1. INTRODUCTION

Indian economy is largely based on agricultural sector. More than 70 percent of our population is dependent on agriculture, directly or indirectly. A considerable contribution to national income comes from agriculture. The number of persons involved in farm activities happen to be more, albeit with little resources. Moreover, they are illiterate, poor and live in remote and inaccessible areas. This segment of population, which generate most of the national income, requires to be revamped by providing critical knowledge through training programmes, in order to improve their efficiency and output. Visualizing the importance of this segment of human resource, Mohan Singh Mehta Committee (1974) recommended the establishment of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) with the following principles :

1) Accelerating agricultural and allied production as the prime goal.
2) Teaching by doing and learning by doing be the principal method for imparting skill training.
3) The training efforts should be targeted to poor ones in order to raise their living conditions and standard.

The main idea behind setting-up of the KVKs is to influence the production system with social justice by creating a favourable condition for the poorest of the farmers. The training happens to be a critical and cheap technical input for development in agriculture and allied fields. The basic idea of KVK trainings is to improve the income of poor farmers and farmwomen through scientific knowledge and skills. The syllabus of KVK is based on the situation, resources, need and social customs; and should provide basic skills for improving efficiency and output of the target group.
The contribution of farmwomen in agriculture, dairying, household economical activities and allied occupations is well established. Such contributions have been studied and documented by various researchers (Mehta and Malaviya, 1997; Ahuja, 1999; Patki and Nikhade, 1999; Patki et al., 2000; Saraswathi and Sumangala, 2001).

In 1976, based on Mehta's Committee, ICAR set up 19 KVKs throughout the country. One of such KVKs was established at National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal in the state of Haryana. It was a KVK, which targeted farmers and farmwomen for providing them skill-oriented trainings in dairy farming and home science related activities. There are considerable evidences to show that dairying still continues to be predominantly the responsibility of farmwomen.

Therefore, Krishi Vigyan Kendra of NDRI, Karnal conducts many training programmes exclusively for farmwomen with the aim to make them competent in performing various activities related to dairy farming and home science. These programmes were started in the year 1979; and the syllabus was based on the needs of farmwomen in the areas of home science and dairying. Training programmes in dairy farming exclusively for farmwomen were designed to improve their knowledge and skill in the specific areas of breeding, feeding, health care, management, clean milk production, fodder production, conservation of green fodder and economics of dairy farming.

Thus, keeping in view of all these, it was thought imperative to conduct an impact study, in this regard.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In India, rural women are actively contributing in activities related to animal husbandry and home science. In fact, women constitute 57.7 percent of India's total labour force engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry (National Sample Survey, 1983). The farmwomen have dominated in terms of contribution in the field of dairy farming (Venkatachalan, 1983; Jyotsana, 1988; Nataraju and Lovely, 1993; Meena, 1994; Fulzele, 1995) and home science activities (Thombre et al., 1987; Sharma, 1994).
Rural women spend much of their time in unpaid activities like working in the family farm and other domestic work. They are the main responsible persons for domestic and household work, which include child care and nutrition, consumption and preservation of milk, processing of milk, processing and preservation of fruits and vegetables, and stitching. Moreover, their prime responsibilities are to maintain dairy animals and to perform activities like feeding, milking and health care of animals. Based on these facts, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, NDRI, Karnal has been imparting trainings in the field of dairy farming and home science related activities to the rural farmwomen since 1979. During this tenure, many on-campus and off-campus training programmes were organized in the rural areas in Karnal district. Although the KVK has been gathering information on the effectiveness of its training programmes through “ex-trainees sammelan” or by conducting competitions and general interviews. No systematic study was, however, conducted for this category of training programmes and target group. Therefore, it become imperative to study systematically whether such training programmes have significant impact in updating the knowledge, developing relevant skills, and inculcating appropriate behaviour and attitude towards dairy farming and home science activities, and also to enhance their level of adoption of the recommended practices. It was also felt important to know the perception of farmwomen trainees regarding these training programmes. Keeping these things in view, the present study entitled "Multi-Dimensional Impact Analysis of Gender Specific Dairy and Home Science Training Programmes organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra. National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal: A Comparative Study of Trainees and Non-Trainees" was conducted, with following objectives:

1) To determine the knowledge level of farmwomen trainees and non-trainees in the selected areas.

2) To measure the level of adoption of various gender specific dairy and home science practices by the trainees.
3) To ascertain the reason behind non-adoption or discontinuance, if any, of dairy and home science practices and to identify the constraints perceived by them in adoption process.

4) To ascertain training needs as perceived by the respondents regarding dairying and home science activities.

1.2 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As the study was conducted to find out the impact of these training programmes on farmwomen, the results of the study shall be of great help to the planners, in general, and KVKs, in particular, in formulating more appropriate and effective training programmes for the farmwomen in future.

The study shall be important to know the actual gain in knowledge and skill by farmwomen through these training programmes. The information from such a study shall be important in further improving the course content of future training programmes. As it is necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the training programmes continuously, the training programmes be strengthened based on the result of study, so as to improve the economic conditions of the farmwomen. Training and skill development is the cheapest method to increase the farmwomen income and improve their abilities for better management of household resources. The study would provide vital information and scientific data for further improving the role of rural training institutions, i.e., KVKs in enhancing rural or national economy.