ABSTRACT

This study entitled "A study of differential profile of urban and rural housewives in relation to decision-making and adoption of homescience innovations in Cuttack district of Orissa state" was undertaken with a view to understand the nature of decision-making, acceptance or rejection of home-science innovations, media orientation and the social, psychological and personal profiles of urban and rural housewives. The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To study the differential profile of rural and urban housewives with respect to social, psychological, and communication behaviour.
2. To study the differential decision-making behaviour in acceptance of certain selected homescience innovations of urban and rural housewives.
3. To study the development perception of rural and urban housewives.
4. To study the constraints in adoption of certain selected homescience innovations in relation to urban and rural housewives.
5. To formulate a suitable homescience extension strategy based on the findings of this investigation.

An appropriate methodology was evolved. Stratified random sampling procedure was adopted to select blocks, villages, and respondents. Hundred housewives, each from urban and rural areas, were identified and were exposed to a structured questionnaire. Their responses were computerized and the analysis was interpreted.

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Urban housewives in general were found to have higher development perception, media orientation, level of education, and value orientation along with unclear family structure than their rural counterparts.
2. The urban housewives were found to be more prone to change than that of rural housewives.
3. The urban housewives were highly aware about the women's status and role in the society whereas the rural housewives were highly aware about traditional norms and values.
4. The profile of urban housewives was characterised by their relatively higher level of education, cosmopolitanism, risk orientation and development orientation along with lesser dependence on the other family members.
5. The constraints relating to economic profitability, cultural compatibility, service and supplies, credit, information transfer, organizational infrastructure have been dealt with to know their role in limiting adoption of homescience innovations among the three groups of respondents, viz, the home scientists, homescience extension agency and the innovation users.
6. Low mobility and outside contact on the part of the housewives was considered to be the biggest cultural factor responsible for non acceptance of innovations.

7. Factors such as tradition, norms of modesty, fatalism, pride and dignity, incompatibility of culture traits, superstition, group pressure, conflict, factionalism, vested interest and family authority were found to be largely responsible for inhibiting decision-making and change.