

## RURAL WOMEN'S ACCESS TO VARIOUS SOURCES OF INFORMATION IN TEHSIL FAISALABAD

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### ABSTRACT

Rural women play an integral role in agriculture. But they have to face a lot of problems. They have no access to modern sources of information. In order to estimate the information gap in the study area, the present study has been planned for the rural women of tehsil Faisalabad. Out of which two rural union councils were randomly selected, from each of the selected Union Council, 2 villages were selected randomly. With help of union council office the rural women involved in agricultural activities was prepared. After making the list, 30 females from each village were selected through simple random sampling procedure. Thus for the present study a total of 120 respondents were selected. The data were collected with the help of pre-tested and validated interview schedule. The data thus collected were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results show that there is a significant relation between age, education alongwith TV and radio. Rural women used to like information disseminated through such media.

**Key Words:** Rural women, access, sources of information

### INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the main contributor (20.9% in GDP) to Pakistan's economy which comprises on major and minor crops, vegetable and fruit production (Anonymous, 2007). Crop production is a gender activity, participated by both male and female. The sex-segregated data for Pakistan is insufficient while Pakistani women play a major role in agricultural production, livestock raising, and cottage industries (Rasheed, 2004). Women participate in crop production activities like seed cleaning, wheat, maize and vegetable production operations. Many research documents show rural female participation rate in agriculture and livestock that is higher (79.4%) as compared to rural men (60.8%) (UNDP, 1997). But, the women work is not considered as paid work, inspite of the fact that visible crop activities in which women spent their time were harvesting (16.3%), stripping sugarcane leaves (12.28%), cotton picking (11.90%), farm produce (brining in) (14.76%) (Qadri and Jehan, 1982). They further investigated that women living in joint families had accounted for having a larger crop production income as against those living in single families. But on the other hand a rural woman has to face a number of problems both at home and at farm. Only 10% women have access to credit and loan facility. Two third of the illiterate persons in the world are women and girls, and only 5% extension services address to women (FAO, 2003). They have to face the information gap especially in the field of production and technology. For solving problems faced by women in crop production activities, care is neither considered by men nor by the government. Due to lack of information sources, women are unaware of most of the advanced crop production

activities and technologies due to lack of training facilities, lack of credit facilities, and lack of resources. There is a dearth of research on the diffusion process in socio-cultural setting of Pakistan (Hussain, 1997). Mass media are spreading agricultural technologies to the farmers at a faster rate than personal contacts. Literate farmers can make use of both electronic (radio, TV, and internet) and print media according to their capacity of use. Now the time has been changing and trends of ICTs intervention have been introduced in the field of agriculture. Currently radio and TV are used for creating awareness about new agricultural technologies among farmers but the timings for broadcast/telectcast of agricultural programmes need to be reviewed (Adebayo and Adesope, 2007). Information sources are a resource of poverty reduction especially in far furlong areas (Langmia, 2006). He suggested for a reliable body of research on the diffusion process to formulate policies for an effective mass communication programme. The present project was, therefore, planned to explore the rural women's access to various sources of information in tehsil Faisalabad.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The universe of the present study was rural women of tehsil Faisalabad. Two rural union councils of tehsil Faisalabad were randomly selected, from each of the selected Union Council, 2 villages were selected randomly. For each village, a list of females who were engaged in agricultural activities was prepared. After making the list, 30 females from each village were selected through simple random sampling procedure. Thus for the present study a total of 120 respondents were

selected. The data were collected with the help of pre-tested and validated interview schedule. The data thus collected were analyzed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to their age**

Age	No.	%
15-29	22	18.3
30-44	66	55.0
45-59	32	26.7
Total	120	100.0

Mean=37.43    SD=9.088

Table 1 reveals that majority of the respondents (55%) were in the age group of 30-44 years, while 26.7% and 18.3% of them belonged to age group of 45-59 years and 15-29 years, respectively. These findings are partially in line with those of Chaudhry (2004) who observed that 44.2% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 26-35 years, while 44.8 and 11.0% of the respondents were of the age of the 36 years and above or 25 years or below, respectively.

**Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their education**

Education level	No.	%
Illiterate	AG94	77.5
Primary	22	19.2
Matric	4	2.5
Total	120	100.0

Mean=1.27    SD=0.621

**Table 3: Distribution of the respondents based on their agricultural information sources**

Information sources	No.	%	Rank Order
Friends	85	71.0	1st
Neighbour	82	69.0	2nd
Relatives	81	68.0	3rd
Television	78	65.0	4th
Radio	54	45.0	5th
Print media	48	40.0	6th
Private agencies	3	2.6	7th
Pesticide dealers	2	2.3	8 <sup>th</sup>
Deptt. of Agriculture	0	0.0	9th

Table 2 reveals that majority (77.5%) of the respondents were illiterate, and 19.2% of the respondents were educated to primary level. While only 2.5% were matriculate. Our findings are partially substantiated by

those of Rasheed (2004) who reported that 66.7% of the respondents were illiterate and 20.0% and 10.0% having the education upto primary and matric level, respectively in Tehsil Gojra District Toba Tek Singh.

Table 3 reveals that the major sources of information regarding new agricultural technologies are personal contacts with friends, relatives and neighbors. Electronic and print media are also playing a significant role in providing information to the rural women whereas pesticide dealers and private companies and department of agriculture are at the tail. In this respect Hussain (1993) highlighted the role of mass media particularly for women in diffusion and adoption of modern cropping techniques. Furthermore it is elaborated by Jamshad (1998) that about half of the respondents were of the view that broadcast media presented introductory type agricultural programme. One-fourth of the respondents watched TV, where as 12.3% and 10% read newspapers and agricultural magazines respectively.

A significant relationship exists relation between education and sources of information. Television has the stronger relation with education than radio and print media, respectively. In the same regard Adebayo and Adesope (2007) stated that highly educated respondents has a significant response towards the usage of information sources as compared to illiterate or less educated ones.

There exists a significant relation between age and sources of information. TV radio and print media, where the best sources of information for all the age groups. This study is partially in line with those of Adekun and Adekoya (2002) who reported that the sources of information available to women involved in fish industry about modern technology and innovation in fisheries in Lagos State, Nigeria. The test of association between the sources of information and involvement in fishing activities gave significant relationship with local women's association ( $\chi^2 = 74.84, p < 0.05$ ) and family members ( $\chi^2 = 34.84, p < 0.05$ ).

**CONCLUSIONS:** The ever-changing global scenario demands for the improved sources of information especially for the rural women to enhance agriculture productivity. Present situation for the women of third world countries is more challenging to upgrade their knowledge and to update their information.

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