

## Socio-economic and Health Status of Farm Women Entrepreneurs in Hassan District

M. SHIVASHANKAR AND M. L. REVANNA

Department of Food Science and Nutrition, College of Agriculture, UAS, GKVK, Bengaluru – 560065

### ABSTRACT

Rural women entrepreneurs who participated in trainings and Entrepreneur development programmes (EDP) conducted at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Zilla Panchayath, RSETI, Women and Child development department, and NGO's Hassan were considered for the study. Hemoglobin content and Morbidity score directly depicting the health and nutritional status of farm women. These health and nutritional status of farm women entrepreneurs played a significant role in increasing self confidence of SHGs for undertaking small scale food processing of value added products and capacity building of women towards entrepreneurial activities. It was found that independent variables like educational status, family size, land holding, family occupation and annual income were positively associated with hemoglobin status of farm women entrepreneurs. The study reveals that factors like family occupation, family size, land holding, annual income and extension participation were found to be positively associated with health status of farm women entrepreneurs.

SELF-HELP Groups in rural India are causing a silent revolution not only in terms of providing access to liquid capital loan to communities but also in contributing towards a greater sustainability in agriculture. Keeping this contribution in mind this study was taken to understand the health and nutritional status of farm women entrepreneurs in Hassan district of Karnataka.

The study was conducted in Hassan District of Karnataka taking 100 respondents (farm women entrepreneurs) as random sample representing entire district. Farm women entrepreneurs who have participated in training and EDP programmes conducted at Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Zilla Panchayath RSETI, Women and Child development department and NGO's, Hassan were considered for the study. A pre-tested structured interview schedule was used to elicit responses from the respondents covering major objectives of the study. Simple statistical tools like percentage, frequency and Chi-square test were done to analyse the health and nutritional status of farm women entrepreneurs.

Table I revealed that, the majority of the farm women were middle aged (between 36 to 50 years) and 36 per cent of the women entrepreneurs only had high school education. This may be due to the lower level of socio economic condition. More than one

fourth of the women were college educated. Contributing reason could be that the rural social environment in which they lived might not have encouraged parents to give formal education to their children. Majority of the farm women depend on agriculture as their main occupation (94%) followed by non-agricultural occupations. With respect to family size, majority of the farm women (67%) were having more than 5 family members followed by small family of 33 per cent (less than 5 members). It is seen from the Table I that, nearly half of the farm women were having a land area less than 2.5 acres followed by small farmers (38%) were having land area 2.5 acres to 5 acres. Eventhough, majority of the farm women perceived agriculture as their main occupation, 53 per cent of the women entrepreneurs were having the annual income ranges from Rs. 50,000/- to 75,000/- followed by 38 per cent (Rs. 75,000/- to 1,00,000/-). The finding was also in line with that of Maruthesha (2014). Majority of the farm women belongs to low annual income categories, this may be due to the fragmentation of land holdings and migration of rural people to urban areas, fifty four per cent farm women belongs to medium category of extension participation followed by low and high group. This is may be due to lack of awareness among farm women and social barriers. The findings were found to be similar with that of Rashmi and Sinha (2011).

TABLE I  
*Socio-economic status of farm women entrepreneurs in the study area*  
(n=100)

Characters	Respondents	
	No.	Per cent
<b>Age</b>		
< 25 to 35 years	32	32.00
36 to 50 years	56	56.00
> 51 years	12	12.00
<b>Educational status</b>		
Illiterate	12	12.00
Primary education	20	10.00
Middle school	14	14.00
High school	26	36.00
College	28	28.00
<b>Family occupation</b>		
Agriculture	94	94.00
Non-agriculture	6	6.00
<b>Family type</b>		
Nuclear	44	44.00
Joint	56	56.00
<b>Family size</b>		
Small (<5)	33	33.00
Big (≥ 5)	67	67.00
<b>Land holding</b>		
Marginal (<2.5 acre)	49	49.00
Small (2.5 to 5.0 acre)	38	38.00
Medium (5 to 10.0 acre)	12	12.00
Big (>10 acres)	01	01.00
<b>Annual income</b>		
Rs. 50,000-75,000	53	53.00
Rs. 75,000-1,00,000	38	38.00
Rs. 1,00,000-1,25,000	06	06.00
Rs. 1,25,000-1,50,000	03	03.00
<b>Extension participation</b>		
Low	30	30.00
Medium	54	54.00
High	16	16.00

The Hemoglobin level was estimated through blood analysis by considering 25 random samples out of 100 total sample size of the study. Table II shows that, 44 per cent of the women entrepreneurs possess normal hemoglobin content followed 36 per cent belongs to mild anaemic categories. Mild anaemic is due to inadequacy of iron through dietary intake,

TABLE II  
*Hemoglobin status of women entrepreneurs*  
(n=25)

Range of Hb g/dl	Category	No.	Per cent
>12	Normal	11	44.00
10-11.9	Mild anemic	9	36.00
8-9.9	Moderate anemic	5	20.00
<8	Severe anemic	0.00	0.00

which in turn results in hemoglobin deficiency. Poor nutrition also affects her activity level and overall physical performance like reduce work capacity, increases fatigue and causes nutritional anemia. These findings are in line with the findings of Shweta *et al.* (2001) and Shobha *et al.* (2011) who reported that mean hemoglobin levels of women were 10.44 g/dl. It was shown in Fig. 1, that majority of women entrepreneurs were belongs to normal BMI (64%) followed by nearly one third of the women entrepreneurs were categorized under over weight category and one six per cent of the women were under

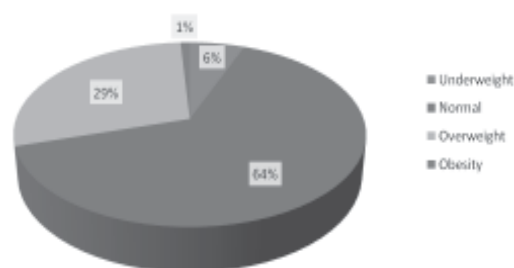


Fig 1: Distribution of farm women respondents according to their Body Mass Index as per WHO standards

TABLE III  
*Association between Health status and socio-economic status of farm women entrepreneurs*

Socio-economic status variables	Chi-square value	Contingency Chisquare value
Age	1.07	0.07
Educational status	11.09	0.23
Family occupation	20.18**	0.30
Family type	2.30	0.11
Family size	3.06*	0.11
Land holding	30.97*	0.37
Annual income	94.56**	0.60
Extension participation	13.00*	0.25

TABLE IV

*Association between Hemoglobin (Hb) status and socio-economic Status of farm women entrepreneurs*

Socio-economic status variables	Chi-square value	Contingency Chi-square value
Age	3.66	0.08
Educational status	10.63*	0.27
Family occupation	29.97**	0.22
Family type	3.37	0.06
Family size	6.86**	0.40
Land holding	93.25**	0.66
Annual income	102.24**	0.58
Extension participation	19.94	0.18

weight. These results found to be positively correlated with the hemoglobin analysis through blood analysis of the women respondents.

Similar findings have been observed by Venkatalakshmi and Peramma (2000) who reported that Body Mass Index of agricultural farm women showed lower weight normal grade (18.5-20.0).

Further hemoglobin (Hb) content of women was correlated with their socio-economic status. From the analysis, it was found that independent variables like educational status, family size, land holding, family occupation and annual income were positively associated with hemoglobin status of farm women entrepreneurs.

It could be concluded that, rural women were able to generate substantial income, which was used towards the family expenditure. Hemoglobin content and Morbidity score directly depicting the health and nutritional status of farm women. These health and nutritional status of farm women entrepreneurs played a significant role in increasing self confidence of SHGs for undertaking small scale food processing of value added products and capacity building of women towards entrepreneurial activities.

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