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Agri-preneurial avenues for women micro entrepreneurship development in Kashmir Valley

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Abstract

Agriculture is the backbone for any country's economic development. Rural women in Jammu And Kashmir State are extensively involved in different types of agricultural activities. Women play a significant role in the state are transplantation, weeding, threshing, collecting fodder, poultry goat rearing, sheep rearing and other livestock raising vegetables and kitchen gardening and post harvest activities. A sample of 100 women belonging to 4 different villages of Srinagar District were selected by using random sampling technique with the objective of entrepreneurial activities preferred by Kashmir farmwomen in various agri-allied areas for income generation skills. It was observed that farm women are interested in acquiring agri-preneurial skills in order to improve their economic status, standard of living and entrepreneurship development.

Keywords: Farm women, entrepreneurship development, agri-preneurial skills

Introduction

Empowerment of women makes her understand the unique potential and enables to break the barriers to utilize her full potential think independently in order to develop courage perception and judgment among the various strategies for empowering women entrepreneurship development had been identified as one of the best strategies that would her to be physiologically, technically and financially empowered. Women are active partners in farming and undertake management along with men the national policies on empowerment of women stream need to maintain stream gender perspective in development process and policies framework for agriculture extension suggested main stream in women in agriculture (Grower, 2004). Women plays significant and crucial role in agriculture developed allied fields and are the axis of the economy and their values governing the rural market. Agriculture sector is particular promising for increase investment in women.

The present study has been undertaken on farm women entrepreneurial needs for skill development to establish entrepreneurship related to agriculture on main crop production poultry livestock post harvest operation etc.

Materials and Methods

The study was carried out on 100 farm women in four different villages of Srinagar District namely Shalimar, Harwan, Nawpora and fakir Gujri in Kashmir valley. From each village 25 farm women were selected randomly comprising a total sample of 100 respondents. Personnel interview technique was used to collect data through a well structured interview schedule for the study in the women empowerment cell of Directorate of Extension SKUAST-Kashmir. Training needs of farm women for entrepreneurship skill development were assessed by three points viz much needed, somewhat needed and least needed were quantified by assigning corresponding weight age of 3, 2, 1, respectively. The total training needs score for each respondent was worked out by summing up the scores. On the basis of mean scores training needs were ranked.

Results and Discussion

The present study revealed that women is an integral part of every agricultural activity and farm activities exclusively undertaken by women as depicted in (Table 1) which was ranked in order of importance based on their weighted mean score. Spicing grinding has been assigned first rank followed by preservation of fruits and vegetables and marketing of their farm produce. They were interested in those training programmers linked directly with their economy which can help them to achieve economic independence.

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However vermicomposting and willow wicker work in order of priority have been kept at last although these training programs are also associate with economy but being cumbersome. Very few respondents ranked packaging, seed storage, dairy product development and poly house technologies in order of the preference for entrepreneurship development due to unawareness and high cost involvement in starting of these enterprises. Sethi and Pant (2001) [2] have also reported the engagement of rural women in agri-allied activities including crop production, livestock management and post harvest handling of produce.

The agriculture is the basic industry and it deals with rural

development and it the source of development of maximum people of the rural sector. The quality of the production can be improved by proper education and training. Women empowerment cell SKUAST-Kashmir support the farmers in general and women in particular by imparting agri-allied activities training, capacity building, and linking them to banks and other cooperatives to get reasonable credit facilities and updating to modernize the agribusiness and assimilated technological advances in the business. Women farmers are encouraged to get involved in the cooperative business to do the business with large scale operations.

Table 1: Agricultural and allied activities preferred by farm women for entrepreneurship development

S no.	Agricultural & allied activities	Weighted mean score	Rank
1	Nursery raising of vegetables	2.42	XII
2	Nursery raising of flowers	2.00	XVIII
3	Kitchen gardening	2.36	XIII
4	Bee keeping	2.62	IX
5	Mushroom production	2.45	XI
6	Preservation of fruits and vegetables	2.89	II
7	Packaging of fruits and vegetables	2.55	X
8	Marketing of Farm produce	2.88	III
9	Drudgery reducing women friendly farm implements	2.32	XIV
10	Ready to eat snacks	2.06	XVI
11	Vermicomposting	1.01	XXV
12	Seed storage	1.72	XXI
13	Capacity building through the group dynamics	2.75	VII
14	Preparation of dairy products	2.03	XVII
15	Care of animals	2.76	VI
16	Animal feeds and fodder	2.67	VIII
17	Micro credit finance	2.84	IV
18	Poly house technologies	2.11	XV
19	Rearing of poultry	1.90	XX
20	Spices grinding	2.99	I
21	Drying of vegetables	2.82	V
22	Sericulture	1.42	XXII
23	Fisheries	1.22	XXIII
24	Willow wicker	1.04	XXIV
25	Others	1.99	XIX

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