

Knowledge level and decision-making of dairy farm women in animal husbandry practices

P. M. PRAJAPATI¹, A. S. SHEIKH² AND H.K. DESAI³

Department of Veterinary and A.H. Extension Education,
College of Veterinary Science & Animal Husbandry
S. D. Agricultural University, Sardarkrushinagar - 385 506 (Gujarat)

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ABSTRACT

In India, women's involvement in livestock management is a long standing tradition and livestock rearing has been as integral part of homestead farming system. Animal husbandry practices is an important tasks in animal husbandry activities and performed by dairy farm women besides fulfilling their responsibilities as home makers. Moreover, the knowledge and skill of the dairy farm women and their participation in decision-making certainly affects effectively in their work. The study was conducted in Vijapur and Mehsana talukas of Mehsana district, where production of milk was highest as compared to other talukas. Ten villages having the larger number of female in milk producer' co- operative societies were selected purposively. The dairy farm women were selected by multistage sampling method. Thus, the sample consisted of 120 respondents for the study. A large majority that (63.33 per cent) of the dairy farm women had medium level of knowledge regarding recommended practices of animal husbandry. The participation of dairy farm women was observed more in aspects of milking and preparing milk product (rank I), followed by feeding of milch animals (rank II), health care and management of milch animals (rank III) and breeding of milch animal (rank IV). The less participation of dairy farm women was observed in general aspects of animal husbandry practices (rank V). A great majority (88.33 per cent) of the dairy farm women had medium to high level of participation in decision-making about animal husbandry practices.

Key words : Feeding, breeding, management, knowledge level

Women's contribution to national development is crucial. Emancipation of women is in essential pre-requisite for economic development and social progress of the action. Women play an important and vital role in animal husbandry practices as manager, decision makers and skilled workers. The contribution of dairy farm women in terms of time and effort is not low or less than men. In India, women's involvement in livestock management is a long standing tradition and livestock rearing has been as integral part of homestead farming system. Animal husbandry practices is important tasks in animal husbandry activities are performed by dairy farm women besides fulfilling their responsibilities as home makers. Moreover, the knowledge and skill of the dairy farm

women and their participation in decision-making certainly affects effectively in their work. Looking to these facts, the present investigation was planned with following objectives.

- [1] To measure the knowledge level of dairy farm women regarding recommended animal husbandry practices.
- [2] To study the participation of dairy farm women in decision-making about animal husbandry practices.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was purposively carried out in Vijapur and Mehsana talukas of Mehsana district, where production of milk was highest as compared to other talukas. Ten villages having the larger

^{1 & 3} P.G. Students , ² Associate Professor & Head

number of female members in milk producer co-operative societies were selected purposively. The dairy farm women were selected by multistage random sampling method. Thus, the sample consisted of 120 respondents for the study. The data were collected by personal contact method with the help of structured interview schedule. The collected data were coded, classified, tabulated and analyzed in order to make the findings meaningful in light of objectives for drawing meaningful interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Knowledge level of dairy farm women regarding recommended animal husbandry practices

In the present study, knowledge refers to know-how about recommended animal husbandry practices possessed by the dairy farm women. Adequate knowledge of recommended animal husbandry practices is essential to dairy farm women for managing successfully and making profit in animal husbandry practices. It was, therefore, thought necessary to obtain information from the dairy farm women about the knowledge they possessed regarding recommended animal husbandry practices. The data regarding level of knowledge are given in Table 1.

Revealing the data in Table,1 that nearly two-fourth (63.33 per cent) of the dairy farm women had medium level of knowledge regarding recommended practices of animal husbandry, followed by high (20.00 per cent) and low (16.66 per cent) level of knowledge. On the basis of the above result, it can be concluded that a great majority (83.33 per cent) of the respondents were found with medium to high level of knowledge regarding recommended animal husbandry practices. The probable

Table 1 Distribution of dairy farm women according to their level of knowledge regarding recommended animal husbandry practices. n = 120

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Low (below 25.86 score)	20	16.66
2.	Medium (in between 25.86 to 55.63 score)	76	63.33
3.	High (above 55.63 score)	24	20.00
	Total	120	100.00

Mean = 40.75 S.D. = 14.882

reason for above finding may be due to their higher education, medium to high level of experience in animal husbandry practices, better extension contact and medium to high level of mass media exposure. This finding is similar to the finding of Toppo (2005), Khokhar (2007) and Upadhyay (2010).

Aspects-Wise Participation of Dairy Farm Women in Animal Husbandry Practices

From the data in Table 2, It can be concluded that the participation of dairy farm women was observed to be more in aspects of milking and preparing milk product (rank I), followed by feeding of milch animal (rank II), health care and management of milch animal (rank III) and breeding of milch animal (rank IV), respectively. The less participation of dairy farm women was observed in general aspects of animal husbandry practices (rank V). There might be due to fact that

Table 2 Distribution of dairy farm women according to their aspect-wise participation in animal husbandry practices n = 120

Sr. No.	Aspects	Regularly	Often	Some times	Occasionally	Never	Mean score	Rank
1.	General aspects	30(25.00)	28(23.34)	25(20.83)	21(17.50)	16(13.33)	02.29	V
2.	Feeding of milch animals	56(46.67)	21(17.50)	19(15.83)	18(15.00)	06(05.00)	02.85	II
3.	Breeding of milch animal	44(36.67)	26(21.66)	24(20.00)	14(11.67)	12(10.00)	02.63	IV
4.	Health care and management of milch animals	52(43.34)	23(19.16)	19(15.83)	16(13.33)	10(08.34)	02.75	III
5.	Milking and preparing milk products	62(51.67)	23(19.16)	20(16.67)	12(10.00)	03(02.50)	03.07	I

the males are mostly engaged in the field oriented/ outside work. Hence, the women are responsible for the care and management of animals. This finding is supported by the findings of Toppo (2005), Narmatha *et al.*, (2009).

Participation of dairy farm women in decision- making about animal husbandry practices

In order to know the level of participation of dairy farm women in decision-making about animal husbandry practices, they were grouped on the basis of mean and standard deviation. The data in this regard are presented in Table 3. It can be concluded that a vast majority (88.33 per cent) of the dairy farm women had medium to high level of participation in decision-making about animal husbandry. This might be due to the reason that in the study area dairy farm women might be involved in management of livestock sector dominantly and guidance provided by *Dudhsagar dairy* and village milk producer's dairy co-operative societies, might have encouraged them for better participation in decision-making about animal husbandry practices. The finding is in the line with the findings reported by Chauhan *et al.*, (2005), Toppo (2005), Upadhyay (2010) and Ram *et al.*, (2013).

Table 3 Distribution of dairy farm women according to their level of participating in decision-making
n =120

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Low (Less than 54.68 score)	14	11.66
2.	Medium (in between 54.68 to 76.81 score)	85	70.83
3.	High (above 76.81 score)	21	17.50
	Total	120	100.00

Mean = 65.741 S.D. = 11.072

CONCLUSION

A large majority that (63.33 per cent) of the dairy farm women had medium level of knowledge regarding recommended practices of animal husbandry. The participation of dairy farm women was observed more in aspects of milking and preparing milk product (rank I), followed by feeding of milch animals (rank II), health care and management of milch animals (rank III) and breeding of milch animal (rank IV). The less participation of dairy farm women was observed in general aspects of animal husbandry practices (rank V). A great majority (88.33 per cent) of the dairy farm women had medium to high level of participation in decision-making about animal husbandry practices.

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