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Attitude of farm women towards agro processing in Raigad district of Konkan region of Maharashtra

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Abstract

Agro processing in India derives its strength. Agro processing provides a reliable livelihood for the growing populations in these countries and also have the tremendous scope for forward and backward linkages. Farmers should be convinced and motivated towards agro processing in terms of their skill, knowledge and attitude is very much essential. If the farmers had favourable attitude which showed in the adoption of new technology and when farmers faced some constraints it resulted in rejection of new technology. The attitude of the farmers towards agro processing has a critical role in its modernizing and it plays an important role. Thus, to understand positivism towards agro processing at grass root level, the study was conducted and attitude of farm women towards agro processing was to study the profile of farm women, to measure attitude of farm women towards agro processing. To study the constraints faced by farm women in agro processing and to obtain suggestions/ feedback towards agro processing.

Keywords: Agro processing, attitude, farm women and Konkan

1. Introduction

Agro processing in India derives its strength. It has high potential for entrepreneurship development. Processing is done at low capital cost, the high supply elasticity of local resources. Agro processing provides a reliable livelihood for the growing populations in these countries and also have the tremendous scope for forward and backward linkages. Agro processing has potential to meet the growing domestic and export demand for the finished products. The new class of products associated with income and life style of the people are the need of the time. Agro-processing industries refer to those activities that transform agricultural commodities into different forms that add value to the product. If farmers should be convinced and motivated towards agro processing in terms of their skill, knowledge and attitude is very much essential. Agro-processing activities comprise two major categories; primary and secondary operations. The intensive motivation to make them positive in attitude and up-to-date knowledge of agro processing however, require constant updating with current information and collaboration with all stakeholders for successful implementation to be realized. Thus, to understand positivism towards agro processing at grass root level, the study was conducted and attitude of farm women towards agro processing was measured with the help of reliable and valid scale. Attitude of farm women towards agro processing was to study the profile of farm women, to measure attitude of farm women towards agro processing. to study the constraints faced by farm women in agro processing and to obtain suggestions/ feedback towards agro processing.

2. Methodology

The present study was carried out in Raigad district of Maharashtra state. For selection of villages each of three villages from Roha, Mangaon, Mahad and Sudhagad-pali tahsils were selected. From each village 5 farmers were selected randomly. Thus, total 60 farm women were interviewed for the present study.

The data were collected through the personal interview. The reliable and valid attitude scale with 14 statements was administered on the selected sample farm women and the responses were collected in five continuum *viz*. strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with weight of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively for positive statements and reverse scoring for negative statements. The total attitude score for each respondent was obtained by adding all the scores of their responses of all the statements and on the basis of mean and S.D., the farm women were grouped into three categories *viz*. unfavorable attitude (below mean – 0.5 S.D.), neutral attitude (between mean + 0.5 S.D.) and favorable attitude (above mean + 0.5 S.D.).

3. Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study are presented hereunder

3.1 The profile of the farm women

The profile of the farm women shows that most of the farm women (65.00%) age were in the range of 35-57 years. Maximum (36.67%) farmers were educated up to primary level and only 3.33 per cent farmers were illiterate. Most of the farmers (66.67%) owned less than one-hectare land. The majority (70.00%) of the farm women had 2-5 members in their family and are living in separate family type (73.33). Regarding experience in farming, it was found that 40.00 per cent farm women had more than 15 years of experience in farming. More than half (51.67%) of the farm women had annual income from Rs.1.01 to 2.00 lakh.

Table 1: demographic profile of the farm women.

Sr. No	Characteristic	Percentage
1	**Age**	
	Up to 35 years	35.00
	Above 35 to 60	65.00
2.	**Education**	
	Illiterate	03.33
	Primary level	36.67
	Secondary	24-00
	Matric and above	16.00
3.	**Land holding**	
	More than one-hectare land.	33.33
	Less than one-hectare land.	66.67
4.	**Type of family (members)**	
	Small up to 4	30.00
	Medium 5-8	70.00
5.	**Family type**	
	Joint	26.67
	Nuclear	73.33
5.	**Farming experience (Yrs.))**	
	Up to 20	40.00
	Above 20	60.00
6.	**Annual income (Rs. lakhs)**	
	Less than 200000	51.67
	200001 to 500000	38.33

3.2 Information about agro processing

In agro processing the primary processing operations involve activities such as crop drying, shelling/threshing, cleaning, grading and packaging. All the farmers and farm women follow these operations more or less with full extent on their farm. The secondary processing operations entail increasing nutritional or market value of the commodity and the physical form or appearance of the commodity is often totally changed from the original. In this project efforts were made to identify the secondary agro processing operations.

Table 2: Information about use of processed agricultural production

Sl. No	Crops production	Processed product name	No. of farm women (N=60)			
			Home scale use		Cottage /Commercial use	
			frequency	Percentage	frequency	Percentage
1.	Paddy grains	Flour	60	100.00	0	0.00
		Poha	11	18.33	0	0.00
		Papad	35	58.33	18	30.00
2.	Nagali	Papad	10	16.66	18	30.00
		Flour	14	23.33	0	0.00
3.	Moong	Dal	38	63.33	5	8.33
4.	Tur	Dal	38	63.33	5	8.33
5.	Udid	Dal	22	36.66	5	8.33
6.	Groundnut	Oil	14	23.33	0	0.00
		Oil cake	14	23.33	0	0.00
7.	Chilli	Pickles	13	21.66	0	0.00
		Dried Chilli	13	21.66	0	0.00
8.	Mango	Mango pickles	33	55.00	0	0.00

3.3 Resources/ingredients and machineries available with the farm women for agro processing in study area

It was observed from the table that majority of respondents are having resources for agro processing in their villages are hand burr mill (36.66%), Domestic flour mill (Gharghanti) (16.66%) followed by Hand pounding (13.33%). Only 1.66 per cent agro processing resources are available like oil and dhal mill in villages to the farm women.

Table 3: Resources and machineries available with the farm women for agro processing

Sr. No.	Name	Frequency	Percentage
1	Hand burr mill	22	36.66
2	Domestic flour mill (Gharghanti)	10	16.66
3	Hand pounding	8	13.33
4	Dal mill	1	1.66
5	Oil mill	1	1.66

3.4 Attitude towards agro processing

Attitude as a component of human behavior is the pre-requisite for any action, which plays a dominant role in adoption of new post-harvest technologies. A Likert-type scale which consisted of 14-items was used to measure the attitude of farm women. The data in this aspect is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Attitude of farm women towards agro-processing

Sr. No.	Types of Attitude	Categorization	Frequency (N=60)	Percent
1	Unfavorable	Below mean - 0.5 SD	13	21.67
2	Neutral	Between mean + 0.5 SD	22	36.67
3	Favorable	Above mean + 0.5 SD	25	41.66
		Total	60	100.00

The data given in table 4 illustrates that, 41.66 per cent of the farmers had favorable attitude towards agro-processing, while 36.67 and 21.67 per cent of the farm women had neutral and unfavorable attitude towards agro-processing, respectively. It can be concluded that more than half of the farm women (58.44%) had neutral to unfavorable feeling towards agro processing. Therefore, it may be understood that the difficulty in practicability of taking up agro processing techniques in the field which might have made impossible to harness the best of the available resources and acquired agricultural post product expertise of the farmers and also the lack of sense of agricultural entrepreneurial development through the agro processing concepts.

3.5 Statement wise attitude of farm women towards agro-processing

Table 5: Statement wise attitude of farm women towards agro-processing

Sl. No.	Statements	Attitude Score
1.	It is worthwhile to spend money on agro processing. (+)	30
2.	I think that the handling of agro processing unit is difficult.(-)	38
3.	Agro processing helps in yielding higher returns. (+)	24
4.	The adoption of agro processing is very risky for farming community. (-)	30
5.	I think that it is simple to implement agro processing technique. (+)	32
6.	In my opinion agro processing is not advisable in rural area. (-)	40
7.	In my sense adoption, the adoption of agro processing helps in improving living standard of farmers. (+)	40
8.	I believe only progressive farmers can go for agro processing. (-)	62
9.	In my estimation agro processing is a profitable business even though it needs more investment. (+)	44
10.	I retard agro processing as it is an expensive technique. (-)	60
11.	In my opinion, establishment of agro processing unit improves rural economy. (+)	46
12.	I am not confident to start agro processing unit. (-)	65
13.	Agro processing unit is a best source of employment for irrespective level of educated rural youth. (+)	50
14.	I think it is not easy to follow legal procedure for agro processing unit. (-)	70

3.6 Constraints in agro processing

Most often the processors of agricultural commodities require a qualitatively homogenous product but agricultural output is characterized by seasonality, perishability and variability. As most of the agricultural commodities go through a specific product cycle they are available in a particular season. In the study area there are different constraints found during the study are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6: Constraints in agro processing

Sl. No.	Constraints	Frequency (N=60)	Per cent
1.	Lack of knowledge about Standardized procedure for processed product of cereals and pulses	47	78.33
2.	Insufficient knowledge about storage and post- harvest operations	43	71.66
3.	Lack of time due to domestic work	39	65.00
4.	Inability to find market for value added products	38	63.33
5.	Decisions makers are elders	34	56.66
6.	Negative attitude towards processing	13	21.66

The data presented in Table 6 revealed that lack of knowledge about Standardized procedure for processed product of cereals and pulses, insufficient knowledge about storage and post- harvest operations and Lack of time due to domestic work are the major constraints reported by 78.33 per cent, 71.66 per cent and 65.00 per cent farm women, respectively. The other constraints were inability to find market for value added products, decisions makers are elders and negative attitude towards processing.

3.7 Suggestions to improve agro processing

The farm women un the study area given some suggestion to improve the agro processing. The data is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Suggestions to improve agro processing

Sl. No.	Suggestions	Frequency (N=60)	Percentage
1.	Procedure for processed product of cereals and pulses be standardized	42	70.00
2.	Practical based training programmes be organized	40	66.66
3.	Popularization of value added products through mass media	37	61.66
4.	Organization of small farmers into groups/association at block level	20	33.33
5.	Low cost machineries be available at block level	18	30.00

The data with respect to suggestions to improve agro processing presented in Table 7 shows that majority (70.00%) of the farm women suggested that procedure for processed product of cereals and pulses be standardized followed by 66.66 per cent farm women who demanded Practical based training programmes. Popularization of value-added products through mass media, organization of small farmers into groups/association at block level and low-cost machineries be available at block level are the other suggestions given by the farm women.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that there is need to standardize the procedures of processing in cereals and pulses. As, more than fifty per cent farm women had neutral to unfavourable attitude towards agro processing. To cope up with this situation, government agencies and extension functionary should conduct vocational trainings at grass root level in order to create awareness about agro-processing technology. Efforts should for popularization of value-added products through mass media. Also, it is need to increase the attitude of farm women towards agro processing in desirable direction by taking appropriate action as per their felt needs.

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