

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Agriculture, which is the backbone of Indian economy, has always been a way of life rather than a commercial avocation. Both men and women of all the ages take part in many activities related to food production, processing and storage. Tribal women play significant roles in farm and home management. Tribal women will continue to play key role in the conservation of basic life support systems such as land, water, flora and fauna.

Also, tribal women play vital roles in the socio-economic development of our country and their contribution to agricultural development is quite significant though they work under severe limitations. Due to handicaps like lack of education, skill, health and nutrition, most of the tribal women are engaged in low paid jobs. As such, there is an urgent need to improve their conditions of living. No doubt, tribal women can play a more positive and active role if they are imparted education, training and skills. They should be enabled to make use of improved and new technologies.

Keeping these concepts in view, an exclusive study entitled, “Role Performance of Tribal Women in Farm and Home Management – An Exploratory Study” was taken with the following objectives.

8. To study the profile of tribal women from three communities
9. To measure the attitude of tribal women towards commercial horticulture
10. To measure the role performance of tribal women in farm and home management through an index.
11. To find out the association and contribution of the profile of tribal women with their role performance in farm and home management
12. To list out the problems and suggestions of tribal women for their effective role performance.
13. To propose a model for empowering tribal women for promoting effective role performance in farm and home.

5.1. Methodology

Nilgiris district of Tamil Nadu was purposively selected because it is one of the districts in Tamil Nadu in which more percentage of tribal population has been reported. Kotagiri and Udhagamandalam blocks were purposively selected because these two blocks have relatively more percentage of the selected tribal communities viz., *todas*, *irulas* and *kotas*. Of these, four revenue villages from Kotagiri block and to revenue villages from Udhagamandalam block were further selected considering the maximum number of identified tribal habitations viz., *todas*, *irulas* and *kotas*.

A sample of 60 tribal women from each tribal community was selected. Random sampling was adopted in selection of the respondents. The total sample size was 180. In addition to it, 30 tribal husbands were selected 10 from each community to study the perception on role perception of tribal women in farm and home management. Thus totally 210 respondents were considered for the study.

5.2. Salient findings

5.2.1. Profile of tribal women

- Among the total respondents, 53.33 per cent of the respondents were found in middle aged group, followed by young (42.78%) and old (3.89%) aged groups.
- Nearly half (27.78%) of the tribal women were observed to be functionally literate, followed by primary school educated (24.34%) and middle school educated (21.11%). None of the respondents had education beyond secondary school level.
- Farming and business status of occupation existed more (38.89%) among the tribal farm women, followed by the combination of farming and wage earner and farming, business and service categories.
- Nearly half (46.67%) of the tribal women were found to operate medium size farms followed by small size farms.
- Majority (56.67%) of the tribal women had five to ten years of farming experience.
- Half of the respondents (51.12%) had low levels of the livestock possessed, followed by 31.66 per cent in medium levels and one fifth (17.22) in high levels.

- Most of the tribal women were observed to earn an income range of Rs. 19,500 to Rs. 24,500.
- Medium (68.89%) level of risk orientation was observed more among the tribal women. Similar distribution was also observed among three communities.
- Half (53.33%) of the tribal women had high levels of self reliance, followed by medium levels (46.67%) of self reliance.
- Among the tribal women, nearly half of the respondents (45.00%) had high level of innovativeness.
- Majority (72.22%) of the tribal women had medium level of aspiration.
- Majority (67.22%) of the tribal women possessed moderate leadership abilities.
- Majority (45.56%) of the tribal women had moderately favourable attitude towards tribal development schemes.
- *Toda* women took self decision in the case of maintenance of cattle (68.33) and consulted with their spouse or elders in decisions related to selling eggs and poultry birds (81.67) with respect to farm management.
- *Irula* tribal farm women took self decision in the case of irrigating fields (85.00) and consulted with their spouse or elders in decision related to buying farm equipment/machinery (100.00) with respect to farm management.
- *Kota* tribal farm women took self decision in the case of using plant protection measures (80.00) and consulted with their spouse or elders in decision related to deciding about area under each crop (60.00) with respect to farm management.
- Self decisions were made by the *toda* farm women in case of selection and preparation of food (100.00), husband dominated in saving (85.00), consulted all the family members only in the case of attending religious ceremonies/functions (83.33) and helped others in taking decision such as borrowing and giving loans (41.67) with respect to home management.
- *Irula* farm women took self decisions in case of selection and preparation of food (100.00), husband dominated decisions were found in cases like household repairs

(71.67) and consulted all the family members only in the case of attending religious ceremonies/functions (78.33) with respect to home management.

- Self decisions were made by the *kota* farm women in case of selection and preparation of food (100.00), The husband dominated decisions were found in cases like construction of new house (75.00) and consulted all the family members only in the case of attending social gatherings in the village (71.67) with respect to home management.
- Nearly half of the tribal women (40.00%) were found to be neither conservative nor liberal. Nearly 34 per cent of the respondents were found to be conservative in nature.
- More than one-third (35.55%) of the tribal women had low level of socio-cultural linkage.
- Majority (48.33%) of the tribal women exhibited a low level of intra-tribal communication.

5.2.2. Attitude of tribal women towards commercial horticulture

- Majority (60.56%) of the tribal women had moderately favourable attitude towards commercial horticulture and 20.00 per cent of them had less favourable attitude towards commercial horticulture.

5.2.3. Association and contribution of profile of tribal women with their attitude towards commercial horticulture and role performance

5.2.3.1. Association and contribution of profile of respondents with attitude of tribal women towards commercial horticulture

- Farm size, farming experience, livestock possession, annual income, risk orientation, self reliance, leadership abilities among tribal women, attitude towards tribal developmental schemes, decision making behaviour and socio cultural linkage had shown positive significant association with attitude towards commercial horticulture at one per cent level of probability.

- The R^2 value was 0.70 which revealed that 70.00 per cent variation in the attitude of tribal women towards commercial horticulture was explained by seventeen independent variables selected for the study.

5.2.3.2. Association and contribution of profile of respondents with role performance of tribal women in farm management

- Farm size, farming experience, livestock possession, annual income, leadership abilities among tribal women and decision making behaviour had shown positive significant association with role performance of tribal women in farm management at one per cent level of probability.
- The R^2 value was 0.636, which revealed that 63.60 per cent variation in the role performance of tribal women in farm management was explained by seventeen independent variables selected for the study.

5.2.3.3. Association and contribution of profile of respondents with role performance of tribal women in home management

- Livestock possession, annual income, leadership abilities among tribal women had shown positive significant association with role performance of tribal women in home management at one per cent level of probability.
- The R^2 value was 0.685, which revealed that 68.50 per cent variation in the role performance of tribal women in home management was explained by eighteen independent variables selected for the study.

5.2.4. Analysis of Role Performance Index (RPI)

5.2.4.1. Indicator-wise Role Performance Index Score

1. The composite Role Performance Index worked out was 0.56.
2. Among the three tribal communities, the *irula* women had secured the highest composite RPI score (0.59) when compared to their counterparts.

5.2.4.2. Principle component analysis of indicators towards role performance

- Two factors were extracted and these factors together explained a total variance of 77.12 per cent towards role performance.

- The indicator farm forestry ranked first since it had more communality (h^2) value i.e. 0.926. It was followed by other indicators like horticulture, community management, animal husbandry, food management, money management, household management, agro biodiversity conservation and purchasing with communality values of 0.903, 0.896, 0.861, 0.826, 0.807, 0.788, 0.731 and 0.648 respectively. Child management was found to be the least contributing indicator (0.326) to the role performance of tribal women.

5.2.5. Role performance of tribal women

5.2.5.1. Role performance of tribal women in farm management

5.2.5.1.1. Role performance of tribal women in animal husbandry operations

- Roles in dairying indicated that collection of fodder for animals (4.48) and milking (4.48) got equal mean scores followed by compost making (4.17) and feeding the animals (4.14).
- Tribal women had performed well in roles like feeding (2.05), collection of eggs (2.04), preparation of feed (2.00) and cleaning the cages (1.91).

5.2.5.1.2. Role performance of tribal women in farm forestry

- Tribal women had performed well in roles like collection of seedlings (2.16), planting (2.16), fuel wood collection (2.15) and making of non-timber forest products (2.15).

5.2.5.1.3. Role performance of tribal women in horticulture

- Tribal women performed most of the roles like transport of seed loan on head to field (4.48), transplanting (4.47) and selection of seed (3.83) with respect to pre-sowing and sowing operations.
- Tribal women performed majority of the roles like top dressing of fertilizers (4.49), thinning and gap filling (4.47), weeding of crops (4.46) and dis-budding (3.86) with respect to intercultural operations.
- The overall picture indicated that majority of the tribal women performed roles like drying (3.13) and storage (2.17) with respect to harvesting.

5.2.5.1.4. Role performance of tribal women in agro bio-diversity conservation

- Majority of the respondents performed roles like livestock maintenance (3.98), exotic breeds husbandry (3.91), cultivating traditional crop varieties (3.91), cultivating domesticated crop varieties (3.87) and cultivating location-specific crops like minor millets (3.57) with respect to genetic resources.
- Tribal women performed roles like nutrient management for the crops (3.90), utilization of locally available resources (3.68), using farm yard manure (3.66) and adopting natural management practices (3.47) with regard to agro biodiversity systems.
- Majority of the respondents performed well in roles like kitchen gardening (3.26), seed banks of traditional crops (3.24), preservation of extinct varieties (3.19) and storage of seeds with advanced systems (3.15) with respect to biotic factors.
- Majority of the tribal women performed roles like human participation (4.04), indigenous post harvest methodologies (3.77), change in food habit (3.70), indigenous storage practices (3.59) and indigenous value addition of the produces (3.59) with regard to social values.

5.2.5.2. Role performance of tribal women in home management

5.2.5.2.1. Role performance of tribal women in purchasing and money management related tasks

- Majority of the tribal women performed well in roles like purchasing of utensils (3.86) and repayment of loans (2.52) with respect to purchasing and money management related tasks respectively. It was followed by selling and purchasing of ornaments (3.23) and keeping records (2.16) with respect to purchasing and money management related tasks respectively.

5.2.5.2.2. Role performance of tribal women in food related tasks

- Majority of the tribal women performed well in roles like daily cooking (4.53), carrying meal to the field (4.53), selection of food (4.51) and serving food (4.51) with respect to food related tasks.

5.2.5.2.2. Role performance of tribal women in household tasks and child related tasks

- The overall analysis indicated that cleaning of utensils (4.56) and teaching children good habits (4.50) with respect to household tasks and child related tasks respectively. It was followed by cleaning and mopping the floor (4.52) and bathing children (4.49) respect to household tasks and child related tasks respectively.

5.2.5.3. Role performance of tribal women in community management

5.2.5.3.1. Role in the SHG activities

- Majority of the respondents had more role performance in exposure visits, giving technical advice to other members, attending group meetings and imparting skills to other members. For the remaining SHG activities, animators and representatives played major roles and occasional to no participation was found with other SHG tribal women members. This might be the reason for such outcomes.

5.2.5.3.2. Role in economic developmental activities

- The overall analysis indicated that all the respondents were found to have performed roles by actively engaging themselves in income generating activities, running the commercial venture, marketing their produce and helping to get resources from supporting institutions.

5.2.5.3.2. Role in social developmental activities

- The overall analysis indicated that, majority of the tribal women participated in resolving social problems in the village, active involvement in addressing social issues and problems and participating in social action programmes.

5.2.6. Role expectations on tribal women by their husbands in farm and home management.

- The tribal husbands had their expectations in areas like horticulture (12.24), animal husbandry operations (6.69) and agro bio-diversity conservation (3.86) with respect to farm management.

- The tribal husbands had expectations on their wives to perform in areas like money management related tasks (4.52), child related tasks (4.51), food related tasks (4.38) and household tasks (4.38) with respect to home management.
- The tribal husbands expected their wives to perform well in areas like SHG activities (4.19), economic developmental activities (3.46) and social developmental activities (2.22) with respect to community management.

5.2.7. Constraints of tribal women in farm and home management

- Among the problems faced, weak extension service in remote places was the primary constraint felt by majority (97.78%) of the tribal women. The next important problem expressed by the tribal women was the inaccessibility of officials in time. Upon observation, it could be seen that the respondents were highly dissatisfied about the inadequate technical support received from extension officials.

5.2.8. Suggestions of tribal women

- The overall analysis indicated that cent per cent of the respondents suggested that supply of adequate inputs in remote places and the infrastructure facilities like storage godowns to be provided for the harvested products so as to prevent loss.

5.3. Implications of the study

- The findings on the profile of tribal women indicated differential patterns in respect of their demographic characteristics. Thus, while planning the developmental interventions, the variations to be taken into account to design appropriate strategies.
- Among the three tribal communities, the *toda* women had moderately favourable attitude which was considerably lesser when compared to their counterparts. It implies that the district authorities especially Mahalir Thittam officials and ground level NGOs have to consider the slow transition among the *toda* women and suitable activities may be initiated to further mainstream the *toda* women with their counterparts with respect to their attitude towards commercial horticulture.
- The correlation and regression analysis revealed that there are several factors influencing the role performance of tribal women in farm and home as well as their attitude towards commercial horticulture. The knowledge of the related and

contributed factors towards the dependent variables would be helpful for planners and administrators to develop a better strategy so as to enhance the role performance of tribal women in farm and home.

- It is evident that the *kota* women are lacking with respect to animal husbandry operations. Thus, the field officials may take necessary measures to strengthen the awareness among the tribal women on the facilities and opportunities and the institutional finance facilities available in their locality related to animal husbandry operations.
- Among the three tribal communities, the *toda* and *kota* women showed least performance in farm forestry. Hence, suitable campaign on awareness about the increasing recognition that farm forestry can meet important community needs for improved tribal livelihood, contribute to household food security and nutrition, help to generate additional employment and income and offer opportunities for processing enterprises etc.
- With respect to horticulture, all the three tribal communities performed better in almost all the roles. Since, most of the tribal women depend on horticultural crops, it is suggested to the administrators that future programmes should be integrated with horticultural crops.
- Agro-biodiversity contributed towards the livelihood sustainability of the respondents. Hence the policy makers may take the stock of livelihood sustainability index on yearly basis and develop appropriate framework for the community.
- The role performance of tribal women in purchasing, financial management related tasks were moderate. This had implications for agricultural universities, home science colleges and other educational institutions in training women about credit facilities to open accounts, invest money and take loans.
- More training programmes, exposure visits and Farmers Field Schools can be organized for capacity building of the tribal women on the various income generation enterprises to strengthen their livelihoods.

- As already they have initiated saving habits among the SHG tribal women, continuous and sustained efforts would pay much dividend in ensuring the economic security and independence of tribal women.
- The tribal women exhibited concrete awareness on various developmental programmes. This could be attributed due to the participation in SHGs. This successful outcome may be popularised among the other tribal communities to enhance the awareness and participation.
- Varied levels of participation have been observed in SHG, economic and social developmental activities. Important activity like maintenance of accounts is not known to significant section of the tribal women. Thus, adequate training and exposure programmes can be organised to train the tribal women in these areas.
- The comparative analysis indicated the SHG tribal women from *irula* community exhibited relatively a low level of participation. Special drives may be initiated to motivate the *irula* SHG tribal women to participate in activities of SHG.
- The tribal husbands had great expectations on their wives to perform better in almost all the roles related to farm and home management. The cultural barriers and taboos are major handicaps for the tribal women to perform better in all the roles. Thus, it is in the hands of the Government and NGOs to break away all the taboos that mainly restrict the role performance of tribal women in farm and home so as to encourage and enthuse them to excel in all the roles.
- The constraints expressed and suggestions of tribal women may have to be considered especially aspects like weak extension service in remote places, the inaccessibility of officials in time, inadequate technical support received from extension officials and distribution of tree seedlings, fertilizers and pesticides were accessed by the same client.

5.4. Suggestions for future research

- Similar studies may be conducted periodically with large sample to determine the role performance of tribal women in farm and home.

- A study combining the role performance of both male and female adult members of farm families in farm and home may be taken up to make an effective comparison of their contribution to these sectors.
- Studies on the role of trained and untrained tribal farm women in farm and home management can be taken up.