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Factors Affecting Adoption of Home Science Practices Disseminated Through Rural Awareness Work Experience (RAWE)

Sandeep Kaur[1], Sukhdeep Kaur Mann[2]* and Manjot Kaur[3]

[1]M.Sc. Student, [2]Assistant Professor, [3]Scientist, Department of Extension Education and Communication Management, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana-141027, Punjab
*Corresponding author email id: mannsukh@pau.edu

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ABSTRACT

The study was aimed to assess the adoption status of home practices and to identify the various factors affecting adoption and non-adoption of practices disseminated through rural awareness work experience programme. The study was conducted in four villages of Ludhiana district of Punjab state, where RAWE programme was conducted during the year 2013-14 to 2016-17. A total of 120 respondents constituted the sample of the study. Data were collected through a well- structured and pre tested interview schedule. Highest adoption status was achieved by the practices under 'Food and Nutrition' followed by practices under 'Human Development' discipline. Various factors affecting adoption of different practices as reported by the respondents were personal interest, saves resources and provides satisfaction. Major factors affecting non-adoption of practices were lack of interest, lack of resources, non-availability of raw material and inadequate skill retention. Majority of the respondents suggested that practices imparted under RAWE programme should be cost effective, for better adoption. Respondents also suggested that to increase adoption rate of home science practices, duration of RAWE should be increased, so that respondents can get sufficient time to learn new practices.

INTRODUCTION

Home Science is a dynamic field of education being both; an applied science and a practice. The science is concerned with enhancing the knowledge about the individual, family and society, their interaction with the environment, and determining the requirements for their overall well-being. The practice of home science uses the knowledge and skills gained to maintain a healthy relationship of individual with his family and society. A landmark in the history of home science was its inclusion in State Agricultural Universities from 1961, with the objective to cater to the need of rural women to contribute to family, economy and improve their quality of life. Women, in rural areas suffer from many disadvantages, and are subjected to a great deal of hardship and drudgery. The jobs done by them are often physically arduous, time consuming and repetitive, resulting in fatigue and drudgery. Therefore, women need appropriate technologies not only to reduce their drudgery in households and other activities but also to improve sanitation, health, environmental conditions, nutritional level and overall well - being and empowerment of women (Patil, 2016).

Since, its inception the teaching programmes in Home Science has been strengthened from time to time. The specific goal of education imparted through the discipline of home science is to develop human resources in rural area with special focus on development of women. In home science researches have been conducted with special focus on recognizing changing needs of the rural women and their families and to provide appropriate solutions to meet their needs. Through these researches different home science technologies have been developed by the scientists across the country (Mann et al., 2018). Home science technologies are those technologies that assist home makers in performing their jobs in an efficient and effective manner. Home science technologies are viewed

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as a complex blend of scientific information, materials, technical methods and process for improving skill and task performance (Verma and Kaushik, 2006).

Development of new technology is not generally a major problem, but dissemination by competent persons and acceptance of these technologies by intended beneficiaries pose problems. Technology transfer is a very complex process. When the technology is disseminated among the members of the social system, the individual is exposed to the innovation's existence and gains some understanding of how and why it works. This is nothing but seeking information about the technology, and this in turn, influences the acceptable behavior of the diffused technologies. But we must say development of home science technologies has not reached to the farm women in the desired manner. This might me due to the factors that these practices /technologies have not been communicated to the rural women properly (Gupta, 2012). It is the responsibility of home science colleges to disseminate these technologies to farm women. Rural Awareness Work Experience (RAWE) was introduced in to the curriculum of B.Sc. Home Science (Hons.) by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) New Delhi, in the year 2002. Through this programme Home Science graduates helps rural women to acquire knowledge about home science technologies and to formulate positive attitude towards adoption of these practices. The purpose of this study was to determine the factors affecting adoption and non- adoption of practices/activities imparted under different disciplines of Home Science during RAWE.

METHODOLOGY

The population of the study consisted of rural women who had attended the RAWE programme organised by college of Home Science, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, Punjab, during the year 2013-14 to 2016-17. The study was conducted in four villages i.e. *Rauwal, Sidhwan Kalan, Talwandi Khurd* and *Sarabha* located in Ludhiana district. A sample of 120 rural women i.e. 30 women from each village was selected for the purpose of the study. Data were solicited by personal interview method. The data on factors affecting adoption and non-adoption of home science activities/practices were obtained under two major categories i.e. socio-economic and technical factors. All the possible factors responsible for adoption and non- adoption of home science practices were enlisted. The responses were recorded on three point continuum scale viz. fully agree, partially agree and disagree by assigning score of 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Further the mean weighted scores were calculated and factors were ranked accordingly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 reveals showed that the highest adoption status was achieved by the practices under 'Food and Nutrition' with mean score of 1.64 followed by the practices under 'Human Development' with mean score of 1.5. Further, the lowest mean score of 'Apparel and Textile Science' (0.63) and 'Family Resource Management' (0.81) indicated the low adoption status of these practices. However, within the practices highest mean score was found in 'care during pregnancy' (2.56), followed by 'fruit and vegetables preservation' (1.64) and 'energy saving techniques' (1.77). It can be concluded that adoption of home science practices under food and nutrition (fruits and vegetable preservation) shows high adoption because respondents reported that it helps to make good use of seasonal fruits and vegetables and they could prepare nutritious and healthy products at household level at low cost. On the other hand practice like care during pregnancy was also adopted at high level because respondents felt that it leads to healthy life.

Table 1. Adoption status of Home Science practices/activities imparted under RAWE programme

Practices	Mean
Apparel and Textile Science	0.63
Value addition to garments	0.63
Care and storage practices of clothing	1.45
Stain removal	0.14
Preparation of cleaning agents	0.32
Family Resource Management	0.81
Energy saving techniques	1.77
Art and Craft making	0.76
Drudgery reduction	0.52
Consumer education	0.22
Food and Nutrition	1.64
Fruits and Vegetable preservation	2.45
Value added products from cereals, pulses and vegetables	2.00
Therapeutic diet plan	0.45
Cooking methods	1.66
Human Development	1.5
Care during pregnancy	2.56
Child care	1.85
Stimulating child developmental skills	1.14
Awareness/counseling	0.45

Score range (0-3)

Data incorporated in Table 2 shows the factors affecting adoption of different home science practices. The majority of respondents reported 'personal interest' as the major factor that leads to adoption of the home science practices with mean score of 2.59 and rank 1. 'Saves resources' and 'provides satisfaction' were other factors which lead to adoption of different practices/activities with mean score of 1.92 and 1.82 and secured 2nd and 3rd rank. Apart of these, 'cost effectiveness', 'easy adoption' and 'easy availability of raw material' were also the factors contributing towards adoption status with rank 4, 5 and 6 respectively. Findings of the study are in line with Khambra et al., (2011) and Chandraker et al., (2021).

The findings showed that 'lack of interest' was the major factor responsible for non adoption of different home science practices with the mean score of 2.12 and rank 1. 'Lack of resources' was another major factor affecting non- adoption with mean score of 2.01 and rank 2. These factors were also reported by Ghosh and Chand (2001). Among the other factors 'inadequate skill retention', 'availability of raw material' and 'lack of retention of knowledge' were ranked third, fourth and fifth respectively. Findings are in line with Manjarekar et al., (2015). However, least important factor that affect non adoption were 'lack of decision making skill' (rank 7) and 'lack of family support' (rank 8). Similar results were also reported by Awasthi et al., (2020) and Kobba et al., (2020).

Majority of the respondents (80%) suggested that practices imparted under RAWE programme should be cost effective, so that they can try new practices (Table 3). These findings are in conformity with the findings of Chandran and Podikunju (2021). Respondents (64.16%) also suggested that to increase adoption rate of home science practices, duration of RAWE should be increased,

Table 2. Factors affecting adoption and non adoption of practices/activities imparted under different disciplines

Disciplines → Factors ↓	Mean score					
	Apparel and textile science	Family resource management	Food and nutrition	Human development	Overall mean score	Rank
Adoption Factor						
Socio-economic factors						
Personal interest	2.72	2.81	2.52	2.32	2.59	1
Saves resources	1.99	2.32	2.16	1.22	1.92	2
Cost effective	1.32	1.98	2.53	1.07	1.72	4
Provides satisfaction	1.82	1.12	2.02	1.88	1.82	3
Technical factors						
Easy availability of raw material	1.92	1.25	1.80	1.13	1.52	6
Easy to adopt	1.42	1.28	1.64	2.12	1.61	5
Helps to learn new skills	1.86	1.58	1.08	1.02	1.37	8
No extra efforts required	1.76	1.56	1.18	1.02	1.38	7
Non adoption factors						
Socio-economic factors						
Lack of resources	2.42	1.98	1.82	1.82	2.01	2
Lack of interest	2.24	2.54	1.90	1.82	2.12	1
Lack of family support	1.32	1.52	1.08	1.31	1.30	8
Lack of decision making skill	1.10	1.68	1.39	1.34	1.37	7
Technical factors						
Non availability of raw material	2.72	1.99	1.72	1.36	1.94	3
Lack of retention of knowledge	2.34	1.72	2.24	1.12	1.85	5
Inadequate skill retention	2.12	1.78	2.32	1.33	1.88	4
Insufficient technical guidance	1.84	1.87	2.12	1.22	1.76	6

Score range 1-3

Table 3. Suggestions given by the respondents for improvement in RAWE programme

Suggestions	(f) (%)
Duration of the RAWE programme should be increased	77(64.16)
Student should adopt lesser number of families	75(62.50)
Number of practices imparted should be reduced	69(57.50)
Practices should be cost effective	96(80.00)
Students should be properly trained before programme	88(73.33)
Literature of the practices should be provided for future use	37(30.83)
Practices imparted should be based on the need of rural women	77(64.16)
Student should be trained to use local language	43(35.83)

so that respondents can get sufficient time to learn new practices. Large number of respondents also suggested that practices imparted under RAWE programme should be based on the need of the individual family. Home makers also reported that students were not able to describe in detail various activities as there was shortage of time therefore they (62.50%) suggested that students should adopt lesser number of families for proper dissemination of practices/activities. Besides, some respondents also suggested that students should use local language (35.83%) while disseminating information and literature of the practices should also be provided for their future use (30.83%).

CONCLUSION

It could be concluded that RAWE programme can help in capacity building of rural women by creating awareness, increasing knowledge and skill in improved home science practices which will help in empowering rural women. It was found that negligible number of respondents adopted practices such as consumer education, therapeutic diet plan, use of solar equipments and awareness/counselling regarding various issues. Therefore, students and teachers under RAWE programme should create awareness regarding importance of these practices to rural women. However, different factors such as lack of resources, non availability of raw material, inability of skill retention etc. leads to non adoption of these practices. Many valuable suggestions were provided by the respondents to cope up with constraints. So, in future these suggestions can be incorporated during RAWE programme for maximizing the extent of disseminated practice.

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