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## Communication sources for farm information and involvement in homestead activities by the women beneficiaries of PMVDY in Sikkim

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### Abstract

The study was conducted in East Sikkim and South Sikkim districts of Sikkim state with 110 randomly selected women members of Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY). The study found that majority of the respondents (70.00%) received farm information regularly from friends followed by 60.91 per cent from panchayat member/Pradhan as a localite source of information. It was also observed that not a single respondent received any farm information from family members; whereas 12.73 per cent of the respondents never received any farm information from village leaders as a localite source of information. The study also revealed that 76.36 per cent of the respondents received farm information regularly from NGO/ SHG leader followed by 48.18 per cent from social worker as a cosmopolite source of information. It is interesting that 79.09 per cent of the respondents often received farm information from Kisan Mela; whereas 22.73 per cent of respondents never received any farm information from bank. Under mass media as information source, 50.00 per cent of the respondents received farm information from television followed by 35.45 per cent from newspaper and 79.09 per cent never received any farm information from radio. Majority of the respondents (55.45%) participated independently in washing clothes followed by 50.91 per cent in maintenance of house; whereas 64.55 per cent of the respondents participated jointly in care of children/ elderly person. The study also reveals that 35.45 per cent of the respondents involved independently in feeding animals and 28.18 per cent participated jointly in caring of animal; whereas 32.73 per cent of the respondents had not participated participation in milking of animal followed 28.18 per cent in cleaning animal shed. Majority of the respondents (81.82%) independently participated in processing food followed by preservation of fruit/ vegetable (80.91%) and 80.91 per cent of respondents had not participated in tailoring. There is some evidence that despite the contribution made by rural women in food security they are not being well served by the existing extension system in developing countries. They are in urgent need of understanding and acquiring new knowledge and skills on cultivation of different crops, so that they could contribute more effectively to the production process.

**Keywords:** Communication source, farm information, involvement, women, PMVDY

### Introduction

Women are the principal food producers and preparers for the family. They play a key role in food and nutrition security at family level, community level and national level. Agriculture in developing countries heavily depends on manual labour and the major contribution is from women. Women have been putting in more labour not only in terms of physical output but also in terms of quality and efficiency. Women can play a significant role in improving the production efficiency and profitability. Women constitute a major percentage of agricultural work forces. They have inaccessibility to modern technology, credit training and other facilities available to male workers and farmers. Other than crop enterprises, they are involved in animal husbandry including dairying, poultry, piggery, goatery, duckery or other agribusinesses etc (Deka *et al.*, 2010) [2]. In the word of Reddy (2003) [3], women are regarded as the backbone of the rural scene. Most of the women perform various types of work for their livelihood and agriculture is considered as the biggest sector where large number of rural women takes part actively. More specifically the tribal population of India constitutes about 67.6 million and woman in the tribal community constitutes half of the tribal population (Nath *et al.*, 2022) [6, 7]. It has been observed that rate of participation in farming is higher among the tribal population than the other castes of the state. More precisely the participation in the farming is higher in hill tribes than non-tribal societies (Das, 1992).

Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) was launched on 14th April 2018 with the objective to help increase tribal incomes through value addition of Minor Forest Products (MFP). The scheme is an initiative of the Ministry of Tribal Affairs as nodal department and at the national level, TRIFED as the Nodal Agency. Under the scheme, Van Dhan Vikas Kendra (VDVK) is established for providing capacity building training, skill up-gradation, and setting up value addition facility and primary processing (<http://trifed.tribal.gov.in/pmvdya>). Central Agricultural University, Imphal, Manipur through its different centres in the states, viz., Manipur, Mizoram, Sikkim and Tripura has been implementing the ESDP (Entrepreneurship and Skill Development Programme) component of the scheme for capacity building of members of VDVVs.

The study was aimed to find the communication sources for farm information and involvement in homestead activities by the women beneficiaries of PMVDY in the state of Sikkim.

### Methodology

The study was conducted in East Sikkim and South Sikkim

districts of Sikkim state with 110 randomly selected women members of Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVKs) of Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana. The socio-personal characteristics of the respondents, viz., age, educational level, mass media exposure, marital status and social participation were measured. Information source utilization for farm information by the respondents were categorized into localite, cosmopolite and mass media and for each category frequency of use was measured in terms of regularly, often and never. Participation in different homestead activities by the respondents were calculated in terms of Independent participation, Joint participation and No participation with respect to major homestead activities, livestock activities and allied homestead activities. Data collection was done with a survey schedule through personal interview of the respondents. Frequency and percentage were calculated separately for each activity.

### Results and Discussion

The socio-personal characteristics of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents based on socio- personal characteristics

(N=110)			
Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1. Age	Below 25 years	0	0
	26-30 years	5	4.55
	31-35years	9	8.18
	36-40 yeas	51	46.36
	41-45 years	34	30.91
	46 years and above	11	10.00
2. Educational level	Illiterate	8	7.27
	Up to primary school	53	48.18
	Up to class X	41	37.27
	Up to class XII	6	5.45
	Up to degree level or above	2	1.82
3. Mass media exposure	Regularly	3	2.73
	Often	34	30.91
	Seldom	61	55.45
	Never	12	10.91
4. Marital status	Single	0	0
	Married	109	99.09
	Widowed	1	0.91
5. Social participation	No membership	0	0
	Member of one organization (SHG/FC/FPO/Societies/NGO)	67	60.91
	Member of more than one organization (SHG/FC/FPO/Societies/NGO)	11	10.00
	Office bearers (secretary/president etc.)	32	29.09

Information source utilization for farm information by the respondents is presented in Table 2. Data presented in Table 2 reveals that majority of the respondents (70.00%) received farm information regularly from friends followed by 60.91 per cent from panchayat member/prodhan as a localite source of information. The study is in the same line with Nath *et al.*, 2022. It is also observed that not a single respondent received any farm information from family members; whereas 12.73 per cent of the respondents never received any farm information from village leaders as a localite source of information. Table 2 also reveals that 76.36 per cent of the respondents received farm information regularly from NGO/

SHG leader followed by 48.18 per cent from social worker as a cosmopolite source of information. It is interesting that 79.09 per cent of the respondents often received farm information from kisan mela; whereas 22.73 per cent of respondents never received any farm information from bank. The Table also reveals that majority of the respondents (50.00%) received farm information from television followed by 35.45 per cent from newspaper and 79.09 per cent of the respondents never received any farm information from radio as mass media source of farm information. It might be due to remoteness of the location.

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents based on information source utilization for farm information

(N= 110)

Sl. No.	Information source	Frequency of use					
		Regularly		Often		Never	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>Localite</b>							
1.	Family member	61	55.45	49	44.55	0	0
2.	Neighbour	45	40.91	59	53.64	6	5.45
3.	Progressive farmer	51	46.36	50	45.45	9	8.18
4.	Relatives	35	31.82	64	58.18	11	10.00
5.	Friends	77	70.00	21	19.09	12	10.91
6.	Village leader	54	49.09	42	38.18	14	12.73
7.	Panchayat member/ Pradhan	67	60.91	39	35.45	4	3.64
<b>Cosmopolite</b>							
1.	KVK scientist	29	26.36	46	41.82	35	31.82
2.	NGO/ SHG leader	84	76.36	26	23.64	0	0
3.	Govt. extension personnel	49	44.55	51	46.36	10	9.09
4.	Social worker	53	48.18	40	36.36	17	15.45
5.	Kisan mela	0	0	87	79.09	23	20.91
6.	Banks	22	20.00	63	57.27	25	22.73
7.	Pesticides/seed/fertilizer depot holders	41	37.27	58	52.73	11	10.00
<b>Mass media</b>							
1.	Radio	0	0	23	20.91	87	79.09
2.	Television	55	50.00	45	40.91	10	9.09
3.	News paper	39	35.45	56	50.91	15	13.64
4.	Farm magazine/Journals	21	19.09	42	38.18	47	42.73
5.	Telephone calls	19	17.27	51	46.36	40	36.36

Participation of respondents in different homestead activities is presented in Table 3. Data presented in Table 3 reveals that majority of the respondents (55.45%) participated independently in washing clothes followed by 50.91 per cent in maintenance of house; whereas 64.55 per cent of the respondents participated jointly in care of children/ elderly person. Table 2 also reveals that 35.45 per cent of the respondents involved independently in feeding animals and 28.18 per cent of the respondents participated jointly in caring

of animal; whereas 64.55 per cent of the respondents participated jointly in collection of fodder. Table also reveals that 32.73 per cent of the respondents had not participated participation in milking of animal followed 28.18 per cent in cleaning animal shed. It is observed from the Table that majority of the respondents (81.82%) independently participated in processing food followed by preservation of fruit/ vegetable (80.91%); whereas 80.91 per cent of respondents had not participated in tailoring.

**Table 3:** Distribution of respondents based on participation in different homestead activities

(N=110)

S. No	Participation Activity	Independent Participation		Joint Participation		No Participation	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
<b>A. Major homestead activities</b>							
1.	Cooking	49	44.55	61	55.45	0	0
2.	Collection of Fuel wood	27	24.55	52	47.27	31	28.18
3.	Fetching water	28	25.45	63	57.27	19	17.27
4.	Maintenance of house	56	50.91	54	49.09	0	0
5.	Washing clothes	61	55.45	49	44.55	0	0
6.	Care of children/ elderly person	39	35.45	71	64.55	0	0
<b>B. Livestock activities</b>							
7.	Collection of fodder	20	1.82	71	64.55	19	17.27
8.	Feeding of animal	39	35.45	48	43.64	23	20.91
9.	Caring of animal	31	28.18	65	59.09	14	12.73
10.	Cleaning of animal shed	22	20.00	57	51.82	31	28.18
11.	Milking of animal	19	17.27	55	50.00	36	32.73
<b>C. Allied homestead activities</b>							
12.	Processing food	90	81.82	14	12.73	6	5.45
13.	Preservation of fruit/ vegetable	89	80.91	21	19.09	0	0
14.	Festival/special occasions	38	34.55	72	65.45	0	0
15.	Weaving	48	43.64	0	0	62	56.36
16.	Tailoring	21	19.09	0	0	89	80.91
17.	Gardening (vegetable/ flower)	32	29.09	68	61.82	10	9.09
18.	Preparation of wine	19	17.27	25	22.73	66	60.00

## Conclusion

Involvement of farm women with respect to farm related practices is vital for achieving greater success towards economically sustainable agriculture; it is most unfortunate to say that the role of farm women in farming has not been highlighted. Transfer of agricultural technology to the women farmers is important as women have been playing vital role in agricultural development in India (Nath *et al.*, 2022) [6, 7]. Among the various communication sources that play an important role in providing information support to the women farmers, interpersonal sources and channels are more important for every cultivation operations. Different mass media and cosmopolite source of information were not frequently utilized and usefulness in area which hindered not only awareness level of tribal farm woman, but also adversely affect the adoption level regarding the least production (Nath and Patel, 2014) [4].

There is some evidence that despite the contribution made by rural women in food security they are not being well served by the existing extension system in developing countries. They are in urgent need of understanding and acquiring new knowledge and skills on cultivation of different crops, so that they could contribute more effectively to the production process (Nath *et al.*, 2017) [5]. So, the findings of this research will help in understanding of the rural women for smooth running of the agricultural system for sustainable agricultural development and overall development of rural women.

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