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Socio-economic profile of tribal farm women in decision making towards agricultural operations in Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Women in general plays pivotal role in farming in Madhya Pradesh state. They carry out various activities in agriculture like cleaning of field areas, preparation of field, sowing, intercultural practices, weeding, harvesting, picking, cleaning of grains, drying of grains and so forth. But it is unfortunate that they remain invisible people. However, their involvement as choice-makers regarding those activities is questionable. Hence the study was carried out to decide the contribution of farm women in decision - making in agriculture. The objective of this paper was to find out the socio-economic profile of the tribal farm women in Decision Making towards Agricultural Operations in Madhya Pradesh state. For the study, the purpose of a total of 120 tribal farm women was selected as respondents from ten villages of a selected block. The tribal women have been a personal interview technique with the help of a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the women were 45.00 percent of the respondents were middle-aged between 36 to 48 years, 42.50 percent with a level of education in primary school, 60.00% of the respondents belonged to a nuclear family type, 45.83 of the respondents belonged to medium family size, 49.16 percent have small size of land holding, 48.33 percent found to medium annual income, and 40.00 percent of the respondents belonged to farming as main occupation category.

Keywords: Socio-economic profile, tribal women, decision making, agricultural operations

Introduction

India is an agricultural country, with an economy that is preliminary agrarian in nature. India ranks second in the world with a population of 121.05 crores, 58.74 crores of which are females (Census of India, 2011). In rural India, agriculture and allied industrial sectors employ 89.5 percent of the total female labor (Singotiya *et al.* 2014) ^[16]. Agriculture plays a vital role in Indian economy and contributes 17 percent to the total GDP and also provides (Meshram *et al.* 2019) ^[9]. Women make essential contributions to the agricultural and rural economies in all developing countries and contribute one-third of the labor required for farming operations. About 70 percent of farm work was performed by women (Ahuja & Narayan, 2016) ^[11]. At present almost all rural development activities of the government are centered on male and female farmers. However, it is not the male farmer alone who needs to be changed to attend to the development of rural India, rural women also need to be involved in the developmental activities as they are the backbone of Indian agriculture. According to the 2011 census, the tribal population in India was 104.3 million. The population of Madhya Pradesh is 72.62 million out of which 15.31million (21.1%) are tribes representing 46 tribes' communities. the tribal population is concentrated mainly in and around the forest area of Madhya Pradesh (Meshram *et al.* 2020) ^[10]. The participation by tribal women in co-operation with their husbands in decisions making not only affects family but farm business too. Therefore, women are considered the backbone of the Indian economy. Women usually contribute to the harvesting of crops, weeding, threshing, irrigation, plant protection, use of bio-fertilizers, supervision, post-harvest operation, etc. Women work with male members and participate in farming activities putting much of hours of productive manual family labor, in tribal families women always work much more than males.

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Material and Methods

The study was carried out in Betul district has been selected purposively from the Madhya State as it possesses adequate population of tribal women. Betul district comprises of ten blocks, namely Betul, Bhaisdehi, Athner, Chicholi, Multai, Shahpur, Ghoradongari Bhimpur, Prabhat Pattan and Amla. Out of which Betul block was selected purposively as higher population of tribes. The selected block, Betul comprises 195 villages out of which 10 villages were selected on the basis of higher tribal women population in the villages. A list of tribal women of each selected village has been prepared with the help of RAEO's and other officials. From each selected village, 12 tribal women were selected by using proportional random sampling method and the total numbers of selected tribal women were 120. Thus, a total of 120 tribal women are considered to study the Socio-Economic Profile of participation of tribal women in agricultural operations in Madhya Pradesh State. Ex-post-facto research design was used in the study. After stringent discussion, one dependent and eleven independent variables were finalized for the investigation.

Results and Discussion

Age

Table 1 revealed that 45.00 percent of the selected tribal women were under middle age group having age between 36 to 48 years. It was followed 34.17 percent respondents were in old age category and remaining 20.83 percent respondents were observed in young age category. Thus, it may be inferred from the data that higher percentage of tribal women 45.00 percent belonged to middle age group. The finding support with the work of Warkade (2010)^[17], Devekar (2010)^[5], Khade (2011)^[6], Chayal *et al.* (2013)^[4], Singhotia *et al.* (2014)^[16], Kavadi *et al.* (2015), Pal and Haldar (2016)^[12], Singh (2017)^[15] and Kiran *et al.* (2018).

Table 1: Distribution of tribal women according to their age

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Young age (Up to 35 Years)	25	20.83
2	Middle age (36 to 48 Years)	54	45.00
3	Old age (Above 49 Years)	41	34.17
Total		120	100.00

Education

The data presented in table 2 reveals that majority of the tribal women 42.50 percent of the respondents received education up to primary school and above followed by Illiterate 17.50 percent middle 11.67 percent and read and write 11.67 percent, only write 8.33 percent, high school percent 7.5 and graduation 0.83 percent. Thus, concluded that most of tribal women (91.67%) were having formal education, however higher percent of tribal women (8.33%) were having education up to high school and above. The findings support with the work of Devekar (2010)^[5], Wahane (2010)^[17], Landge (2011)^[7], Rai (2011)^[13], Singh (2011)^[15], Kavadi *et al.* (2015), Mohanta (2017)^[11] and Kiran *et al.* (2018).

Table 2: Distribution of tribal women according to their education

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Illiterate	21	17.50
2	Only Write	10	8.33
3	Both Read and Write	14	11.67
4	Primary	51	42.50
5	Middle	14	11.67
6	High School	9	7.50
7	Graduation	1	0.83
Total		120	100.00

Family Type

The data presented in table 3 reveals that majority of the tribal women more than half (60.00%) of the respondents belonged to nuclear family type and remaining 40.00 percent of them belonged to the joint family type. Thus, it may be concluded that more than half (60.00%) of the respondents most of tribal women (60.00%) were from the nuclear family. The findings support with the work of Wahane (2010)^[17], Chayal *et al.* (2013)^[4], Pal and Haldar (2016)^[12].

Table 3: Distribution of tribal women according to their family types

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Nuclear Family	72	60.00
2	Joint Family	48	40.00
Total		120	100.00

Family Size

The data presented in table 4 reveals that highest percent 45.83 of the respondents belonged to medium family followed by small family 39.17 percent and large 15.00 percent family size. Thus, it may be concluded that less than half (45.83 %) of the respondents belonged to medium family size. The findings support with the work of Jain (2007), Devekar (2010)^[5] and Landage (2011).

Table 4: Distribution of tribal women according to their family size

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Small (Up to 7)	47	39.17
2	Medium (8 to 11)	55	45.83
3	Large (Above 11)	18	15.00
Total		120	100

Land Holding

The data regarding land holding of the selected tribal women from table 5 revealed that out of the total farmer 28.33 percent were observed in marginal land holding group and 49.16 percent respondents were observed small land holding group. Whereas 22.50 percent selected tribal women were medium land holding. Hence, it may be concerned that most of the tribal women 49.16 percent have small size of land holding. The findings support with the work of Warkade (2010), Landage (2011), Chayal *et al.* (2013)^[4], Singotiya *et al.* (2014)^[16] and Kavadi *et al.* (2015).

Table 5: Distribution of tribal women according to their land holding

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Marginal (up to 1 ha)	34	28.33
2	Small (1 to 2 ha)	59	49.17
3	Medium (2 to 5 ha)	27	22.50
Total		120	100.00

Family Income

The data presented in table 6 reveals that higher percentage of the tribal women 48.33 percent found to medium to annual income followed by high income 31.67 percent and low annual income group 20.00 percent respectively. Thus, it may be concluded Medium annual income 48.33 percent group followed by low and high annual income group. The findings support with the work of Satpute (2012), Bhairve (2013), Singh (2017) [15].

Table 6: Distribution of tribal women according to their family income

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low (Up to 50,000)	24	20.00
2	Medium (50,001 to 1,00,000)	58	48.33
3	High (Above to 1,00,001)	38	31.67
Total		120	100.00

Occupation

The data presented in table7 reveals that 40.00 percent respondents belonged to category farming as main occupation followed by 34.17 percent of the respondents were having occupation as agriculture and collection of forest products. 10.83 percent of the Agriculture + Labour, 9.17 percent of Agriculture + Business and 5.83percent of the respondents were having occupation as Agriculture + Service. Thus, it may be concluded that 40.00 percent of the respondents had farming as main occupation. The findings support with the work of Samdariya (2011), Thakur (2013), Machhaliya (2014) [8], Mohanta (2017) [11] and Chandravadia Kiran *et al.* (2018).

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to their occupation

S. No	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Farming	48	40.00
2	Agriculture + Labour	13	10.83
3	Agriculture + Business	11	9.17
4	Agriculture + Collection of Forest Products	41	34.17
5	Agriculture + Service	7	5.83
Total		120	100.00

Conclusion

The participation by tribal women in co-operation with their husbands in decisions making not only affects family but farm business too. Therefore, women are considered the backbone of the Indian economy. Women work with male members and participate in farming activities putting much of hours of productive manual family labor, in tribal families women always work much more than males. After all this, she is not considered an important part of any decision-making related to all activities. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents were middle-aged, had primary school group, nuclear family type, medium family-size group, had a small size of landholding category, medium family income, and farming is the main occupation group.

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