

Skill of Farm Women in Selected Agro-Based Enterprises in District Jhalawar

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Abstract

The study was conducted in Jhalrapatan Panchayat Samiti of Jhalawar district of Rajasthan. Total of 141 members of 13 active Self Help Groups (formed by KVK) were included for sample of the study. Pre and post-test experimental research design was used for the study. The study revealed that majority of the respondents were from 31—45 years of age, illiterate, married, from other backward classes middle socio-economic status and had farming as main occupation. Majority of them had orange orchards of 2—5 ha, coriander cultivation under 5 ha area and mehendi fencing around their fields. The initial skill was nil in orange squash preparation while they were skilled in masala and mehendi preparation. Again training and intervention helped them to upgrade their skill. The products were marketed through KVK and university outlet. After 3 years masala enterprise was discontinued due to tough competition and thereby difficulty in marketing and low profit margin. Mximum profit range was from orange face pack followed by henna for hair coloring and minimum profit range was in masala enterprise.

Key words : Skill, Agro-based enterprise, Farm women.

Indian constitution has given equal rights and opportunities to both men and women in the political, economic and social spheres and it also prohibits any kind of discrimination against women. In all the planning papers right from the day of independence, one can find continuous government concern for gender equality and protection of women's right. A critical analysis of the five year plans over the years starting from independence reflects that in the earlier phase of developmental planning, the concept of women development was mainly welfare oriented. Empowerment of women could be in any sphere of life—legal, social, political and economic. Women in rural areas share the economic responsibilities equally; therefore economic empowerment directly or indirectly affects all other areas of empowerment. As women play an active role in the economy of their families, they are wise enough to invest money and lead better life. There is a link between a women's access to independent income and her position in the family. It is believed that when women are provided credit and they take up income generating activities, their income is expected to increase. When they earn money, their say in the decision making in the house improves. For women to be empowered it is essential to provide

them access to information, knowledge, resources and power to make decisions. Women have suffered utter neglect and deprivation over centuries. For long they have not been regarded as equal partners in the development process. Even though no deliberate effort has been made to keep women out, yet through the process of evolution of societies women got confined to the four walls of their domesticity and in the process were cut off from the main stream of developmental activities. Continuous neglect has led to their becoming the poorest among poor and passive citizens. Constant discouragement from their own family members and outside world incapacitated women and made them feel small and incapable for the world at large. To promote entrepreneurship in agriculture two important factors must be considered : Development of the human factor—the entrepreneur herself; and development of environment where entrepreneurial activities can flourish and grow. The human factor includes person's own motivation, attitude, capabilities like risk taking ability, ability to work hard, innovativeness, decision making, problem solving capacity. The environmental factors include social attitudes, values, support systems like markets, credit, family support.

Table 1. Distribution of the respondents by background information.

Personal variables	f	(%)
1 Age (yr)		
18—30	5	3.5
31—45	116	82.3
46—60	20	14.2
2 Education		
Illiterate	89	63.1
Can read & write	31	21.3
Up to primary	19	13.5
Middle & Above	2	1.4
3 Marital Status		
Unmarried	1	0.7
Married	133	94.3
Widow	7	4.9
4 Caste		
SC/ST	20	14.2
OBC	121	85.8
5 Family Type		
Nuclear	64	45.4
Joint	77	54.6
6 Occupation		
Farming	96	68.1
Farming with service	23	16.3
Ag Labor	22	15.6
7 Socio-Economic Status		
High (23 & above)	20	14.2
Medium (between 14 to 22)	118	83.7
Low (Up to 13)	3	2.1

Entrepreneurship development is a process comprising essentially three phase's viz. stimulatory-support-and sustenance. The stimulatory phase includes motivational activities which psychologically prepare an individual to take to entrepreneurship. During this phase individuals are also exposed to different business ideas. It is one of the most important phases of the entire entrepreneurship development process. If this phase is carried out effectively and the farm women are motivated, she can, on her own, also manage to learn the other two phases. The stimulatory phase in developing entrepreneurship has to be handled by experts who not only have good understanding of psychology but are also genuinely interested in the development of women. They should combine in themselves the ability to encourage and allow the

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by production of enterprise related crops-oranges, coriander and mehendi. (N = 141).

Crop (Average area under cultivation and average production per annum)	f	(%)
1 Orange		
0.5 to 2 ha (5 to 40 tons / ha)	20	14.2
2 to 5 ha (40 to 100 tons / ha)	90	63.8
More than 5 ha (More than 100 tons / ha)	9	6.4
No land	22	15.6
2 Coriander		
0.5 to 2 ha (20 q / ha)	0	0
2 to 5 ha (20 to 50 q/ha)	32	22.7
More than 5 ha (More than 100 q/ha)	87	61.7
No land	22	15.6
3 Mehendi on Fencing Around the Fields	119	84.4

individual to develop rather than discourage and create a sense of withdrawal.

Methods

Pre- and post-research design was used to conduct the study in Jhalarapatan panchayat samiti of district Jhalawar, Rajasthan. This Panchayat samiti was purposively selected because Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Jhalawar was performing various developmental activities in this Panchayat samiti. One of the important activities was establishment and promotion of income generating activities through formation of women Self Help Groups. All 13 active SHGs having 141 members were included in the sample of the study. Since Jhalawar is rich in coriander, orange, mehendi cultivation hence researcher found processing and value addition of these could be the most suitable for income generation training was organized for cleaning grinding, packaging and marketing of whole coriander and its powder. Intervention period was given for one year to solve their problems and establishing the enterprise and their adoption pattern, reasons for adoption and non-adoption were analyzed and association of selected variable with adoption behavior of farm women was also reviewed.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents by their knowledge about components of bottling, labelling and packaging. N = 141.

Components	Initial knowledge		After exposure		After intervention	
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)
1 Bottling Orange Squash						
Bottles should be clean and dry	4	2.8	141	100	141	100
Use funnel for filling the bottles	4	2.8	141	100	141	100
Do not fill the bottle upto rim keep 2 inch space unfill	0	0	141	100	141	100
Bottle should be sealed with wax for longer shelf life	0	0	141	100	141	100
2 Packaging						
Use polythene bags for packing dry products	89	63.1	141	100	141	100
Use sealing machine for proper packaging	0	0	141	100	141	100
3 Label Should Include Information On						
Name of the product	136	96.4	141	100	141	100
Ingredients with amount	0	0	141	100	141	100
Quantity of the product	136	96.4	141	100	141	100
Method of using the product	0	0	141	100	141	100
Expiry date	0	0	141	100	141	100
Price	137	97.2	141	100	141	100

Results and Discussion

Profile of the Respondents

This section presents a profile of the respondents. This includes age, education, marital status, caste, family type, occupation and socio-economic status and production of concerning crops.

Age. The majority of the respondents (82.3%) were in the age group of 31—45 years followed by 14.2% in the age group of 46—60 years (Table 1). Only 3.5% were in the younger age group i.e. 18—30 years.

Education. The majority of the respondents (63.1%) were illiterate and 21.3% of respondents could read and write. A few respondents were primary pass (13.5%) while one was middle pass and one was graduate.

Marital Status. The majority of the respondents (94.3%) were married while 4.9% respondents were widow. Only one respondent was unmarried.

Cast. Perusal of table 1 shows that majority of the respondents belonged to other backward caste (85.5%) while rest of 14.2% were SC/ST (14.2%). None were from upper caste group.

Family Type. Majority of respondents had joint family (54.6%), while 45.4% were in nuclear family

system.

Occupation. The majority of the respondents (68.1%) had agriculture as the main occupation of which 16.31% were doing agriculture with service. About 16% of the families were agriculture labor.

Socio-Economic Status. Majority of the respondents (83.7%) were in the category of middle socio-economic status, 14.2% families belonged to high socio-economic status category while only 2.1% were

Table 4. Distribution of respondents by their knowledge about marketing avenues of enterprise. N = 141.

Avenues	Initial knowledge		After exposure		After intervention	
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)
1 KVK and university outlet	0	0.0	141	100	141	100
2 Fairs/haats	0	0.0	138	97.9	141	100
3 From home/order basis	38	26.9	141	100	141	100
4 Cooperative stores	12	8.5	141	100	141	100
5 City village market	141	100	141	100	141	100

Table 5. Distribution of respondents according to their skill in preparing different enterprises. N = 141. *By traditional chakki.

Steps involved	Before training		After training		After intervention	
	f	(%)	f	(%)	f	(%)
1 Orange Squash						
Preparation of sugar syrup (1 thread)	102	72.3	129	91.5	141	100
Measurement & Mixing of citric acid	0	0.0	135	95.7	140	99.3
Extracting orange juice	0	0.0	135	95.7	141	100
Mixing juice & sugar syrup	0	0.0	141	100	141	100
Measuring & Mixing of color & essence	0	0.0	110	78.0	139	95.6
Measuring & mixing of KMS	0	0.0	107	75.9	141	100
Cleaning & drying of bottles	0	0.0	127	90.1	141	100
Filling squash in the bottles	0	0.0	128	90.8	141	100
Sealing the bottles	0	0.0	130	92.2	141	100
2 Whole Coriander						
Grading by sieves	140	99.3	140	99.3	141	100
3 Orange Face Pack / Coriander Powder / Mehendi / Henna						
Fine grinding*	141	100	141	100	141	100
Sieving	141	100	141	100	141	100
Mixing of ingredients	132	93.6	137	97.2	141	100
Filling of the bags as per determined quantity / weight	0	0.0	138	97.9	141	100
Sealing of the polly bags	0	0.0	141	100	141	100

from low socio-economic status group.

Production of Enterprise Crops

Table 2 presents the profile of the sample in terms of average area under cultivation of crops related to selected enterprises and average production per annum. Data reveal that majority of the respondents (63.8%) had orange orchards of 2–5 ha and their

Table 6. Distribution of adopters according to procurement of loan / money. N=93. *No of group members. **No of SHGs.

Financial agencies	f	(%)	Range of loan amount (Rs)
1 Self help group account	82*	88.2	3000—5000
2 Bank (loan taken by the groups)			
(i) Nationalized Bank	8**	8.6	10000—20000
(ii) Haroti Kshetriya Gramin bank	3**	3.2	5000—15000

annual production ranged from 40—100 tones / ha. A few respondents had orchards of 0.5 to 2.0 ha which provided production of 5 to 40 tonnes/ha. Only 6.4% had large orchards (more than 5 ha) and large annual production of more than 100 tonnes/ha. While 15.6% respondents did not possess orchards at all as they were landless families.

Coriander is the main crop of Jhalawar district. Majority of the respondents (61.7%) had coriander production in larger area i.e. more than 5 ha which provided yield of 100 q/ha while 22.7% respondents had 2—5 ha area under coriander cultivation, which gave average production of 20—50 q/ha. Landless families (15.6%) did not have any production.

Table 7. Distribution of adopters according to their linkages with marketing agencies. N = 93. *Multiple responses.

Marketing agencies	f	(%)
1 University/KVK	93	100
2 District industry centers' fair	93	100
3 Line departments' fair	85	91.2
4 On orders (through homes)	50	53.8
5 Shopkeepers	7	7.5
6 Local weekly haats	6	6.5

Mehendi shrubs were used as fencing around the fields. All the respondents who had land under cultivation of orange and coriander grew mehendi shrubs around the fields which yielded production of 20 q/ha.

Labeling, Bottling and Packaging

Table 3 depicts knowledge of respondents about bottling, packing and labelling of the final products. The respondents did not possess initial knowledge about bottling as they did not prepare orange squash for commercial or domestic use. Only few things were known to them i.e. 2.8% of them knew about the use of clean and dry bottles and use of funnel for filling the bottles. None of them was aware of keeping the bottle 5 cm vacant while filling squash and sealing bottles with wax for longer shelf life of orange squash.

Regarding packaging, the majority of the respondents (63.1%) knew use of polythene bags for packaging dry products like masala, henna powder, mehendi powder. Informal discussion with the respondents brought out this point that many respondents knew the techniques of candle packaging however, none had seen the sealing machine for sealing purpose. The training and intervention upgraded the knowledge to 100% on these technologies.

The respondents were asked whether products should be labelled. All the respondents were in agreement in this aspect. However, knowledge about different information to be given on the label was not complete. Majority of the respondents (about 96–97%) said that name of the product, its quantity and price should be given on the label. None knew about other pertinent information to be given like ingredients with amount, method of using the product and expiry date. The data reveal that training and intervention helped the respondents to gain complete knowledge about labelling. According to Aravarchi (1) introduction of non-farm activities for income generation is a must. But to maintain its success is not an easy task because it has to face competition from well established large scale and multi-national companies in the field of product technology, marketing and distribution. Shekahawat (2) in a study conducted at Bikaner district reported that respondents of selected income generating activities like papad

making, bujia making do not face any problem because the activities were performed at home. As purchasing of raw material and marketing of produced goods which may raise some problems were generally not performed by them.

Marketing Avenues

Table 4 depicts that respondents had some initial knowledge about marketing avenues for sale of final products. All the respondents knew that products can be sold in city/village market. About 27% respondents said that products could be sold directly from home and that products could be prepared on the basis of orders. Very few (8.5%) respondents knew of cooperative stores. None was aware of marketing through KVK and University outlet. After training and intervention, almost all the respondents acquired knowledge about various marketing outlets. According to Rajeshwari (3) the important rural industries like khadi, gur making, carpet weaving, carpentry, candle, match box making, were facing a number of problems. Among these the most important were related to marketing. It was further concluded that psychologically rural industries were depressed due to lack of appreciation and security. Kumari et al. (4) conducted a study on problems faced by rural women in non-farm income generating activities in Bikaner district with a sample of 160 rural women from four villages. Half of these women were doing stitching and half were involved in woollen yarn making activities. The study revealed that 25% rural women in stitching activity had limitation of working space as they performed the activity at their own place. In stitching activity, some of the rural women faced the problems related to training, getting finance, tools/equipment and raw material purchasing. In case of woollen yarn making activity, transportation, getting finance and place for conducting the activity were found to be the major problems.

Skill

Table 5 depicts the skills of respondents in preparation of different products. Performance test was administered to measure the skills. Every step of each enterprise was observed critically and was recorded accordingly. The preparation of orange squash re-

quired nine steps. Before training, the respondents did not know how to prepare orange squash as they had never prepared it nor they had knowledge about it. However, prior to training, majority of the respondents (72.3%) were able to prepare one thread sugar syrup. It is probably because preparation of sugar syrup is needed in preparation of many sweets thus it was known to them.

The data further show that the training had improved the skills of the respondents as 78—100% respondent could perform various tasks of orange squash preparation correctly. Measuring of citric acid, color, essence and preservative was found to be a little difficult as about one fourth of the respondents could not perform it correctly. While the other steps were performed correctly by 90—96% respondents. This means that the respondents required more practice for refining their skills. Post training support during intervention helped the respondents to reach perfection in preparation of orange squash as almost all of them could prepare squash using different steps correctly.

With respect to skills of grading whole coriander the data show that the respondents already possessed the skill. Sifting of any food item is common in household because it is done for cleaning grains hence the skill of sifting was known to all the respondents. Grading in three grades using two sieves was performed correctly. During the training also the emphasis was given on importance of grading for value addition of whole coriander as skill was already possessed by the respondents.

The products like orange face pack, coriander powder, mehendi and henna required skills of grinding, sifting and mixing of ingredients and packaging. The respondents possessed skill in grinding and sieving even before the training. Mixing of ingredients properly could be done by 93.6% respondents before the training, which was further improved after the training and intervention. The respondents did not have the skills of polly packaging which they learnt during the training and achieved perfection after intervention.

These data are encouraging as they reveal that majority of the respondents showed interest in learning and preparation of these products. Preparation of orange squash requires special skills at every step but practice of making squash and other products

independently with technical guidance with investigator helped them to perfect them during intervention. The knowledge and skill gaps observed in the post training were corrected during intervention.

Linkages between Groups and Agencies to Provide Financial Support and Market Outlet

During training period respondents were exposed to different agencies which can provide financial support like local financial agencies, regional and nationalized banks and self help groups. The researcher also made efforts to link self help groups with marketing agencies to sale their products. For effective liaisoning and coordination, the researcher was regularly in touch with self help groups and marketing agencies. Findings related to this aspect are presented in Tables 6 and 7. Since all the selected enterprises were started on small scale and the main raw material whether orange, coriander or mehendi was produced at their own farms, the initial cost for establishing the enterprises did not involve large amount of money thus there was no need for procuring loan from the banks. However, 88% adopters took loan from their own SHGs. About 8 SHGs took loan from nationalized banks and 3 SHGs took loan from Haroti Khetriya Gramin Banks to provide loan to their members for various purposes including for establishing enterprises. Table 7 shows that major outlets for sale of products were university and Krishi Vigyan Kendra, fairs organized by DIC and line departments. Agriculture university has a regular outlet located at Udaipur. This outlet keeps the products of different self help groups and the entrepreneurs promoted by different units of the university like KVK's, research stations and colleges. To encourage and facilitate marketing of the products, the products of the farm women under study were also kept at the university outlet. The transport of the products was arranged by the KVK. Since Jhalawar KVK is promoting entrepreneurship development among farm families, hence it has a temporary counter for sale of these products. This temporary counter operates during seasons and trainings at KVK to enable trainers to purchase the products and also get motivation for such activities. Specially during season and also when trainings were organized.

A number of local fairs were organized by the line departments like agriculture, horticulture, district industry center. In these fairs a stall is given free to self-help groups for sale of their products. All the adopters under the study used the facility for marketing their products. Very few respondents (7.5%) sold their products through shopkeepers and in local haats (6.5%). The major reason was that shopkeepers did not give good price and local haats also had low price. Nearly 53.8% of respondents prepared and sold the products on orders from their homes.

University and KVK also organized farmers fair where the stall was allotted to self help groups for sale of their products. Besides this, the investigator also made efforts to obtain orders from university through correspondence and sold the products. The adopters were also ensured that they will always be

assisted in selling products hence entrepreneurs can approach Krishi Vigyan Kendra for marketing purpose without hesitation.

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