

## TRAINING NEEDS OF RURAL WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE: A CASE STUDY OF DISTRICT BAHAWALPUR, PAKISTAN

Naveed Iftikhar<sup>1</sup>, Tanvir Ali<sup>1</sup>, Munir Ahmad<sup>1</sup>, Ashfaq Ahmad Maan<sup>2</sup> and Qamar-ul-Haq<sup>3\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Agri. Extension, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

<sup>2</sup>Department of Rural Sociology, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad

<sup>3</sup>Department of Community Medicine, Punjab Medical College, Faisalabad

\*Corresponding author's e-mail: drqamarulhaq@yahoo.com

Pakistan is a third world country with more than 162 million population. It has multiple strata of life with multidimensional livelihood strategies. Agriculture is the mainstay of the Pakistan's economy. It has employed 44.8% of the work force. More than 52% of the country's population is comprised of women. Rural women play a significant role in various arenas of life. An ordinary farm woman is the main player to sustain life activities both at home and farm. They are active participant in agriculture, livestock management and poultry husbandry also their participation in community development and social relations is recognizable. Whereas in livestock production they look after animals and their primary medication. They also have to perform domestic chores of cooking, cleaning of house, washing of clothes taking care of children and fetching of water and fuel. Although they perform all of the above mentioned tasks but due to lack of resources, information sources and technical guidance, they have to meet the multiple challenges. On the other hand they are deprived of education, nutrition, medication and security. Due to lack of skill enhancement training of rural women, they are lagging behind than the international standards of crop production, livestock management and post harvest operations, resulting low yield of the crops and poor quality of the produce. To probe the matter, the present study the role of rural women in agriculture and their training needs in District Bahawalpur was designed. District Bahawalpur consists of five tehsils namely Hasilpur, Bahawalpur, Khairpur Tamewali, Ahmadpur East and Yazman. Out of which two tehsils were selected randomly and five union councils from each tehsil were also randomly selected. From each selected union council 2 villages were selected randomly. From each selected village 20 women, involved in agricultural activities, were selected through random sampling technique, thus making a total of 400 respondents. The data were collected through a pre-tested interview schedule designed for this purpose. The data collected were analyzed and interpreted by using appropriate statistical package to draw the conclusions and to suggest measures for improvement. The results revealed that Short training programs for crop production, livestock care and management, human health and sanitation and handicrafts making for capacity building and skill development of the desert women were intensively required.

**Keywords:** training need, livestock, rural women, crop production

### INTRODUCTION

Women's role in crop sector is significant from the stone ages. Women are extensively involved in the production of major crops like cotton, rice, pulses and vegetables (Sadaf, 2005). They are involved in rice transplantation and cotton picking in Sindh and Punjab (Qadri and Jahan, 1992). They participate in all operations related to crop production such as sowing, hoeing, transplanting, weeding, harvesting and post harvest operations such as threshing, winnowing, drying, grinding, husking and storage (Jamal, 2005). In the rainfed areas, women contribute to almost all of 22 identified crop tasks with the major contribution to seed preparation, collection and application of farmyard manure, husking and storage (Freedman and Wai, 1998). Men's involvement is higher in the early stages of cultivation such as field preparation. Driving tractor and watering the fields are also men's job. Food processing and storage is an area where women

participation is higher than men's. Whereas, in an other study Mollel *et al.* (2000) reported that in Morogoro both men and women were equally involved in land preparation, ploughing, planting, weeding, harvesting, and also in livestock health and feeding. Although rural women devote two third more time than men, they also do more struggle for their survival and economic well being but unfortunately they are considered unpaid labour resulting no economic reforms provided by government. Women had to face a lot of constraints in crop production activities, which also degrade their health and life pattern. As it has been documented that women in Sindh walk up to 10 miles to fetch water. Due to heavy weight of wood and water over long distances they suffer from different kinds of diseases. Women cotton pickers suffer from blisters, skin rashes caused by the chemical sprayed to protect cotton plant from pests (Mumtaz, 1993). In broad spectrum, women role in agriculture has been changing in the diverse circumstances of intensive privatization, male migration

to bigger cities and restoration of property rights. Again the need of education, awareness and training has been increasing day by day (FAO, 1996).

Rural women have more affection and care with livestock due to their reproductive nature of role. The link between rural women and animals remained from ages especially the implications of the very strong relationship between women and children and small animals. A rural woman's work in Pakistan is more visible in livestock sector than crop sector. She spends 5.5 hours in caring of livestock and just 50 minutes for her own children (Jamal, 2005). It is reported that in 90% farm families' livestock management is entirely women's domain of work. Livestock heads have varied importance for the farm families. In poor livestock keepers, it serve in several ways such as livestock products and services of especially in travelling and loading (Saghirs, 2005). In some households, livestock accounts for only a small portion of the economic activities, while, in others, livestock is the only source of livelihood (Zafar, 2004). Different tasks are pre-determined between male and female in livestock production. But overall the work done by males in rural families outweighs that of females. These were the grazing and watering of animals, the sale of products to agents, care of sick animals and 60-80% women are in feeding and milking of animals in Pakistan. In the cleaning of animals and in caring for those that are sick, the work of both sexes was about the same. Women were exclusively responsible for cleaning sheds, manure collection, and selling products to villagers (Ram, 2001). Although rural women are sacrificing a lot but they have to face a number of problems like poor information about the veterinary treatment of the animals. They do not have information about the diseases and how to control, how to feed animal and about milk processing along with their vaccination. They usually use traditional (desi) treatment for their sick animals. They also have to face the problem of shortage of feed resources especially in dry seasons. Production of livestock can be increased by using proper scientific breeding and feed management practices and also by the use of modern technology. There should be special training programmes for rural women with the help of these trained women, rural masses can be trained to raise the standard of livestock production along with care (Devendra, 2002).

But still rural women are facing the technological constraints and other problems. Technology can help to reduce time and work load of rural women that is closely inclined with the training of rural women to handle these equipment (Khan, *et al.* 2006). It's the time of modern industrialization in all fields of life.

There should be some research work for rural women's facilitation in domestic chores (Bolabola, 1988).

Training refers to the "acquisition of knowledge, skills, and competencies as a result of the teaching of vocational or practical skills and knowledge that relates to specific useful skills" (Wikipedia, 2006) and according to FAO (1993) "Training is extending and developing individual's capabilities for better performance in their work. It involves the transfer of new knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitude to develop and maintain trainees' competencies to perform specific roles at their work place". In the context of rural women's training is indeed required especially in case when any formal education is absent. Training programs regarding their practical problems can enhance their efficiency and competency. Trainings programs like tailoring, beautician, poultry farming, card making and Traditional Birth Attendant could be fruitful in income generation perspective. Income generation had been reported from tailoring only and women had earned Rs.2500 to Rs. 3000 per month (Asif, 2000). Universal female education combined with training programmes in activities like sewing, embroidery, knitting, carpet-making and other vocational skills are strongly recommended. Increased female education should be considered a social asset, as they play an important role in developing character. Moreover, their training and education will help to make them aware of the current and future problems of the country (Ghayur, 2003). There are certain constraints lies in rural women's training, firstly they should have a considerable knowledge in training areas but there is a great need to redesigning training and extension interventions to suit the women's requirements. It means they should be practical, short-term, use audio-visual material and be located at the right time of the day (afternoon) and close to the women's homes. Employment of women training and extension officers would increase the efficiency of the work. A pre-requisite of a training is that which have the quality of capacity building to the women in order to create more jobs and maintain food security (Rangnekar, 2003).

The objectives of the study were:

- To find out the socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the respondents.
- To identify sources of information about agriculture of rural women.
- To identify the training needs of rural women in agriculture and home management.
- To find out the hindrances faced by rural women in agriculture sector.
- To suggest the recommendations.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in district Bahawalpur. The study area was selected using simple random technique. It comprises five tehsils namely Hasilpur, Bahawalpur city, Bahawalpur Saddar, Khairpur Tamewali, Ahmadpur East and Yazman. Out of which two tehsils i.e. Yazman and Bahawalpur Saddar had been randomly selected. Five rural UCs were randomly selected and to approach grass root level with maximum chances of participation of respondent's two villages were randomly selected from each union council.

For the sampling of present study, a complete list of rural women of both Tehsil viz. Yazman and Bahawalpur was collected from the office of union council. The selection of rural women was purely on random basis. Twenty rural women from each village were selected as the study sample making a total of four hundred rural women.

A well-designed and comprehensive interview schedule were prepared in the light of research objectives. The collected information were analyze with descriptive and inferential statistics.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals that 48.2% of the respondents were in the age group of 30-44 years, followed by 31.5% and 20.3% of them who belonged to age group of 45-59 years and 15-29 years, respectively. The mean age of the respondents was 38.53 years with 10.24 years standard deviation. The above research findings are partially in line with those of Chaudhry (2004) who found in her case study in district Jhung under the title of "the investigation into attitude of rural women towards exchange marriages" that 44.2% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 26-35 years, while 44.8 and 16.0% of the respondents were of the age of the 36 years and above.

Results of Table 1 reveal that majority (56.5%) of the respondents were illiterate, followed by 17.5 and 12.8% of the respondents who were primary and matriculated, respectively. While 6.5 and 6.3% were intermediate and middle, respectively. On the other hand only 0.5% of the respondents were graduated clearly depicting the low level of education of the study area. This situation is quite worth taking with immediate consideration by our government. Illiteracy leads to ignorance and ignorance leads to poverty which ultimately eats every thing. The results of the study necessitate to design plans for the enhancement of literacy in the area. The findings of Rasheed (2004) who found in her M.Sc thesis under the title of "Women

participation in decision making process regarding agricultural business and family matters in tehsil Gojra" which partially coincide with the findings under discussion about education level that 66.7% of the respondents were illiterate, whereas 20.0% were primary and 10.0% were matriculate.

**Table 1. Socio-economic and demographics characteristics of the respondents**

Age	No.	%
15-29	82	20.3
30-44	193	48.2
45-59	125	31.5
Total	400	100.0
Educational level	No.	%
Illiterate	226	56.5
Primary	70	17.5
Middle	25	6.3
Matriculation (up to 10th grade)	51	12.8
Intermediate (up to 12th grade)	26	6.5
Graduation (up to 14th grade)	2	0.5
Total	400	100.0
Marital status	No.	%
Unmarried	70	17.5
Married	307	76.7
Widow	13	3.3
Divorced	10	2.5
Total	400	100.0
Family system	No.	%
Nuclear	182	45.5
Joint	218	54.5
Total	400	100
Occupation of family head	No.	%
Farming	202	51.4
Service	5	1.3
Labourer	192	48.0
Business	1	0.3
Total	400	100
Social Status	No.	%
Teacher	23	6.3
Labourer	302	75.5
House wife	73	18.3
Total	400	100

Table 1 also shows that 76.7% of the respondents were married, while 17.5% were unmarried followed by 5.8% were widowed and divorced. Almost similar results were reported by Anwar (2003) reported that majority (88.18%) of her study respondents was married, 7.27% were widow and 2.72% were single. Table 1 more indicates that 54.5% of the respondents had joint family system while 28.3% of them were living in nuclear type of family. Here nuclear family means that a family which consists of parents and their children and has a separate identity. Whereas, joint family means that a family which consists of blood

relation surrounded by a number of married persons and their children. The findings of present study negate the results of Safdar (2004) who found that majority 65.0% of the respondents had nuclear family type, while 35.0% of them were living in joint family system. It is depicted from Table 1 that 51.4% of the respondents had farming as their family head's occupation. Whereas, 48.0% of the respondents were labourer. On the other hand 1.6% of the respondents had service and business as their family head's occupation. The above results coincide with those of Kokab (2001) who found that 25.8% of the respondents' family heads' occupation was agriculture, whereas 18.5 and 17.9% had labour and business as their family heads' occupation. Only 9.3% of the respondents had Govt. jobs as their family heads' occupation.

Data from Table 1 further indicate that majority (75.5%) of the respondents were labourer, 18.3% house wives and 6.3% were teachers. The results of the present study is in lined with those of Khan (2005) who reported that an overwhelming majority (94.3%) of the respondents were ordinary farmers while remaining about 5% of the respondents were members of union council, farmer and labour councilor and Nazim and Niab Nazim.

**Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to their annual income**

Annual income	No.	%
Below 50,000	203	50.8
50,000-100,000	161	40.3
More than 100,000	36	9.0
Total	400	100.0

The data in Table 2 show that 50.8% of the respondents had income below 50,000 rupees and 40.3% were fell in the category of 50,000-100,000 rupees. On the other hand only 9.0% of the respondents had annual income more than 100,000 rupees. It is clear from the above data that the study population is below poverty line. This is due to low education rate and less livelihood strategies emphasize to generate more income sources at their door step with minimum cost in order to uplift their standard of living.

The data presented in Table 3 show distribution of the respondents according to their labour work and training needs that 310 (0.51, 0.53) women do the labour work among them 300 (0.77, 0.41) spend their income on household. Only 57 (0.09, 0.29) women had control over their income.

Whereas, below average 37 (0.12, 0.32) women had labour opportunities. On the other hand a higher proportion of 186 (0.45, 0.49) women had a positive response towards lower income jobs for them. But now a days people have awareness about education as in the present study 357 (0.89, 0.31) women had positively responded for equal education for both gender as a consequence 396 (0.82, 0.59) women had opinion about getting the training and 273 (0.88, 0.31) preferred 10:00 to 12:00 am as most suitable time profile for training 347 (0.87, 0.29) of them have chosen daily training format. Due to social constraints only 75 (0.12, 0.33) women were permitted to go to other village to get training for handicrafts and 192 (0.53, 0.49) were permitted to get training from male veterinary doctor. In the same context Khushak and Hisbani (2004) stated that in rural areas, 87% of females are illiterate. They suggested that the earning level of women can increase by giving them training in the field of vocational training, handicraft, poultry farming, sericulture, beekeeping and other post production techniques. It is duty of government and private association to motivate and influence rural women ensure admission and increase their literacy level. On the other side Zafar *et al.* (2004) viewed that women's participation in livestock care and management. No doubt livestock raising is a source of supplementing family income and improving nutritional level of family. They suggested to arrange special training programmes for rural females with the help of these trained women, the standard of livestock production.

Table 4 depicts the training needs in crop production that harvesting and post harvesting technique and marketing has mean value 1.85 and 1.80 SD 1.89 and 1.95 with 1st and 2nd order in crop production. On the other hand seed beds preparation and planting method with mean value 0.02 and 0.03 SD 0.14 and 0.30 with 6th and 7th rank order. The above data clearly show that women need training in later stages of crop production rather than the early stages which is vice versa for farmers. In the same aspect Mashkoor (1995) concluded that in crop production activities the domain of different operations divided into men and women. For female, seed preparation (93.5%), taking off fodder (50.0%), drying (51.5%), preparing storage (73.0%) and storing food for home (66.2%) were the activities. Whereas, for male, collecting farm yard manure applying on farm (88.9%), weeding (47.8%), harvesting (53.9%), binding (wheat) (67.1%), husking maize (55.4%), threshing (50.1%), on-farm transport (80.7%), off-farm transport (90.4%) and storing fodder (76.1%) were operations.

**Table 3. Distribution of the respondents according to their labour work and training needs**

Labour work and training needs	No.	Mean	S.D.
Do you do labour work	310	0.51	0.53
Do you spend major part of your income on household	300	0.77	0.41
Do you get right amount of money of your work	90	0.21	0.40
Do you spend your income on your self	92	0.17	0.37
Do your family members like working of the women	68	0.14	0.35
Do you have control of your household income	57	0.09	0.29
Do you have labour opportunities	37	0.12	0.32
Do you satisfied with the distance of work place	48	0.11	0.31
Do you satisfied with working hours	45	0.14	0.34
Do women movement a problem	56	0.46	0.49
Are there lower income jobs for women	186	0.45	0.49
Do you promoted through training	180	0.77	0.41
Are there women training opportunities available	91	0.22	0.49
Do you need training for gaining expertise in your work	323	0.92	0.40
Do men and women should get equal education	357	0.89	0.31
Do educated women can run the house in a better way	356	0.88	0.31
Should women get professional education	247	0.61	0.48
Do educated women can increase the household income	251	0.61	0.48
Do the educated women Create less conflicts	390	0.02	0.15
Do you think you should get any training	396	0.82	0.59
1) 10.:0-12:00 am	273	0.88	0.31
2) 01:00-03:00 pm	122	0.59	0.38
3) 04:00-06:00 pm	5	0.12	0.02
If a training would be organized in any other house of the village, will you come	214	0.53	0.49
1) Daily	347	0.87	0.29
2) Weekly	49	0.12	0.30
3) Monthly	4	0.01	0.03
If you have to go to other village for handicrafts training?	75	0.12	0.33
If male vet. doctor organize a training, your family head will permit you to attend?	192	0.53	0.49
Do you think women training can be a hurdle in their household chores?	294	0.53	0.50

**Table 4. Distribution of the respondents according to their training needs in crop production**

Activity	No.	Mean	S.D.
Harvesting and post harvesting techniques	228	1.85	1.89
Marketing	214	1.80	1.95
Pest management	37	0.94	0.29
Seed selection	12	0.35	0.17
Crop management	12	0.35	0.17
Seed treatment	10	0.06	0.44
Seed bed preparation	9	0.02	0.14
Planting method	7	0.03	0.30

**Table 5. Distribution of the respondents according to their training needs in livestock management**

Activity	No.	Mean	S.D.
Chicken meat production	327	0.83	0.38
Egg production	320	0.82	0.39
Poultry feed	306	0.80	0.40
Poultry diseases	291	0.76	0.43

Table 5 show training needs in livestock management that safeguard management to care animals from diseases and precautionary measures of diseases stood 1st with 0.74 mean value and 0.44 SD. Whereas, fodder production and milk production has mean value 0.69 and SD 0.46 and 0.47 with 4th and 5th rank order.

In the same context Mashkoo (1995) found that in livestock management female dominated operations were cleaning sheds (90.7%), cleaning animals (50.0%), bringing fodder (52.5%), milking (67.4%), egg collection (87.0%), manure collection (92.9%) and selling products to villagers (94.1%).

**Table 6. Distribution of the respondents according to their training needs in poultry production**

Activity	No.	Mean	S.D.
Save guard management to care animals from diseases	295	0.74	0.44
Precautionary measures of diseases	295	0.74	0.44
Information about animal diseases	284	0.73	0.45
Taking care of diseased animals	277	0.73	0.69
Artificial insemination	277	0.69	0.46
Fodder production	265	0.69	0.46
Milk production	217	0.66	0.47

Table 6 show training need in poultry production that chicken meat production has mean value 0.83 SD 0.38 with 1st rank order. On the other hand poultry diseases has mean value 0.76 SD 0.43 with last i.e. 4th rank. Rural women has a significant role in backyard poultry production from the years in different parts of the country. In the same perspective Jamshid (1998) found that 96%, 94.66, 85.33, 84.66, 66.84% and 36.66% of the respondents participated in livestock poultry production activities like preparing ghee, egg collection watering animals, cleaning sheds of animals, milking animals, and selling produce, respectively. In on hand they can improve their family nutritional status by incorporating proteinous diet on the other they can earn some household income through selling of eggs.

**Table 7. Distribution of the respondents according to their training needs in food storage**

Activity	No.	Mean	S.D.
Drying of fruits and vegetables	382	0.99	0.54
Rodentification of grains	381	0.98	0.54
Selection and grading of fruits and vegetables	388	0.97	0.18
Pickles and jam making	382	0.96	0.19
Food storage	385	0.96	0.19
Seed storage	277	0.96	0.19
Bin storage of agri. Produce	375	0.95	0.22
Fruit and vegetable storage	385	0.95	0.22
Preparation of Earthen store room	376	0.95	0.22
Wheat cleaning	332	0.94	0.24

Table 7 show that drying of fruits and vegetables and Rodentification of grains has mean value 0.99 and 0.98 SD 0.54 with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> rank order. Whereas, bin storage of agri. Produce, fruits and vegetable storage, preparation of earthen store room and wheat cleaning has mean value 0.95 and 0.94 SD 0.22 and 0.24 with 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> rank order. As it is cleared from the study of AWDF (2003) that women contribute to food storage not only through processing and preparation of food but also indigenously practice of storing and godowning the food.

**Table 8. Distribution of the respondents according to their training needs in health and sanitation**

Activity	No.	Mean	S.D.
General health care measures	398	0.99	0.54
Child care	398	0.99	0.54
Drainage	398	0.99	0.54
Information about contagious diseases	395	0.97	0.18
Precautionary measures of contagious diseases	396	0.98	0.49
First aid	386	0.95	0.22

Table 8 show training needs in health and sanitation that general health care measures child care and drainage has mean value 0.99 SD 0.54 with 1<sup>st</sup> rank order. On the other hand first aid has mean value 0.95 SD 0.22 got last order i.e. 4<sup>th</sup>. Rural women should have a general awareness about health and nutrition to maintain the health status of their family and to control emergencies. Government should plan special training courses for rural women with collaboration of health department to combat various unhappy situations.

The data presented in Table 9 depict the hindrances faced by rural women in performance of their role in various activities of agriculture and other income generation activities like less health facilities as responded by 380 (0.98, 0.49) respondents in the answer of "Do you think if more health facilities are provided they can work more?". On the other hand 392 women reported that their sources of income are less in the answer of question "Do you have less sources of income?". Whereas, 379 (0.94, 0.22) have faced deficiency of information. When the rural women were asked about their access to various sources like VCR, tape recorder, internet, plots of Deptt. Of Agriculture, journals or magazine and Agricultural Extension agent they were replied with nil answer. However, 172 and 160 respondents have an access to TV and radio. It reflects that rural women have not an access to various resources as compared to male members of the community.

**Table 9. Distribution of the respondents according to hindrances faced by them**

Hindrances	No.	Mean	S.D.
Do you think if more health facilities are being provided you can work more?	380	0.98	0.49
Do you have less sources of income?	392	0.97	0.14
Do you think if you were more educated you can earn more	389	0.97	0.16
Do you have faced deficiency of technical competencies	378	0.94	0.22
Do you face deficiency of information	379	0.94	0.22
Do you think male persons don't permit of women training	373	0.93	0.25
Do you think if women have the decision power she would attend training or not	369	0.92	0.26
Do you have TV in your home	172	0.43	0.51
Do women used to watch TV	160	0.40	0.52
Do you have radio in your home	118	0.30	0.48
Do women used to listen radio?	104	0.26	0.45
You consult the posters and pamphlets distributed by Deptt. of Agriculture	3	0.07	0.08
Do you have facility of daily news paper	20	0.05	0.21
Do women used to read news paper	7	0.01	0.13
Do any social welfare organization work in your village	4	0.01	0.09
Do you have ever listened an agricultural cassette on it	1	0.01	0.03

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Women agricultural agent should be appointed to address rural women and to bridge the information gap between rural women and research.
2. The role of rural women should be promoted through media.
3. Skill development training programs should be arranged for women regarding handicrafts making and anterior decoration articles, in order to enhance their monthly income
4. Although Bahawalpur embroidery is well known throughout the country but it need a lot of promotion for being a progressive industry of the area.
5. Artisans engraved worker and hand made local shoe maker should be encouraged through exhibition and loak mela.
6. Most of the women wanted to develop animal farms, for milk and ghee sale for increasing their monthly income. So SMEs should reach at their doorstep.
7. A holistic approach of training program would meet the need of the desert women.
8. Short training programs over crop production, livestock care and management, human health and sanitation and handicrafts making for capacity building and skill development of the desert women.
9. Training program may be from three days to one month or so depending on the objectives of the training.
10. Women trainer should be appointed for the training of rural women.
11. Solely these training programs would not sufficient but professional institutes and industries should also develop in order to make these training program effective and practical.
12. A sound infrastructure development like clean drinking water, sanitation, electrification, schools and hospitals would change the fate of desert women.
13. A small unit of industrial home should be made at union council level. In which a handicrafts expert should be appointed and through the plate farm of this industrial home handicrafts should be introduced throughout the country. It can serve as a small business industry unit for the local women, who take training from this institute and then start their own business at home.
14. The communities where male female sit together and discuss their problem are more prospering than other who don't gathered for solution of social problems
15. Women should be trained in areas like home management, budget making, childcare and education and saving strategies.

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