

# Social Empowerment of Women Through Dairy Farming: A Study

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## Abstract

This study explores the social empowerment of women through dairy farming, focusing on the issues and challenges they face. Dairy farming has emerged as a significant avenue for social development in rural areas, offering women opportunities to enhance their knowledge and improve their livelihoods. This research aims to analyse the multifaceted impacts of dairy farming on women's social status, including children's education aspects, marriages aspects, financial aspects, respect and treated. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with women involved in dairy farming across various regions. Key findings reveal that while dairy farming provides substantial social benefits and empowerment opportunities, women encounter several barriers such as limited access to resources, inadequate training, and socio-cultural constraints.

**Keywords:** Women development, Social Empowerment, Dairy farming

## Introduction

India is a rich country inhabited by poor people. This is done to under utility of natural growth. Indian economy is rural economy. Rural sector plays a significant role in Indian economy. It affects directly or indirectly almost all the economic activities in the country. It employs the maximum number of people. It is also important source of national income in India. It also supplies food for the survival of the entire population of India.

A large part of the revenue of the government is also obtained from rural sector. In short, rural sector can be rightly considered as the back bone of our economy. But rural sector continues to be neglected. It is backward as well as developing economy. Moreover, most of the rural people are agriculturists. Indian agriculture is mainly depends on the nature. It means monsoons. Indian monsoons are irregular and uncertain. Hence there is no guarantee to growth and development of economic system.

Finally, Dairying is a very significant sector to generate employment with lower unit cost of employment for the target groups of the rural India. For example, it is found that one rupee investment in the dairy sector could generate three rupees worth employment. It has also been established as better source of employment as compared to other alternatives for example, an investment of 10 lakh rupees in dairying generate 290 person employment, while in the crop production same investment can generate only 120 person employment. Infact, in the best favourable environment dairying has found to provide as much as 78% of the total income to small and marginal farmers in some regions of A.P.

### **Role of Dairy Farming in Women Empowerment**

Milk and dairy foods play a crucial role in enhancing the nutrition of girls and women throughout various stages of their lives. From adolescence through pregnancy, breastfeeding, and into motherhood, women must be empowered to make informed nutritional choices. Dairy products are particularly valuable as they supply essential nutrients for maintaining bone health, including calcium, phosphorus, magnesium, and zinc. Additionally, vitamin D, which is often fortified in dairy products, and protein contribute to overall well-being. The protein in milk and dairy products also helps counteract age-related muscle loss, making dairy an important component of a balanced diet for women at any age.

Milk production significantly supports the livelihoods of millions of women and their families, creating substantial socio-economic value for rural communities. Women dairy farmers worldwide are gaining financial autonomy through ownership of revenue, livestock, and land, which positively impacts their ability to invest in their children's education and improve housing conditions.

Additionally, women in the dairy sector are increasingly assuming leadership and governance roles. Dairy farming not only diversifies and enhances family incomes, particularly in developing countries, but also fosters a better understanding of food choices and availability through educational initiatives like school milk programs. By empowering women to make informed decisions about nutrition, dairy farming delivers dual benefits: it enhances the lives of women and, in turn, provides significant advantages for their children's development.

To boost rural women's involvement in dairy farming, it is essential to provide support through both public and private initiatives. Programs that supply female dairy farmers with practical tools, such as milking machines, can reduce manual labour and prevent injuries, offering significant benefits. Additionally, workshops that focus on leadership and management skills for farmer groups or small enterprises can empower women. Training programs aimed at transferring production and marketing skills are also valuable, as they enable women to process milk into dairy products, extend shelf life, and engage in collective selling. For many rural women in developing economies, small-scale dairy farming is a crucial source of livelihood. These women will benefit from adopting low-impact farming practices and facilities that reduce carbon emissions and water pollution. Additionally, resource-limited female farmers could gain from obtaining ecological certification for their products. Such certification can enhance the market value of their products, leading to better prices and increased income.

Female dairy farmers are transforming their lives and communities by participating in collective efforts to produce and market dairy products. Their involvement in dairy farming not only benefits their personal lives but also enhances their communities. This makes dairy farming an accessible livelihood option for socio-economically disadvantaged women. The increased participation of women in dairy farming also enhances their chances of engaging in public decision-making, thereby improving their social and economic status. Income from dairy farming directly supports household livelihoods and elevates the quality of life for these women. Furthermore, greater involvement in dairy farming allows women to contribute ideas, make decisions to improve their families' and communities' well-being, and assume leadership roles. As female dairy farmers continue to use dairying as a source of income and a means of connecting with markets and rural society, their participation will further promote gender equality within their communities. It provides women with limited income opportunities and public presence the chance to earn a living and voice their perspectives, thereby fostering greater gender balance in rural areas.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To study the importance of dairy forming in India
2. To analyse the social empowerment of women through dairy forming

**Methodology**

The objectives of the present study are empowerment of women through dairy and it is focus on Anantapuramu districts only.

**Sample design**

Anantapuramu district is divided into 35 revenue mandal after bifurcation of Anantapuramu district. Among these mandals, 4,88,604 litres were producing, and top five producing mandal were found Bukkaraya Samudram (24,435 litres), Yellanur (22,998 litres), Tadpatri (21,952 litres), Narpala (19,967 litres) and last place were found Kalyandurg (18,913 litres) respectively. Total production of milk in these five selected mandal are found 1,08,265 litres in total 4,88,604 litres milk production in Anantapuramu district. It is found that nearly one fourth of milk production from the selected five mandals in the study area. Among these, each mandal 40 sample women milk providers were selected by using simple random sampling techniques. Altogether, 200 sample women respondents were selected from top five mandals in Anantapuramu district.

**Data Collection**

In the span of one and half month's data was collected from five mandals in the Anantapuramu district. The process of data collection was very enriching with an opportunity to get glimpses of lives of women from different areas, benefiting out of same process. After the creation of the visiting schedule, the researcher organised an interview for gathering of data. The data collection process is a time-consuming task. It took an average of two to two and half hours for an interview to get information about the schedule. During this process of obtaining information, the applicant had to give priority to the suitability. Some respondents had to visit their counterparts during the day with the respondents who were busy with their work during the day. Sometimes it was necessary to get information even in the morning and at lunch time. As the researcher preferred the convenience of the respondents during the visit, the respondents used to talk about themselves and free open discussions. There was no linguistic difficulty in talking to women in rural areas. But these women were talking easily with the researcher in the context of the topic. While the women in the sorority area experienced feelings of shame and shyness in the presence of men. In the situation where the information regarding the information explained to the women was completed.

During the process of data collection, researchers have experienced a lot of work experience with the Women's. Trust building is a very important thing in the process of obtaining information. The skills of employing the researcher in confidence and the experience of working in rural areas have become very useful. During the process of obtaining information from the researcher, every respondent was often given a detailed understanding of the original objectives of the research. Apart from this, it was used to explain the usefulness of the information presented. Thus, even though some of the sisters were nicely saying, "How will this benefit us?" Let us know. What was the answer to such a situation was the subject of miscarriage. But at the end of persuasion the sisters were informed to give information but did

not show enthusiasm. Something was showing inactivity. As a result, the information found by the researcher was absurd due to lack of proper information.

The information apart from interviews through observations and non verbal communications found during the field work has actually been added to the researcher's knowledge.

## Analysis and interpretation of the data

During the process of obtaining information, the researcher received detailed information related to the study. It is necessary to analyse and interpret as per the original objective of researching the information received. After the classification of information, the researcher has tried to present numerical information through different types of chart for the interpretation of information based on the table. The numeral form of the study was more in the form of information. Various types of information have been attempted to check the co-relation with the classification of data.

## Tools used

For analysis of the both qualitative and quantitative data, various statistical tools were used in the study. The data was collected through a schedule and processed with the help of SPSS software. For the purpose of investigation frequency tables with percentages are used.

## Social Empowerment

**Table 1 You are gained status and respect from your family members after taking dairy farming**

S.No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	% to total
1	Strongly agree	42	21.00
2	Agree	30	15.00
3	Undecided	48	24.00
4	Disagree	62	31.00
5	Strongly disagree	18	09.00
	Total	200	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Table one explains about opinion of sample women respondents regarding gaining of respect and status from their family members after taking of dairy activity in the Anantapuramu district. The table data denoted that the highest percentage (31 per cent) have stated that they disagree, 36 per cent represents 72 sample women respondents opinion ranges from strongly agree to just agrees, and it is quite interestingly found that 24 per cent (48 women) of the respondents did not share their opinion on the above statement. It can be concluded from the table data that majority of the respondents did not agree about the statement in Anantapuramu district of Rayalaseema Region.

**Table 2 Men are treated and given more respects after dairy farming**

S.No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	% to total
1	Strongly agree	20	10.00
2	Agree	36	18.00
3	Undecided	64	32.00
4	Disagree	44	22.00

5	Strongly disagree	36	18.00
	Total	200	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Table 2 explain that men are treated and given more respect after dairy farming. Generally, India is male dominated society and male is not entertaining to female as a economic aspect. In this regard 28 per cent of the sample women respondents opinion ranges from strongly agree to just agree, 40 per cent of the women respondents have expressed their opinion from disagree to strongly disagree. And is it denoted that 32 per cent of the respondents don't share their opinion about the statement.

**Table 3 Family members are allowed your opinion on children educational matters**

S.No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	% to total
1	Strongly agree	30	15.00
2	Agree	70	35.00
3	Undecided	24	12.00
4	Disagree	56	28.00
5	Strongly disagree	20	10.00
	Total	200	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Every family has been taking decision in related to education of their children for future benefits. It is quite interestingly found that male is taken decision relating to their children education. In this regard, the researcher raised a statement like "Family members are allowed your opinion on children educational matters". According to this statement, the responses were sought, analysed and presented hereunder. It can be found that 15 per cent 30 sample respondents have expressed that they are strongly agreed, 35 per cent represents 70 respondents have expressed just agree, 28 per cent of them (56 women respondents) have not agreed (disagrees) and 10 per cent of the strongly disagree. A little percentage of the respondents was not expressed like "undecided" in the study area.

It can be concluded from the table that after taking dairy farming by female, earning and contributing incomes to their family men are considered of women opinion while taking decision in their children education matters.

**Table 4 Your opinion allowed in to children marriages matters**

S.No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	% to total
1	Strongly agree	68	34.00
2	Agree	54	27.00
3	Undecided	20	10.00
4	Disagree	26	13.00
5	Strongly disagree	32	16.00
	Total	200	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Marriage is very important matter in to every children life and also selected right person. In this context, the researcher has raised a question to the women like “your opinion allowed in to children marriage matters”, collect the information, tabulated, analyzed and presented hereunder. It is found from the quantitative data of the table that 34 per cent of the women respondents have stated that “strongly agree”, 27 per cent of the women respondents have expressed that “just agree”, 29 per cent represents 58 women respondents response ranges from disagree to strongly disagree and 10 per cent of the women respondents were don’t express any opinion on the above statement.

It is deduced from the table 4 data that –majority of the children marriages matters, both male and female have been deciding and taking decision together. Hence, the present table data were also proved positive dimensions.

**Table 5 Your opinion is highly valued in financial matters after dairy farming**

S.No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	% to total
1	Strongly agree	50	25.00
2	Agree	32	16.00
3	Undecided	22	11.00
4	Disagree	36	18.00
5	Strongly disagree	60	30.00
	Total	200	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Table 5 depicted that “your opinion is highly valued in financial matters after dairy farming in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh State. It is further noticed that before taking there is no entertaining of women in financial matters. But after economic/financial independence of women through dairy farming. The researcher has collected primary data from the select women, tabulated, analysed and presented the table 5. It can be traced from the table that 25 per cent of the women households have strongly agree, 16 per cent of the respondents have stated that just agree, 18 per cent of the respondents have disagree, and 30 per cent of the women respondents have strongly disagreed.

It is clearly noticed that 11 per cent of the dairy women respondents don’t disclosed any opinion and it can be concluded that male is not accepted to women in involving financial decision making process in Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.

**Table 6 You are well verse in all matter after associated with dairy and banking activities**

S.No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	% to total
1	Strongly agree	28	14.00
2	Agree	20	10.00
3	Undecided	32	16.00
4	Disagree	92	46.00
5	Strongly disagree	28	14.00
	Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey



Generally, female have been involving for feeding to cow/buffalo, and taking milk activity. Otherwise male is not accepting to involving training, development, increasing milk production, etc. According to this direction, the researcher has raised a statement like “you are well verse in all matters after associated with dairy and banking activity”. From this statement, the responses were sought, analysed and presented. It can be found that 24 per cent (48 women) of the women respondents responses ranges from strongly agree to just agree, and 16 per cent (32 women) of the women respondents undecided to give any response for above statement.

It is further disclosed that majority of the women respondents responses ranges from disagree to strongly disagree and it represents 60 per cent (120 sample women respondents), in the study area. It is clearly concluded that there is no entertaining of women in all matters even after effective participating in dairy activities and banking activity in backward area of Anantapuramu district of Andhra Pradesh.

### Conclusions

The study demonstrates that dairy farming has considerable promise for boosting women’s social status and independence. It can increase their income, offer skill-building opportunities, and enhance their social standing in the community. Nevertheless, to fully realize these benefits, several challenges need to be addressed. These include restricted access to social aspects, not given to freedom, free mobility and also not involving in various matters. By addressing these issues, stakeholders can help to unlock the full potential of dairy farming as a tool for women’s social empowerment, and give respect to all women for social progress in rural areas.

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