



## THE PERSONAL, SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF IRANIAN FARM WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

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### ABSTRACT

The present investigation was conducted in Iran, West Azarbayjan, Two districts of Markazi and Khosroshsar, during the period 2010-2011. The study revealed, half of farm women in Markazi and khosroshahr were in young age group of 18-35 years, and monitory, (17.5%) of farm women belonged to age group of more than 45. Majority of farm women of Markazi and Khosroshar, were literate, studied Up to middle school level. Majority of the respondents, 88 per cent were married in the both districts. According to the findings, a majority of respondents in districts belonged to medium level of income. Big farm families with 58.6 per cent had a great number of farm women with medium level of income. The data showed that majority of farm families belonged to medium size of family size. Majority of farm women of all the three groups, marginal farm women, small farm women, big farm women, had medium level of animal possession. The data indicated medium level of accessibility of big farm women to marketing infrastructure. High level of accessibility belonged to small farm women. In case of marginal and small farmers, they had high level of innovativeness. The data indicated that a majority of the three groups had medium level of aspiration .It showed that level of aspiration not dependent on size of land and land holding of farm women families. According to the data majority of farm women in, marginal and small farm families belonged to medium level of extension contact, in case of big farm families they had low extension contact. Though a majority of all the respondents had low level of extension participation, results showed high level of mass media exposure in case of marginal and small farm families. The data revealed that a majority of farm women of all the three groups had medium and high level of inter-spouse communication, and majority of farm women belonged to low level of cosmopolitaness.

**KEY WORDS:** Socio-psychological, economic, Iranian farm, women participation, agricultural activity etc.

### INTRODUCTION

Mirmoezi (1994) in her study conducted in Gilan of Iran observed that farm women participated in many agricultural activities such as land preparation, seed treatment, sowing of seed, fertilizer application and seedling plantation of paddy. Nawabakbar (1997) reported that farm women participated in agriculture productions activates, such as cultivating (seeding) conservation (weeding, spading and sifting) and harvest (cut sugarcane branches) and they also participate in activities like doing pastoralist and caring animals, milking, nurturing poultry, gardening, fixing yard, snow removal, repairing building, handicrafts.

Banihashem (1999) found that preparing seed for transferring to storage were done by women. Transplanting (most important stage in cultivating rice) and weeding were done by them, completely. Although no land was considered for women (indeed by this, major proportions of agriculture workforces was deprived from having production instruments that they work on) but, it has affected on women's roles in agriculture activity. Baradaran and Salmanzadeh (2000) pointed out in their study conducted in Ramhormoz district of Khuzestan province in Iran that a majority of the respondents were married. Padmavathi (2002) pointed in a study conducted in Kurnool district of Andhra Pradesh that majority (55 %) of farm women labourers were in middle age group of 30

and 50 years and 37 per cent were in young age group of less than 30 years and 80 per cent in old age group on more than 50 years. Bhagyavathi *et al.*( 2008) in their study on participation level of farm women in entrepreneurship activities under self help groups in Kadur taluk of Chikmagalur district found that age of respondents was not found to be significantly related with participation level of farm women in all the activities of self help groups. Sharma (2008) reported that education was not significantly related with the role of farm women in agriculture development.

### METHODOLOGY

The present research study was carried out in West Azarbayjan, Two districts of Markazi and Khosroshhar. Research design is the plan, structure and strategy of investigation conceived so as to obtain answer to the research questions. The design explains what observations to make and how to make. It also indicate to us, what types of statistical test are to be applied for analyzing the data .In the present study , “ the ex-post facto research design ” is used. The literal meaning of ex-post-facto “from what is done afterwards”. It means something done or occurring after an event with a retrospective effect on the event. Kerlinger (1973) defined ex-post –facto research as “systematic empirical enquiries in which the scientists do not have direct control of independent

variables, because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulable". Cooper and Schindler (1999) defined ex-post facto as a research design in which investigator have no control over the variables in the sense of being able to manipulate them. They can only report what has happened or what is happening. Considering the adaptability of the phenomenon to be studied, the ex-post facto design was selected as an appropriate research design. The data were collected from 200 randomly selected respondents by

using a detailed interview schedule employing personal interview method, which obtained through proportionate stratified sampling technique. The results were consolidated by employing the statistical analysis.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An examination of the Table I projected that half of the respondents belonged to young category it means between 18- 35 years old, followed by 32.5 per cent medium and 17.5 per cent old age.

**TABLE I:** Characteristics of farm women based on districts

Personal variables	Name of Districts					
	Markazi (n=165)		Khosroshahr (n=35)		Total (n=200)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Age						
18-35 (young)	84	50.9	16	45.7	100	50.0
35-45 (middle)	53	32.1	12	34.3	65	32.5
>45 (old)	28	17.0	7	20.0	35	17.5
Education						
Illiterate	7	4.2	4	11.4	11	5.5
Up to middle	100	60.6	21	60.0	121	60.5
Middle School and above	58	35.2	10	28.6	68	34.0
Marital status						
Single	20	12.1	4	11.4	24	12.0
Married	145	87.9	31	88.6	176	88.0

**TABLE II:** Socio-economic characteristics of rural women

Socio-economic variables	Name of Districts					
	Markazi (n=165)		Khosroshahr (n=35)		Total (n=200)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Annual income						
Low	54	32.7	4	11.4	58	29.0
Medium	89	53.9	22	62.9	111	55.5
High	22	13.3	9	25.7	31	15.5
Land holding status						
Marginal farm women	59	35.5	0	0.0	59	29.5
Small farm women	84	50.9	28	80.0	112	56.0
Big farm women	22	13.3	7	20.0	29	14.5
Family Size						
Small	62	37.6	16	45.7	78	39.0
Medium	79	47.9	13	37.1	92	46.0
Big	24	14.5	6	17.1	30	15.0
Animal possession						
Small	59	35.8	15	42.9	74	37.0
Medium	79	47.9	17	48.6	96	48.0
Large	27	16.4	3	8.6	30	15.0
Marketing infrastructure						
Low	50	30.3	11	31.4	61	30.5
Medium	84	50.9	17	48.6	101	50.5
High	31	18.8	7	20.0	38	19.0

Majority of the respondents, 60.5 per cent belonged to middle school level, followed by 34.00 high schools level and above, 5.5 per cent were illiterate, 88 per cent of respondents were married, only 2 per cent were single. majority of the respondents (55.50 %) belong to the medium level of income followed by 29 per cent with low level of income and 15.5 per cent had high level of income, (56 %) of them belonged to the families with small size of land, followed by (29.5 %), low and (14.5 %) were big farmers, (46 %) of the respondents belonged to medium size of families, followed by (39 %) small size of

families, and (15 %) had big size of families. From a glance at Table III it is seen that, (47.9%) of farm women in Markazi and (48.6 %) in Khosroshahr had medium level of animal possession. In Markazi (35.8 %) of respondents and in (42.9 %) in Khoasroshahr had small level of animal possession. Table III indicated that (50.5 %) of the respondents belonged to the families with medium level of marketing infrastructure, (19%) had high level of accessibility to marketing infrastructure, 30.5 per cent of respondents had low accessibility to marketing infrastructure. Table III indicated that (48.5 %) of farm

women in Markazi had high level of innovativeness and also (51.4 %) in Khosroshahr had medium level of

innovativeness at same time (6.1 %) in Markazi and (20 %) in Khosroshahr had low level of innovativeness.

**TABLE III:** Psychological characteristics of rural women

Psychological variables	Name of Districts					
	Markazi (n=165)		Khosroshahr (n=35)		Total (n=200)	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Innovativeness						
low	10	6.1	7	20.0	17	8.5
Medium	75	45.5	18	51.4	93	46.5
High	80	48.5	10	28.6	90	45.0
Level of aspiration						
Low	25	15.2	7	20.0	32	16.0
Medium	81	49.1	16	45.7	97	48.5
High	59	35.8	12	34.3	71	35.5
Perceived role overload						
Low	48	29.4	12	34.3	60	30.3
Medium	55	33.7	19	54.3	74	37.4
High	60	36.8	4	11.4	64	32.3

The majority of farm women in both Districts Markazi and Khosroshahr had medium level of aspiration 49.1 per cent in Markazi and 45.7 per cent in Khosroshahr. In total 48.5 per cent had medium level of aspiration. Data revealed that (15.2 %) in Markazi and (20 %) in Khosroshahr had low level of aspiration. 36.8 % of respondents in Markazi and (36.8 %) had high perceived role overload. In Khosroshahr 54.3 per cent of farm women had medium perceived role overload.

### CONCLUSION

Despite the vital role being played by farm women in various agricultural activities, little effort has been made to get women to be more visible and tangible in the field of extension activities. Therefore, extension and training programmes have to address rural women's information needs. In fact, recognition of the variability of women's participation in different agricultural activities would have a bearing on the selection of actual clientele for educational programmes.

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