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Role of women in farm decision making

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Abstract
The present study was conducted in Nanded district from Marathwada region of Maharashtra State in 2022-2023, with an objective to study "Role of women in farm decision making". Four villages from each tehsil were selected. Total twelve villages were selected for research study. Ten farm women were selected from each selected village and hence 120 farm women were selected for the study. Ex-post facto research design was used for the study.

As regard with the profile of farm women it was observed that, majority (70.00%) of the farm women were from middle age category., more than one fourth (30.83%) of farm women were educated up to primary school, majority (66.67%) farm women had medium annual income, more than two fifth (45.00%) of farm women had small size of land holding, majority (74.17%) of farm women were married, more than two fifth (43.33%) of farm women belonged to middle caste category, majority (66.67%) of farm women belonged to nuclear family, majority (78.33%) of the farm women belonged to medium category were involved in farming, more than half (51.67%) of the farm women had medium social participation, more than half (60.83%) of farm women had medium level of mass media exposure, more than half (55.83%) of farm women had medium sources of information. It was found that majority (65.83%) of farm women had average role in farm decision making, while only 13.33 percent of farm women had good role in farm decision making and more than one fifth (20.83%) of farm women had poor role in role in farm decision making, respectively.

Regarding relationship between profile of farm women and role in farm decision making. The results of correlation coefficient showed that independent variable age had positive and non-significant relationship with role in farm decision making. Whereas education, annual income, land holding, marital status, caste, type of family, involvement in farming, social participation, mass media exposure, sources of information had positive and highly significant relationship with role in farm decision making.

Keywords: Role, farm decision making, farm women

Introduction
"If you educate a man, you educate a person but, if you educate a woman, you educate a nation" Mahatma Gandhi. India is a nation of villages, with almost 70.00 percent of the population living in rural areas with farming as their primary industry. In India, agriculture is the backbone of the economy. "Agriculture is our best endeavour because it will ultimately result in the greatest amount of true wealth, virtue, and happiness." In our country, where the main source of income is agriculture, where Men and women both participate. For the majority of our population, agriculture is a major source of raw materials, income, and employment. In agriculture, women play a big and vital role. Women's roles in agriculture are typically complementary, both in terms of their physical engagement and their ability to make decisions. Women in agriculture can be managers or landless workers, and the level of female involvement varies depending on the farm households' land ownership and agro-production systems. To awaken people, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once stated, "women must be awakened. once she is on move, the family move, village move, nation move. " The 'real functions' carried out by farm women in connection to their status in the household have been defined as the term "role" in operational terms. Farming is a field where women predominate. According to Dr. M.S. Swaminathan, one of the pioneers of the green revolution in India, women were the ones who domesticate crop plants initially, launching the art and science of farming. And played a significant part in the production of crops from soil preparation to postharvest activities, and they continue to do so. Women shape and create the future of every nation. Man can feed his family if you teach him how to farm. The neighbourhood will have food if you teach women to cultivate. As agriculture is the foundation of the Indian economy, women are the foundation of our nation's socioeconomic development. This means that the advancement of our nation depends on the status and development of women.

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They participate in multidimensional way in each and every step of cultivation, harvesting, marketing. The cultivation of agricultural crops, animal care, food preparation and processing, wage labour in various businesses, water 2 collection, product marketing, and family care, in addition to domestic duties, are all managed by rural women. Farm women conduct the majority of the cutting, picking, cleaning, drying, storing, and processing procedures for grains. Farm women also perform the majority of the cleaning, weeding, harvesting, threshing, winnowing, and grading operations. Making decisions is another crucial and essential part of every home. The majority of women work in a variety of occupations to support themselves because agriculture is the largest unorganised industry and employs a significant number of women taking active part. The number of women who participate in domestic and agricultural work depends on the social, cultural, and economic climate of the region. They demonstrate their participation in planning, decision-making, and leadership tasks. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how women participate in various decision-making processes in the agriculture sector in order to better comprehend their role in agriculture as a means of enhancing the family's economic situation. Therefore, the primary goal of this study is to evaluate the level of engagement and decision-making patterns of women in the agricultural sector. Women participation in agricultural operations is besides their usual domestic work. Most of the contributions made by women to the farm sector also go unaccounted as they are not directly involved. The contribution of female labour towards agricultural production is always more than the male labour in all types of landholding size.

Farm women are typically portrayed as meek, illiterate, stupid, and judgmental females who have become entangled in a web of traditions and customs. Women are required to fulfil the combined roles of wage earner and housewife. Both roles place significant time and energy demands on women. Women who live in rural areas work on farms as agricultural laborers and cultivators. Women actively participate in pre-sowing, harvesting, post-harvesting operations, and related tasks. Low socioeconomic status women actively participate in agricultural labour. In our society, women have different roles. They have a major role to play in the development process also. For the last few years, programmes for women have been receiving particular attention under community and rural development programmes. The desirable socioeconomic development can be achieved only when women in large are stimulated and motivated to accept and adopt new techniques. Additionally, they demonstrate their participation in planning, decision-making, and leadership tasks. Their role in agriculture varies by geography, ecological zone, farming system, caste, class, and socioeconomic position of households, among other factors.

Objectives
1. To study the Profile of farm women
2. To find out the relationship between profile of farm women and their role in farm decision making

Materials and Methods
The methodology procedure consisted of measurement of dependent and independent variables, sampling techniques, selection and measurement of variables, tools and techniques of data collection and analysis of data. The present study was carried out in the Nanded district of Maharashtra State. From

Nanded district, three tehsils were selected randomly. From each selected tehsil four villages were selected randomly. Thus, total twelve villages were selected from two tehsils for the study. From each selected village, ten farm women were selected randomly. Thus, 120 farm women were selected for the study. Keeping in view, the objectives of the study, the interview schedule was prepared and for this purpose ex-post facto research design was used.

Results and Discussion
The farm women were distributed into different categories based on their selected profile characteristics they were analyzed and presented in the following Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of profile farm women

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Profile	Frequency	Percentage
A	**Age**		
1	Young	16	13.33
2	Middle	84	70.00
3	Old	20	16.67
B	**Education**		
1	Illiterate	24	20.00
2	Primary School (1st to 4th)	37	30.83
3	Secondary School (5th to 7 th)	20	16.67
4	Higher School (8 th to 10 th)	17	14.17
5	Higher secondary (11th to 12 th)	19	15.83
6	Graduation and above	3	2.50
C	**Annual income**		
1	Low	16	13.33
2	Medium	80	66.67
3	High	24	20.00
D	**Land holding**		
1	Marginal	16	13.33
2	Small	54	45.00
3	Semi medium	39	32.50
4	Mediun	11	9.17
5	Large	0	0
E	**Marital status**		
1	Unmarried	12	10.00
2	Married	89	74.17
3	Divorce	2	1.67
4	Widow	17	14.17
F	**Caste**		
1	Upper	28	23.33
2	Middle	52	43.33
3	Lower	40	33.34
G	**Type of family**		
1	Nuclear	80	66.67
2	Joint	40	33.33
H	**Involvement in farming**		
1	Low	15	12.50
2	Medium	94	78.33
3	High	11	9.17
I	**Social participation**		
1	Low	27	22.50
2	Medium	62	51.67
3	High	31	25.83
J	**Mass media exposure**		
1	Low	26	21.67
2	Medium	73	60.83
3	High	21	17.50
K	**Sources of information**		
1	Low	32	26.67
2	Medium	67	55.83
3	High	21	17.50

A. Age: The data in table 1 indicated that, Majority 70.00 percent of the farm women were from middle age category. Followed by 13.33 percent of the farm women from young age category and 16.67 percent of the farm women were from old age category.

B. Education
The data in the table 1 revealed that, 30.83 percent of the farm women were educated up to primary school and secondary school were 16.67 percent. While 14.17 percent of the farm women educated up to higher school, 15.83 percent of the farm women completed their higher secondary and 20.00 percent of them were illiterate. And 2.50 percent of farm women were graduate and above.

C. Annual income
The data in table 1 indicated that, 66.67 percent of farm women had medium annual income between, while 13.33 percent had the low annual income. About 20.00 percent had high income.

D. Land holding
The data from table 1 revealed that, 45.00 percent of the farm women were having 1.01 to 2.00 ha. of land and belonged to small land holding category, while 13.33 percent of the farm women were having land up to 1.00 ha and belonged to marginal category. 32.50 percent of the farm women had 2.01 ha to 4.00 ha of land and belonged to semi medium category and 9.17 percent of farm women had 4.01 to 10.00 ha land and belonged to medium category and nobody belongs to large land holding category (above 10 ha).

E. Marital status
The data in the Table 1 revealed that, majority 74.17 percent of farm women were married, 10.00 percent were unmarried and 14.17 percent of farm women were in widow and only 1.67 percent of farm women were in divorce category.

F. Caste
The data given in Table 1 shows that, more than two fifth i.e., 43.33 percent farm women belonged to middle caste. And 23.33 percent who were observed under upper caste and 33.34 percent of farm women belonged to lower caste.

G. Type of family
It was observed from Table 1 that, out of the total farm women, majority 66.67 percent of farm women belonged to nuclear family and followed by 33.33 percent belonged to Joint family.

H. Involvement in farming
It was observed from Table 1 that, majority 78.33 percent of the farm women belonged to medium category were involved in farming followed by 12.50 percent were from low category and 9.17 percent of farm women involved in farming belonged to high category.

I. Social participation
From the Table 1. it can be comprehended that, more than half i.e.,51.67 percent of the farm women had medium social participation followed by low participation were up to 22.50 percent and high social participation were 25.83 percent.

J. Mass media exposure
The above table 1 shows that, majority 60.83 percent of farm women had medium level of mass media exposure, followed by 17.50 percent of the farm women who had high level of mass media exposure and 21.67 percent of the farm women who had low level of mass media exposure.

K. sources of information
It was seen from the table 1 that, more than half i.e., 55.83 percent of the farm women had medium of sources of information followed by 17.50 percent had high of sources of information. 26.67 percent of farm women had low sources of information.

2. Relationship between the profile of farm women and their role in farm decision making
The data related to relationship between profile of farm women and their role in farm decision making were subjected to the correlation coefficient.

Table 2: Coefficient of correlation between role in farm decision making and profile of farm women

SL. No	Independent Variables	Correlation coefficient ('r')
1.	Age	0.017^{NS}
2.	Education	0.319**
3.	Annual income	0.305**
4.	Land holding	0.305**
5.	Marital status	0.442**
6.	Caste	0.495**
7.	Type of family	0.459**
8.	Involvement in farming	0.490**
9.	Social participation	0.479**
10.	Mass media exposure	0.555**
11.	Sources of information	0.436**

* = Significant at 0.05% level of probability
**= Significant at 0.01% level of probability, NS = non-significant

It is evident from table 2 that, the results of correlation coefficient showed that independent variable age had positive and non-significant relationship with Role in farm decision making. Whereas education, education, annual income, land holding, marital status, caste, type of family, involvement in farming, social participation, mass media exposure, sources of information had positive and highly significant relationship with role in farm decision making.

2.1 Age and Role in farm decision making
The data in the table 2. revealed that, there was positive and non-significant correlation between age and role in farm decision making.
It means, role of farm women in farm decision making is not correlated with the age of farm women. Age does not have considerable effect on role in farm decision making.

2.2 Education and Role in farm decision making
The data in the table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between education and role in farm decision making.
This means that higher the level of education higher will be role of farm women in farm decision making. The most important part of education is the accumulation of skills and knowledge. Higher education brings changes in the farm women attitude, skills and knowledge and hence higher education leads to increase in role of farm decision making.

2.3 Annual income and Role in farm decision making
The data in the table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between annual income and role in farm decision making.

This shows that higher income lead to more investments on use of new technologies, use of more sources of information and thus increases the role in farm decision making. So higher income farm women lead to increase in role of farm decision making.

2.4 Land holding and Role in farm decision making
The data in the table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between land holding and role in farm decision making.

This shows that greater the size of land holding, higher role of farm women in farm decision making. So, the farm women having more land holding were increasing the role in farm decision making.

2.5 Marital status and Role in farm decision making
The information in the Table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between marital status and role in farm decision making.

2.6 Caste and Role in farm decision making
The data in the Table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between caste and role in farm decision making.

2.7 Type of family and Role in farm decision making
The data in the Table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between family type and role in farm decision making.

It could be concluded that family type and role of farm women in farm decision making were highly significantly related with each other. Role of women in managing economy of families in rural areas which implies that women in nuclear families had higher role when compared to joint family where woman's decision were given less importance. Thus, family type has highly significant correlation with the role of farm women in farm decision making.

2.8 Involvement in farming and Role in farm decision making
The data in the Table 2. revealed that, there was a positive and highly significant correlation between involvement in farming and role in farm decision making.

It could be concluded that involvement in farming and role of farm women in farm decision making were highly significantly related with each other. It was also noticed that the involvement of farm women resulted into increase in farm decision making ability.

2.9 Social participation and Role in farm decision making
The data in table 2. revealed that social participation shows positive and highly significant relationship with role in farm decision making.

The result may be due to those farm women participated in the informal and formal organizations, other groups and agencies it will ultimately increase their social participation and broaden their thinking level with new ideas and innovations. Thus, it will influence the role of farm women in farm decision making.

2.10 Mass media exposure and Role in farm decision making:
The data in the table 2. revealed that, there was positive and highly significant correlation between mass media exposure and role in farm decision making.

It is observed that, higher mass media exposure leads to utilization of information about farming by the farm women which increasing their role in farm decision making.

2.11 Sources of information and Role in farm decision making
The data in the table 2. revealed that, there was positive and highly significant correlation between source of information and role in farm decision making.

Conclusions
It was observed that majority of farm women were from middle age, majority of farm women had education level up to secondary school, majority of farm women had medium annual income, more than one third of farm women belonged to small land holding category, majority of farm women were married, majority of farm women belonged to middle caste category, majority of farm women belonged to nuclear family, medium level of involvement in farming, medium social participation, medium mass media exposure, medium sources of information. And also, it was concluded that majority of farm women had average role in farm decision making.

As per relationship between role in farm decision making and profile of farm women it was illustrate that, age had positive and non-significant relationship with role in farm decision making while education, annual income, land holding, marital status, caste, type of family, social participation, mass media exposure and sources of information, had positive and highly significant relationship with role in farm decision making.

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