

Education and training of rural women in a selected area of Bangladesh

Mohammed Nasir Uddin
Nahid Anjuman

Abstract

The main purposes of the study were to determine the level of education and training exposure of the rural women in a specific area of Bangladesh. The study was conducted in Boyra and Bhabakhali unions under Mymensingh sader Upazila of Mymensingh district. 100 rural women were selected randomly as sample of the study from a population of 1042. Data were collected by using structured interview schedule during March 1 to April 01, 2009 through interviewing. More than half (63 per cent) of the rural women were literate which is higher than national literacy rate. On the other hand, exact half (50 per cent) of the rural women had no training exposure, while 31 per cent, 9 per cent and 10 per cent had short, medium and high training exposure respectively on different issues.

Keywords: Education, training, rural women.

Introduction

Women constitute about half of the population of the Bangladesh and most of the living in rural area. The majority of rural women, perhaps 70 percent, were in small cultivator, tenant, and landless households; many worked as laborers part time or seasonally, usually in post-harvest activities, and received payment in kind or in meager cash wages. Another 20 percent, mostly in poor landless households, depended on casual labor, gleaning, begging, and other irregular sources of income; typically, their income was essential to household survival. The remaining 10 percent of women were in households mainly in the professional, trading, or large-scale landowning categories, and they usually did not work outside the home (BBS, 2007).

The issue of women education is to be responded to with importance. The international declarations and the education strategies usually seek to include women's issue. The declarations made clear why women education is so important and further showed some guidelines as to make the programmes on women education successful within a stipulated time-frame. Bangladesh is also not exception for the same issue.

Human resource development largely depends on empowerment of women. On the other hand, education is a necessary pre-requisite for women empowerment and human resource development. So, women education is a vital necessity for any society. Again, women cannot be empowered only by formal or informal education, their rights and privileges should be taken into account. In Bangladesh, the literacy rate of male was observed 58.9% while female literacy rate was 50.4%. Only 2.3% population have degree or above level education (BBS, 2009). Moreover, education in rural area is less poor compared to education in urban area. But, now it is improving because government has taken some initiatives with collaboration of non-government organizations as well as international organizations.

Formal education system makes them active in formal fields, guides them to different ways of life and recognizes her ability to utilize talents. Non-formal education helps women to raise her voice confidently at grass-root level. Non-formal and informal education can play an active role in identifying and thereby exploiting the hidden talents and capabilities. Through this, even a woman with little education can maintain

Education and training of rural women in a selected area of Bangladesh

Mohammed Nasir Uddin, Nahid Anjuman

her family, farm activities or business. She, even being at the marginal stage can change her economic conditions through micro-credit, co-operative system of anything of its kind. Women are participating in recent elections contesting with men in local government institutions. Although the number of such women is not very high, they can prove themselves worthy like the men if they get necessary education and opportunity to flourish talents.

Training is the process of improving skill, increasing knowledge and changing attitude of an individual for doing job properly. In Bangladesh there are so many training centers for providing training opportunity for the rural women. But, it is reality that everybody did not go to education and training institutes for their education and training. Considering the above situation, researcher has taken a piece of research entitled "Education and Training of Rural Women in a Selected Area of Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the study stated below:

- i. to determine the level of education of the rural women
- ii. to measure training exposure of the rural women.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Boyra and Bhabakhali unions under Mymensingh sader Upazila of Mymensingh district. According to the information of the Sub-Assistant Agricultural Officers who are working at study area, housewives who those are engaged with farming activities related to production of crops, livestock, fisheries, agro forestry were the population of the study. Out of these, purposively selected women, only 10% were selected as sample of the study through simple random method.

In order to collect relevant information for the study, a structured interview schedule was prepared carefully keeping the objectives of the study in mind. Level of education of a respondent was measured in terms of classes passed by him from formal institutions (i.e. school, college etc.). A score of one (1) was assigned for each years of schooling in a formal education system. For example if a respondent passed the final examination of class VIII in the school, his educational score was given as 8. On the other hand, a score of 0.5 and zero (0) was given to the respondent who could sign only and could not read and write respectively. On the other hand, training exposure was measured by the total number of day(s) that a respondent participated in agricultural training courses in her farming career from different organizations. A score of one (1) was assigned for each days of training received.

Data were collected by using structured interview schedule during March 1 to April 01, 2009 through interviewing. Descriptive statistics was used to interpret the collected data properly.

Result and Discussion

Level of education and training exposure of the rural women are described in this section and presented in the table 1 and 2.

Level of education

The level of education scores of the rural women ranged from zero (0) to 14 with an average of 4.52 and standard deviation 4.02 (Table 1). Based on their educational qualification scores, the women were classified into five categories as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the women according to their level of education

Categories (years of schooling)	Number of women	Percentage of women	Mean	Standard deviation
Illiterate	14	14	4.52	4.02
Can sign only (0.5)	23	23		
Up to Primary (1-5)	28	28		
Up to secondary (6-10)	30	30		
Above secondary(>10)	5	5		
Total	100	100		

Data presented in Table 1 indicate that more than half (63 percent) of the rural women were literate which is higher than national literacy rate of 54.8 (BBS, 2009). Data also revealed that 28 percent of the rural women had primary level of education, 30 percent had secondary level of education 5 percent had above secondary level of education while 14 percent women were illiterate and 23 could sign only.

Rural women basically involved in farming system which is a complex process requiring sound knowledge and intellectuality for its implementation. Education is an important factor for acquiring knowledge by an individual on different aspects of his/her life. Educated person can take risk to a greater extent and has more mental and psychological ability, understanding and making decision of adopting or rejecting new ideas and practices. Hence, it is expected that education is one of the important factors in determining women involvement in farming system. Thus, different level of involvement of the rural women regarding farming system can be explained in terms of their different level of education. Parveen (1993), Khan (2007) and Chowdhury (2003) observed a similar type of difference in literacy rate in their respective studies.

Training exposure

Training exposure scores of the rural women ranged from 0 to 180 days. The mean and standard deviation were 13.23 and 33.23 respectively. Rural women on the basis of their training exposure scores were classified into four categories as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of the women according to their training exposure

Categories(in days)	Number of women	Percentage of women	Mean	Standard deviation
No exposure (0)	50	50	13.23	33.23
Short exposure (1- 15)	31	31		
Medium exposure (16 -30)	9	9		
High exposure (above 30)	10	10		
Total	100	100		

Education and training of rural women in a selected area of Bangladesh

Mohammed Nasir Uddin, Nahid Anjuman

Data presented in Table 2 reveals that half of the rural women had no training exposure where 31 percent, 9 percent, 10 percent of the respondents had short, medium and long training exposure respectively.

Training enables women to come in contact with high level of specialist having diversified experience, and problem solving capabilities. This opportunity enables one to improve skill and increase knowledge resulting better management. Thus, training exposure can be considered as one of the prime factors for the involvement of rural women in activities especially activities related to farming system. There was less facility to receive training on agriculture or non-agricultural subject matter for the rural women. One of the important reasons was that, there are few of organizations are working in the study areas and their activities are mostly restricted to micro credit distribution. After fulfilling their micro credit obligation they go for training in sort term basis on health and agriculture. However, the organization imparted training to the rural women those are involved in NGOs but which is insufficient in comparison to the whole population. Das (2007) found that majority of the respondents had no training experience in their study. Amin (2007) found that majority of the respondents had short training experience.

Conclusion and recommendation

The findings indicated that education and training exposure of the rural women had been found at moderate level. Rural women become aware by increasing knowledge and developing skill through education and training when come in contact with different communication agents. Regular training and non-formal education programmes should be arranged on different aspects for the rural women locally by the different government and non-government organizations. So that they will get opportunity to develop themselves. On the other hand, proper monitoring and evaluation of programmes taken by government and non-government should be strengthened.

References

- Amin, M.D. 2007. Participation in Diversified Income Sources by World Vision, Bangladesh. M.S.(Ag. Ext. Ed.) Thesis. Dept. of Agricultural Extension Education. Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, Bangladesh.
- BBS. 2009. Welfare Monitoring Survey, March,2009. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka.
- BBS. 2007. Statistical Year book of Bangladesh. Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. Statistics Division, Ministry of Planning, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, Dhaka.
- Chowdhury, A.H. 2003. Farmers Attitude Towards Crop Diversification. M.S.(Ag.Ext.Ed.) Thesis, Department of Agricultural Extension Education,, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh.
- Das, T. 2007. Farmers' Perception of the Effect of Shrimp Culture on Their Livelihood. M.S. (Ag. Ext. Ed.) Thesis. Dept. of Agricultural Extension Education. Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh, Bangladesh.
- Khan, M.M.A. 2007. Farmers Awareness on Adverse Effects of Rice Monoculture. M.S. (Ag.Ext.Ed.) Thesis, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh.
- Parveen, S. 1993. Attitude of the Rural Women towards Homestead Agricultural Production. M.Sc.(Ag.Ext.Ed.) Thesis, Department of Agricultural Extension Education, Bangladesh Agricultural University, Mymensingh