



Involvement of Women in Agriculture and Livestock Activities in Arid Region of Rajasthan, India

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Abstract: The present study was conducted in *Umednagar* village of tehsil (Administrative unit) Mandor of Jodhpur district. The village was selected purposively under the transfer of technology program supported by CAZRI, Jodhpur. Data were collected from a sample of 50 farm women on activities related to agricultural production, livestock related activities, domestic works and role in decision making. Study revealed that there was a clear differentiation among activities performed by male and female members individually besides overlapping in few activities which they performed jointly. Regarding agricultural activities like field preparation bunding and clearing weeds, harvesting and transport of harvest, majority considered them as joint work. However in case of weeding (72.22%), threshing (52.78%) and winnowing (77.77%) females were more involved in these operations and involvement of male members was very less (16-33%). In case of livestock activities except health care (13.88%) and marketing of produce (6.66%) women were always involved in all the other activities like fodder collection, drying, feeding, cleaning, milking, processing milk etc. Regarding different household works the contribution of women was very high (91.67-100%) except marketing for household provisions which was primarily done by the male members (58.33%) or jointly (41.66%). Regarding decision making in livestock, it is evident from the data that most of the decisions about breeding (66.66%), feeding (83.33%) as well as management of cattle were taken jointly (85.33%). In case of health parameters activities like consultation, vaccination and control of parasites were taken care by their male counterparts. In case of farm credit, investment of added profit and adoption of innovative technologies, the male counterparts dominated and participation of female members was very low or negligible.

Key words: Decision making, livestock, household, agricultural activities, arid.

Women are the pivots around which the family, the society and the whole community moves. Rural women are important segment of the village society by virtue of their numbers and hours they spent in performing multifarious activities at home, farm and upkeep of cattle. They lead difficult life and spend maximum time doing tiring and arduous tasks. Studies also report that (Gabriel, 1991; Tekale, 2012) women generally perform farm activities which are time and labor intensive, monotonous, and more drudgery prone. Women's participation in various farm and non-farm activities varies widely across the regions according to different farming systems and socio-economic status of the families. Farming and animal husbandry are the major work domain beside the domestic works where their participation may range as high as 100%. Since all household, agricultural

and livestock activities are done manually, they cause considerable physical and mental fatigue to the women.

Women have been playing crucial role not only in agriculture but in allied activities such as various non-farm operations, livestock and domestic activities. Though they participated in all sorts of activities, their role in decision making was generally as supportive only (Chaudhary and Singh, 2003; Okorji, 1991). The pattern of decision making profile of women varies across the regions. Thus, the identification of role of woman in agriculture and livestock activities and the decision making process of various farm and nonfarm activities is very important. Keeping this in view the present study was undertaken to assess the involvement of farm women in agriculture and livestock activities *vis-à-vis* decision making process of farm women in related activities.

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