have low level of self confidence, respectively.

Extension Participation: Less than 10 per cent of the sample had participated in extension activities.

Analysis of Managerial Abilities: Six major functions of management namely: planning, organizing, supervising, communicating, coordinating and controlling have been taken into consideration, for analyzing the management abilities of the women headed households.

The results of the analysis are presented in Table.1. From the Table it can be seen that, among the six major management functions, the maximum involvement of sample women could be observed in coordination function followed by communication, planning, controlling, organizing and supervision of activities.

Table 1. Managerial Abilities of Women Heading the Households

S. No.	Management function	AL	ST	N	Total
I	Planning				
1	Daily routine	35	53	182	270
2	Planning independently	96	134	40	270
3	Consider the past experience	97	136	37	270
4	Thinking through alternatives	34	132	104	270
	Average	66	115	89	270
	Percentage	24.44	42.59	32.96	100
II	Organizing				
1	Prioritizing the work	57	148	65	270
2	Assigning the work	49	128	93	270
3	Organizing things on time	36	122	112	270
	Average	47	133	90	270
	Percentage	17.41	49.26	33.33	100
III	Execution/supervision				
1	Supervising the work regularly	40	124	106	270
2	Supervising for timeliness	31	98	141	270
	Average	35	111	124	270
	Percentage	12.96	41.11	45.93	100
IV	Communication				
1	Giving clear instructions	90	141	39	270
2	Interacting to get new ideas	140	116	14	270
3	Discussing with peer groups	143	89	38	270
4	Listening & clarifying doubts	23	104	143	270
5	Gathering information from various sources	20	79	171	270
	Average	83	106	81	270
	Percentage	30.74	39.26	30.00	100
V	Coordination				
1	Arranging rightly	87	159	24	270
2	Maintaining good relations	223	43	4	270
3	Seeking neighbours' cooperation	221	39	10	270
	Average	177	80	13	270
	Percentage	65.56	29.63	4.81	100
VI	Controlling				
1	Taking remedial action	145	111	14	270
2	Making alternative arrangements	25	153	92	270
3	Maintaining inventory	11	122	137	270
4	Assessing the expenditure	36	115	119	270
	Average	55	125	90	270
	Percentage	20.37	46.30	33.33	100
	Overall average	77	112	81	270
	Percentage	29	41	30	100

Note: AL= Always; ST= Sometimes; N= Never; T= Total

The managerial ability of an individual is influenced by many socio-economic, psychological and extension related factors. Therefore, the managerial ability was correlated with important socio-economic, psychological and extension parameters of the individual and the correlation coefficients viz. 'r' values obtained are presented in Table 2, below.

Table 2. Correlation between Managerial Abilities and other Characteristics

S.No.	Managerial Ability	Characteristics	'r' value (Correlation coefficient)
1	Planning	Age	- 0.1891**
		Education	0.1647**
		Family size	- 0.518
		Farm experience	0.1303*
		Land size	0.0029
		Self confidence	0.130*
		Innovativeness	0.054
		Extension participation	0.2301*
		SHG	0.194*
2.	Organizing	Age	-0.2156*
		Education	0.2024*
		Family size	- 0.154
		Farm experience	0.0932
		Land size	- 0.0715
		Self confidence	0.273**
		Innovativeness	0.147*
		Extension participation	0.1398*
		SHG	0.172*
3.	Supervising / implementing	Age	- 0.2089*
		Education	0.1714*
		Family size	- 0.0292
		Farm experience	0.1056
		Land size	0.0663
		Self confidence	0.342**
		Innovativeness	0.190**
		Extension participation	0.0113
		SHG	0.344**

4.	Communicating	Age	-0.2202*
		Education	0.2006*
		Family size	-0.306
		Farm experience	0.1113
		Land size	0.0160
		Self confidence	0.166**
		Innovativeness	0.1119
		Extension participation	0.1775*
		SHG	0.215**
5.	Coordinating	Age	0.0951
		Education	0.1156
		Family size	0.1051
		Farm experience	-0.0013
		Land size	0.0038
		Self confidence	-0.064
		Innovativeness	-0.009
		Extension participation	0.1534*
		SHG	0.023
6	Controlling	Age	-0.1705**
		Education	0.1667**
		Family size	0.0217
		Farm experience	0.0785
		Land size	0.0878
		Self confidence	0.229**
		Innovativeness	0.065
		Extension participation	0.1845*
		SHG	0.164*

* Significant at 5.00 per cent level of probability

** Significant at 1.00 per cent level of probability

It is obvious from Table 2, that the managerial ability in planning, organizing, supervising, communicating and controlling was significantly correlated with the variables age and education.

Age is negatively correlated while education is positively correlated in all functional areas. The planning ability and farming experience are also positively correlated and found to be significant at five per cent level of probability.

Self-confidence and managerial ability in organizing, supervising and controlling were also positively correlated and found to be significant at 1 per cent level of probability, whereas planning was found to be positively correlated and significant at 5 per cent level of probability. Similarly managerial ability

and innovativeness were correlated in the management functions of organizing and supervising only.

Extension participation had shown significant positive relationship with planning, organizing, communicating, coordination and controlling, functions that were found to be significant at 5 per cent level of probability. Like-wise the management ability in planning, organizing and controlling had positive correlation with participation in Self Help Groups that is significant at 5 per cent level of probability where as supervision and communication functions had shown positive relationship that is significant at 1 percent level of probability.

Further, the correlation analysis between overall managerial ability and other characteristics was also attempted and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation between Overall Managerial Ability and other Characteristics

S. No.	Characteristics	'r' value (Correlation coefficient)
1	Age	-0.2263*
2	Education	0.2099*
3	Family size	-0.0083
4	Farm experience	0.1106
5	Land size	0.0524
6	Innovativeness	0.102
7	Self confidence	0.219*
8	Extension participation	0.1845*
9	SHGs	0.224**

* Significant at 5.00 per cent level of probability

** Significant at 1.00 per cent level of probability

From Table 3 it can be noted that the overall management ability and other parameters like age, education, self-confidence, extension participation as well as participation in Self Help Groups, were found to have significant correlation. Among these, age has shown negative relationship that is significant at 5 per cent level whereas participation in SHG has shown positive correlation with managerial abilities at 1 per cent level of significance.

Conclusion

The study revealed that education has a significant positive correlation in planning, organizing, supervising, communication, coordinating and controlling functions of management. Similarly, self confidence of the women was also found to have significant relationship with the managerial ability of the women heading the households. Lastly, participation in SHGs and extension activities has also shown significant relation with managerial efficiency. In view of these observations, it is recommended that women headed households should be given priority in the extension activities of ongoing schemes for providing them opportunities to sharpen their managerial skills. Since education has shown positive relationship, special modules on management could be developed for training these women which will enhance their self confidence and managerial abilities and help them become more productive. Women headed households have limited resources. Therefore, extension programmes with a combination of rational and creative approach to problem solving and decision making will have potential for providing a conceptual framework, upon which the programmes can be based, for developing the managerial efficiency of these women headed households.

References

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