

A Study on the Role of Family Members in Making Decisions, on Farm Operations of Cotton

Farmers all over the world are projected and exposed to many innovations in the field of agriculture and are called upon to take timely and judicious decisions in respect of farm and home affairs. Farm families must decide what to produce, how to produce how much to produce and how to allocate the income resulting from their farm business between family living needs, debts-payment and capital investment. Wilkening (1953) found that decisions in farm matters were frequently the concern of two or more male members of the family and to the extent the wife and children provided labour for the farm and shared in its returns, they would be involved in these decisions. Bharmrah (1966) has stated that decisions-making become a family issue which needed the help of other family members to solve the problem. With a view to find out the role of family members in making decisions on farm operations for cotton a study was taken up in Sarcar Samakulum panchayat union of Coimbatore District. Four villages were selected at random and 120 cotton growers were identified by proportionate random sampling technique. The farmers were interviewed

personally with a well structured interview schedule.

Decision making has two phases (i. e., consulting and final decision) The farmers' consultation in regard to the different practices are as detailed below:

Table 1. Consultation among family members

Item	Consult- ed	Not con- sulted
Selection of strain	68	52
Application of manure	62	58
Plant protection measures	63	57
Cultural practices	54	66
Selling of Kapas	76	44
Availing of credit	81	39

More than 60 per cent of the farmers were consulting the family members for all the practices except adoption of cultural practices. The consultation was high for availing of credit and also selling of kapas. This shows that farmers consult very much with their family members in respect of receipts and loans. The farmers may take decisions independently or collec-

tively or with their parents. The decision making pattern of cotton growers are as in Table 2.

Table 2. Decision making pattern

Items	Individual decision (N=120)	Collective decision	Decision along with parents
Selection of strain	98	16	6
Application of manure	97	18	5
Plant protection measures	97	17	6
Cultural practices	98	16	6
Selling of kapas	96	19	5
Availing of credit	93	22	5

Decision along with parents for further action was very negligible. Majority had individual decision to act upon as he is the person who is directly involved in carrying out these operations. Thus the study revealed that though there is consultation, among family members about the different operations of cotton cultivation, the

final authority of taking a decision rested with the head of the family.

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