



Drudgery Reduction of Rural Women in Marathwada Region

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Abstract:

Human resource development is the central focus in the present development era. Ergonomics is one of the most important key to foster the work productivity of human resource. Ergonomics is the process of designing or arranging workplaces, products and systems so that they fit the people who use them and enhance their productivity. Gender friendly equipments developed on the basis of ergonomics plays important role to reduce drudgery of rural women and enhance their performance. The present study is carried out in Marathwada region of Maharashtra to study the drudgery reduction experienced by rural women after use of gender friendly equipments which were introduced to them by Krishi Vigyan Kendras from Marathwada. The data collected from primary source by interviewing 110 rural women from Marathwada region revealed that majority of rural women(54% to 93%) experienced great drudgery reduction with the use of gender friendly equipments designed by different universities and research stations from all over India, which was introduced to them by their local KVKs. They showed interest to

continue the use of these equipments in future, if made available at village level with subsidised rates. The government's special attention to design different gender friendly equipments to reduce the drudgery of rural women in their work and promotion of the availability of these equipments and products at village level will definitely enhance the productivity of their human resource and will definitely enhance rural women's contribution in development of Nation.

Key Words: Rural women, Ergonomics, drudgery reduction, gender friendly equipments, KVK.

Introduction:

In present development era concentration is on the better human resource development in every field whether in cooperates or in rural human resource development. Government is focusing on up gradation of their human resource by promoting the invention and use of innovative technologies based on ergonomics which enhance comfortable working and productivity of the people. Ergonomics is the applied science of equipment design as for the workplace intended to maximize productivity by reducing operator fatigue and discomfort. It is also called as human engineering. Ergonomics is the process of designing or arranging workplaces, products and systems so that they fit the people who use them. Ergonomics is important because while performing job the body is stressed by an awkward posture, extreme temperature or repeated body movements which affects person's musculoskeletal system. Ergonomics removes risk factors that lead to musculoskeletal injury and allows for improved human performance and productivity. It also improves quality of work and reduces cost of injuries. Safety, comfort, ease of use, productivity / performance and aesthetics are the aspects of ergonomics.

As a human resource women in India constitute about 50% of population and about 77% of them belong to rural areas. Majority of rural women came from marginal and small farmers or landless families. They work about 14 to 16 hours of day in house, agriculture and allied activities, as a cultivator or agriculture labour. Rural women facing this triplicate burden undergo more drudgery which not only affects their health but also affects their work efficiency and low income leading to poor diet, poor health and poverty. Constraint of literacy, low technical knowledge and skill again make them helpless. In recent years Krishi vigyan Kendras working in each district are promoting the technical knowledge regarding agriculture and allied activities to the rural population at village level. Each KVK is imparting knowledge regarding the drudgery reducing technologies specially developed for women to improve their work efficiency and income. Awareness regarding these technologies is created in rural women through trainings, demonstration and taking trials at their work place. In the present paper the effort is made to study the drudgery reduction of the rural women from Marathwada region of Maharashtra who used the gender friendly and ergonomically designed technologies at their workplace mostly in agriculture and allied field which were introduced to them by krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of Marathwada region.

Objectives:

The study was carried out with following objectives.

1. To study the rural women beneficiaries who get acquainted with gender friendly equipments through Krishi Vigyan Kendras.
2. To study technologies experienced by the rural women.

3. To understand benefits of use of gender friendly equipments experienced by rural women.

Methodology:

The present study is purely based on primary source of data gathered from eleven Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Marathwada region by interviewing the Heads of these KVKs and also by interviewing randomly selected 110 rural women beneficiaries who themselves used the gender friendly equipments which was introduced by these KVKs in year 2015-16.

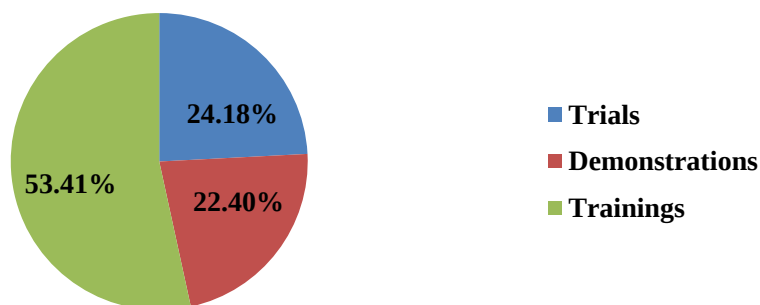
Results & Discussion:

Total 11 krishi Vigyan Kendras from Marathwada region introduced different drudgery reducing technologies to the rural women by providing them knowledge through 18 trainings and gave opportunity to experience 26 technologies by using them at their work places in 2015-16. Total 732 rural women get acquainted with gender friendly technologies through trainings, demonstrations and trails conducted by KVKs. About 53% of total beneficiaries were actually used these technologies at their work places which is shown in table No. 1 and figure no. 1.

Table no. 1: Rural women beneficiaries who get acquainted with gender friendly equipments through Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

S.No.	Method of awareness	No. of technologies	No. of rural women beneficiaries	% of rural women beneficiaries.
1	Trails	10	177	24.18
2	Demonstrations	16	164	22.40
3	Trainings	18 trainings	391	53.41
Total			732	100

Figure no. 1 Percentage of Rural women get acquainted with GFT through KVKs in 2015-16



Technologies experienced by rural women:

To reduce the drudgery of rural women at household, agriculture and allied fields, KVKs in 2015-16 introduced total 26 different drudgery reducing and gender friendly technologies (GRT) designed and developed by different universities and different Research Stations from all over India to rural women. KVK provided these technologies to rural women for actual use at their workplaces and experience the benefits of them. Technologies experienced by rural women were water wheel for water transport, pomogranate aril extractor, revolving stand and stool for milking, hand mittens for harvesting of Brinjal, Soybean and ladies finger, CIAE sickle, wheel hoe for weeding, cycle Hoe, hand hoe set, wheel hand hoe, pedal operated potato peeler and slicer, spring rake, twin wheel hoe, groundnut stripping frame, Brinjal and Bhindi cutter, Sulabh cotton picking coat, groundnut decorticator, double screen grain cleaner, gravity separator, spiral grain cleaner cum grader etc.

Benefits of gender friendly technologies experience by rural women in Marathwada :

After the use of drudgery reducing technologies for considerable period at their regular work place rural women experienced some benefits to them which are noted in table no. 2.

Table no. 2 Benefits of gender friendly technologies experience by rural women in Marathwada

S.No.	Benefits experienced by rural women	No. of rural women N=110	Percentage(%)of rural women
1	Reduced time consumption	87	79
2	Improved work quality	62	56
3	Reduced Musculoskeletal pain	102	93
4	Improved comfort in working	71	65
5	Improved cost benefits	59	54
Total			100

Table Number 2 reveals that majority of rural women experienced reduced musculoskeletal pain (93%) and reduced time consumption (79%) for particular work and About 54% to 65% rural women experienced ease in use of technology with improved work quality, improved cost benefit and improved comfort in working. They showed interest in continuing the use of technologies and suggested to provide these gender friendly equipments at subsidised rate and low cost and also to make available them at village level.

Conclusion:

Rural women experiences high drudgery while working at their home, agricultural and allied activities. They use traditional methods and traditional implement to complete the work and

suffer from huge mental and physical stress. Considering the needs of rural women Krishi Vigyan Kendras of Marathwada region provided exposure and opportunity to rural women to experience benefits of gender friendly technology developed by different universities and Research Stations from all over India. Results show that majority of rural women (above 54% to 93%) from Marathwada region experienced benefits of these technologies and were comfortable in using them at their workplace. They also expressed interest in using these technologies with availability at village level at subsidised rates. The government should take initiative to provide these equipments at subsidised rate to enhance the use of these technologies and promote human resource development.

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