Mysore J. Agric. Sci., 59 (3) : 78-87 (2025)

Influence of Urbanization on Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Lower Middle Income Households

Geetha M. Yankanchi, Usha Ravindra, Shilpa Yatnatti, K. Geetha and G. Swetha
Department of Food Science and Nutrition, College of Agriculture, UAS, GKVK, Bengaluru - 560 065
e-Mail : shilpayatnatti@gmail.com

Authors Contribution

Geetha M. Yankanchi : Planning of research objectives and methodology

Usha Ravindra : Evaluation of research findings and discussion of results

Shilpa Yatnatti : Data collection and analysis and draft preparation

K. Geetha : Research design, formulation of questionnaire and objectives guidance

G. Swetha : Data compilation and tabulation

Corresponding Author :
Geetha M. Yankanchi

Received : January 2025
Accepted : Feburary 2025

Abstract

The socio-demographic profile forms the basis to undertake nutritional assessments. In India, Bengaluru is one of the rapidly urbanizing south mega city and the rate at which the city is expanding, has significantly influenced the surrounding localities in various aspects. To study these aspects, understanding socio-demographic characteristics of lower middle income families is most needful and forms the basis of the study. A total of 300 lower middle income households were selected from north and south transects of Bangalore rural-urban gradient. Socio-demographic information of selected households was collected through questionnaire and personal interviews. Age wise distribution indicated predominant age category of the men was 30-40 years. In north rural, only 32.00 per cent of men were engaged in agriculture, whereas in transition and urban non agriculture based occupations were predominant. These findings were statistically significant both in north (÷2 =25.80*) and south (÷2 =30.86*) transects. Majority of women belonged to the age group of 25 to 30 years. Rural women had significantly good educational status compared to transition and urban in north transect whereas in south transect educational status of transition women was comparatively good. In northern transect, majority of urban women were employed in occupational activities followed by rural and transition. However, in southern scenario, majority of rural and urban women were involved in occupation compared to transition. In north transect 56.00 per cent of transition and urban households belonged to nuclear type of family, whereas in rural 44.00, 30.00 and 26.00 per cent of households belonged to extended, nuclear and joint family respectively. Similar findings were also evident in south transect. The socio-demographic characteristics are changing across rural urban interface of Bengaluru and are reflected in nuclear type of family, decreasing family size, changes in occupational patterns, income and land holdings.

Keywords : Socio-demographic profile, Urbanization, Lower middle income, Household survey

Socio-demographic profile refers to a detailed information of the key demographic and social characteristics of a specific population or group. These specific characteristics include age, gender, educational level and income and play vital role in decision-making processes. Understanding of these characteristics form a basis to undertake nutritional assessments such as food consumption pattern, dietary diversity, nutritional status and lifestyle pattern etc. (Vijayalakshmi *et al*., 2018). According to Lange and Meier (2009) there are at least two reasons why the middle classes are the focus of research activities. First, they are the key decision-makers and consumers in the world's emerging economies. Secondly, they contribute to spreading social innovation and modernization beyond the borders of the traditional industrialized nations. Urbanization is the increasing share of a nation's population living

in urban areas. Most urbanization is the result of net rural to urban migration, driven by various factors such as industrialization, improved living standards, education and health care facilities etc. (Satterthwaite *et al*., 2010). As a result, cities expand and they significantly influence on various socio-demographic characteristics of a population especially among lower middle income families. Urbanization has a positive impact on economic growth, human development and poverty reduction. However, the rapid urbanization process has caused a range of problems, such as unsettled migrants, income inequality and land scarcity, leading to enormous challenges on sustainable development (Zhang and Zhou, 2022). To address these challenges, it is essential to understand the pattern and extent of socio-demographic changes. In India, Bengaluru is one of the rapidly urbanizing south mega city and the rate at which the city is expanding, has significantly influenced the surrounding localities in various aspects. To study these aspects, understanding of socio-demographic characteristics of lower middle income families is most needful and forms the basis of the study. Hence the present research was undertaken, with the aim to characterize sociodemographic profiles of lower middle income families across rural urban interface of Bengaluru.

Material and Methods

Bengaluru rural urban interface involving both north and south transect constituted study localities and based on urbanization index, these study localities are divided into rural, transition and urban areas (Hoffmann *et al.,* 2017). Based on purposive random sampling, 50 lower middle-class households were selected from each study area (rural, transition and urban) constituting the total sample size of 300 from both north (n=150) and South (n=150) transects (Fig. 1). The research objectives were explained to the households and written consent was taken for their participation in the study. The detailed questionnaire was developed based on study objectives and pre

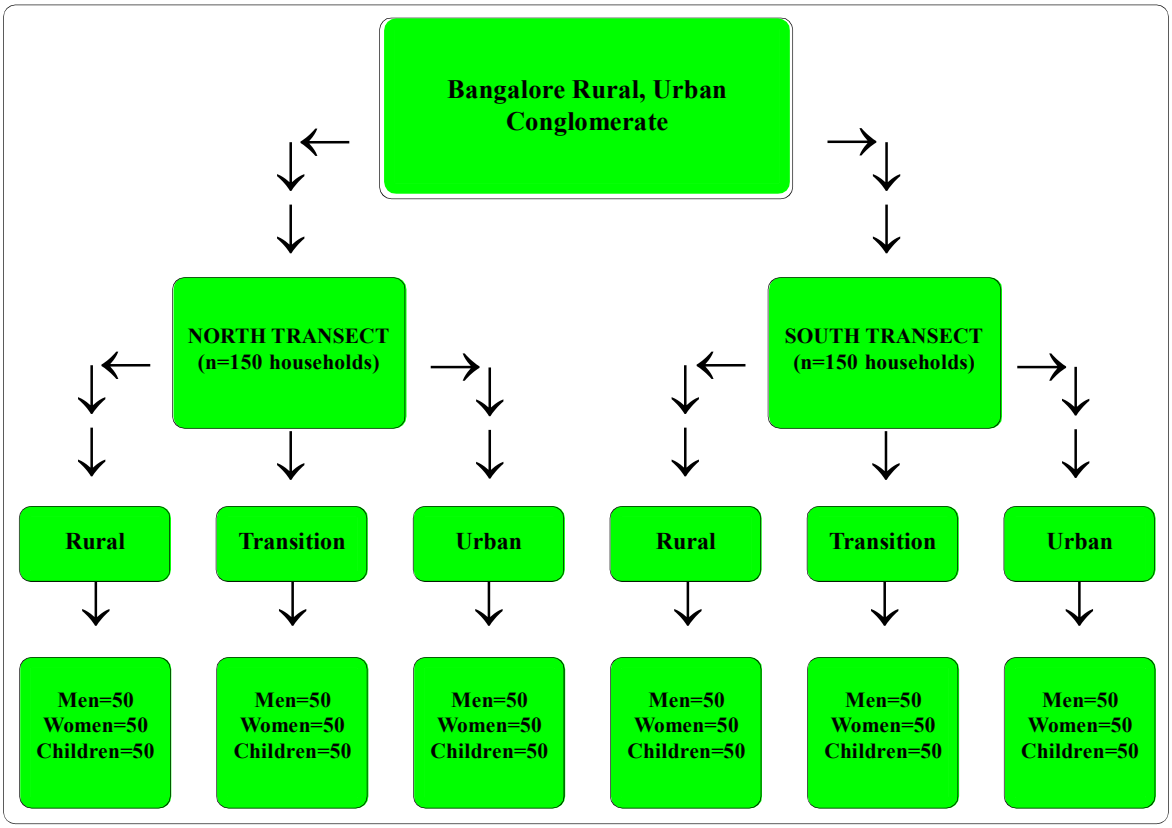

Fig. 1 : Sampling framework of the research

testing was done to incorporate necessary changes and standardized. Household visits were conducted and through personnel interviews, information on age, education, occupation, landholding, income, family size and type was collected and recorded. Further data was pooled and analysed with suitable statistical tools to derive inferences based on study objective.

Results and Discussion

The study households were selected from a total of 42 localities spread across rural urban interface of north and south transect of Bengaluru. Socio-demographic profile of 600 men and women, residing at rural, transition and urban localities, helps to associate the transformations at different stages of urbanization. Further, this data source can supplement the other major findings of research in relation to nutritional status and dietary practices.

Socio-Demographic Profile of Men

The socio-demographic profile of men in north and south transects are presented in Table 1 and 2 respectively.

Age wise distribution of men in north transect indicated that 72.00, 60.00 and 66.00 per cent of men respectively belonged to the age group of 30-40 years. Similarly, in south transect, 86.00, 70.00 and 60.00 per cent of men, in rural transition and urban respectively were in the age group of 30-40 years, indicating predominant age category of the study subjects. In north transect majority of men (40.00%) studied up to high school or SSLC and 28.00

Table 1

Socio-demographic profile of men respondents in north transect

(n=150)

Characteristics	Men (n) (%)			χ2Test	*'p' value*
	Rural	Transition	Urban		
Age (Years)					
20-25	02 (04)	02 (04)	03 (06)		
25-30	12 (24)	18 (36)	14 (28)	2.103 NS	0.716
30-40	36 (72)	30 (60)	33 (66)		
Education					
Illiterate	01 (02)	04 (08)	01 (02)		
Primary	09 (18)	00 (00)	10 (20)		
Middle school	07 (14)	07 (14)	11 (22)	11.80 NS	0.160
High school/SSLC	20 (40)	20 (40)	20 (40)		
Intermediate/PUC/Diploma	06 (12)	14 (28)	05 (10)		
Graduate	05 (10)	05 (10)	03 (06)		
Post graduate	02 (4)	00 (00)	00 (00)		
Occupation					
Daily wages	04 (8)	13 (26)	15 (30)		
Government	00 (00)	00 (00)	02 (04)		
Private	18 (36)	25 (50)	24 (48)	25.80 *	0.0002
Self employed	12 (24)	02 (04)	07 (14)		
Agriculture	16 (32)	10 (20)	02 (04)		

NS = Non significant, *Significant at 5% level

TABLE 2

Socio-demographic profile of men respondents in south transect

(n=150)

Characteristics	Men (n) (%)			χ2Test	*'p' value*
	Rural	Transition	Urban		
Age (Years)					
20-25	00 (00)	02 (04)	02 (04)		
25-30	07 (14)	13 (26)	18 (36)	8.680 NS	0.069
30-40	43 (86)	35 (70)	30 (60)		
Education					
Illiterate	14 (28)	02 (04)	03 (06)		
Primary	06 (12)	04 (08)	06 (12)		
Middle school	17 (34)	15 (30)	13 (26)		
High school/SSLC	08 (16)	17 (34)	15 (30)	9.18 NS	0.32
Intermediate/PUC/Diploma	05 (10)	05 (10)	05 (10)		
Graduate	00 (00)	07 (14)	08 (16)		
Post graduate	00 (00)	00 (00)	00 (00)		
Occupation					
Daily wages	04 (08)	06 (12)	08 (16)		
Government	03 (06)	00 (00)	01 (02)		
Private	14 (28)	13 (26)	15 (30)	30.86 *	0.00002
Self employed	14 (28)	31 (62)	26 (52)		
Agriculture	15 (30)	00 (00)	00 (00)		

NS = Non significant, *Significant at 5% level

per cent of transition men studied up to PUC or diploma. Similarly, in south transect, 34.00 and 30.00 per cent of transition and urban men studied up to SSLC. Whereas in rural majority of men (34.00%) studied up to middle school only. Individuals studied up to PUC or Diploma were equal among all the study areas (10.00%). However, the proportionate distribution with respect to education of men did not differed significantly across rural urban interface of Bengaluru among both north and south transects.

When occupation is considered, in north transect, though majority of men employed in private firms (36.00%), 32.00 per cent of the rural men practiced agriculture. In transition and urban nearly 50.00 per cent of the men were engaged in private firms. Also it was observed that 26.00 and 30.00 per cent of men worked based on daily wages in transition and urban respectively.

In south transect, agriculture was predominant among rural men (30.00%) followed by self-employment (28.00%) and working in private firms (28.00%). It was surprising to note that, 62.00 and 52.00 per cent of men in transition and urban respectively were self-employed. Also, 26.00 per cent of men in transition and 30.00 per cent in urban were working for private organization. The distribution of men based on occupational status was found to be statistically significant both in north (÷2 =25.80*) and south (÷2 =30.86*) transects, indicating significant influence of urbanization on the occupational status of lower middle income men across rural urban interface.

According to Sukanya and Tantia (2023), urbanization is a global trend that has both positive and negative impacts on economic development. Urban areas are hubs of innovation, investment and job creation, leading to increased productivity and economic growth. Urbanization and economic growth go hand in hand in several nations. As regional economies transition from an agrarian-based economy to an urban economy centred on industry and services, economic expansion typically requires converting agricultural land to urban uses (residential, commercial and industrial). This trend is observed in urban areas in low- and middle-income nations undergoing structural economic changes and ex-urban (or peri-urban) regions in rich countries affected by the economic growth of surrounding urban centres. In many low and middle-income countries, substantial financial inflows and foreign direct investment (FDI) have altered urban and rural areas. In the present study, the diminishing agricultural practice from rural to urban areas is evident and men are dependent on non-agriculture occupational activities such as working in factories, transport, own petty shops, building construction and allied occupations, which are created as a result of urbanization.These implications are also seen in rural areas as only 30.00 per cent of men are engaged in agriculture and remaining 70.00 per cent of them were employed in other occupational activities.

TABLE 3

Socio-demographic profile of women respondents in north transect

(n=150)

Characteristics	Women (n) (%)			χ2Test	*'p' value*
	Rural	Transition	Urban		
Age					
20-25	21 (42)	14 (28)	24 (48)		
25-30	19 (38)	26 (52)	15 (30)	5.842 NS	0.211
30-40	10 (20)	10 (20)	11 (22)		
Education					
Illiterate	00 (00)	08 (16)	03 (06)		
Primary	08 (16)	00 (00)	05 (10)		
Middle school	02 (04)	05 (10)	09 (18)		
High school/SSLC	21 (42)	18 (36)	21 (42)	18.96 *	0.015
Intermediate/PUC/Diploma	09 (18)	17 (34)	11 (22)		
Graduate	08 (16)	02 (04)	01 (02)		
Post graduate	02 (04)	00 (00)	00 (00)		
Occupation					
Unemployed/Housewife	32 (64)	36 (72)	28 (56)		
Daily wages	00 (00)	02 (04)	12 (24)		
Government	02 (04)	00 (00)	01 (02)	23.13 *	0.003
Private	03 (06)	02 (04)	05 (10)		
Self employed	03 (06)	05 (10)	04 (08)		
Agriculture	10 (20)	05 (10)	00 (00)		

NS = Non significant, *Significant at 5% level

Sociodemographic Profile of Women

Results related to age, education and occupation wise classification of women from northern and southern transects across rural-urban gradient is presented in Table 3 and Table 4 respectively.

In north transect, classification of women based on age, indicated that both in rural (42.00%) and urban (48.00%) majority of women belonged to 20 to 25 years age group. However in transition 52.00 per cent of women were in the age group of 25 to 30 years. In south transect, nearly 50.00 per cent of women belonged to 25 to 30 years age group, followed by 20 to 25 years age group. However, age wise distribution of women was found to be statistically non significant across rural urban interface of both north and south transect.

In north transect, majority of the women studied up to SSLC, but 34.00 per cent of women in transition studied up to PUC or diploma. It was surprising to note 16.00 and 4.00 per cent of rural women were studied up to graduation and post-graduation respectively. Rural women had significantly good educational status compared to transition and urban.

In south transect, majority of the women in rural (40.00%) and urban (30.00%) studied up to middle school. It was observed that, 38.00 per cent in transition, 28.00 per cent in rural and 16.00 per cent women in urban completed SSLC education. Women studied till PUC or diploma were 16.00, 12.00 and 8.00 per cent in transition, urban and rural respectively. About 18.00per cent in urban and 6.00per cent of women in transition were studied up to graduate.

TABLE 4

Socio-demographic profile of women respondents in south transect

(n=150)

Characteristics	Women (n) (%)			χ2Test	*'p' value*
	Rural	Transition	Urban		
Age					
20-25	18 (36)	19 (38)	18 (36)		
25-30	25 (50)	23 (46)	25 (50)	0.236 NS	0.993
30-40	07 (14)	08 (16)	07 (14)		
Education					
Illiterate	05 (10)	05 (10)	03 (6)		
Primary	07 (14)	05 (10)	09 (18)		
Middle school	20 (40)	10 (20)	15 (30)	18.24 *	0.019
High school/SSLC	14 (28)	19 (38)	08 (16)		
Intermediate/PUC/Diploma	04 (08)	08 (16)	06 (12)		
Graduate	00 (00)	03 (06)	09 (18)		
Occupation					
Unemployed/Housewife	33 (66)	41 (82)	33 (66)		
daily wages	00 (00)	02 (4)	08 (16)		
Government	00 (00)	01 (2)	02 (04)	19.43 *	0.012
Private	06 (12)	03 (6)	05 (10)		
Self employed	05 (10)	03 (6)	02 (04)		
Agriculture	06 (12)	00 (0)	00 (00)		

NS=Non significant , *Significant at 5% level

Educational status of transition women was comparatively good to rural and urban women.

Educational status among women across rural urban interface of Bengaluru in both north (÷2 =18.24*) and south transects (÷2 =19.43*) exhibited statistically significant difference and indicated urbanization and related migrations has impacted the educational status of women across rural urban interface of Bengaluru.

Brock and Cammish (1997) reported that, nine groups of factors potentially affecting female participation in education includes, geographical, sociocultural, health, economic, religious, legal, political/ administrative, educational and initiatives. Several factors, including residence in a rural area and the health effects of poverty and malnutrition, proved to affect female participation in education. In the present study, the household sampling comprised native residents and also migrants with different socio-cultural backgrounds which has impacted diversified and significantly different educational status among women.

In north transect occupational status of women reveals that, majority of them were housewives. However, 20.00 per cent of rural women were engaged in agriculture and 24.00 per cent of urban women were working for daily wages. In transition 10.00 per cent of women were self-employed and involved in agriculture. It was observed that, majority of urban women were employed in occupational activities (agriculture, livestock management, tailoring, house maids, construction, working at factories, petty shops etc.,) followed by rural and transition. (Divya *et al.,* 2022).

Similarly, in south transect, majority of the women were housewives, about 6.00 per cent of rural women were engaged in agriculture and private jobs. In urban 16.00 and 10.00 per cent of women were working for daily wages and private firms respectively. These findings indicated majority of rural and urban women were involved in occupation such as agriculture, livestock management, tailoring, house maids, construction, working at factories, petty shops etc compared to transition.

These finding were statistically significant in both north (÷2 =23.13*)and south (÷2 =19.43*) transect indicates urbanization is influencing occupational status of lower middle income women across rural urban interface of Bengaluru.

According to Jayaweera (2010) there is no positive linear relationship between education and the economic, social and political empowerment of women, as a consequence of the interface of gender ideologies and social and economic structural constraints. In present study it was observed that, more number of urban women are employed in one or the other occupational activities compared to rural women in north transect. However, equal participation of both rural and urban women in southern transect is evident for economic participation of women through involvement in occupational activities. These findings are supported by Biswas and Banu (2023) reported that, there is no difference between the two time periods data about the women work participation scenario in urban and rural India. In both the transects, though with good educational status, transition women participation in occupation is found to be least due to diversified reasons including, nuclear family, family support, house chores, children etc.

Family Characteristics

Family characteristics are part of socio-demographic information of the households. These parameters directly or indirectly influence on nutritional status of the family members.

The findings related to family characteristics of the north and south households is presented in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, respectively.

In north transect, 56 per cent of transition and urban households belonged to nuclear type of family, whereas in rural 44, 30 and 26 per cent of households belonged to extended, nuclear and joint family respectively. Majority of the rural families (52%) had medium family size whereas in transition (52%) and urban (46%) small families were predominant. In transition 52 per cent families had single earners, followed by rural (50%) and urban (40%). However,

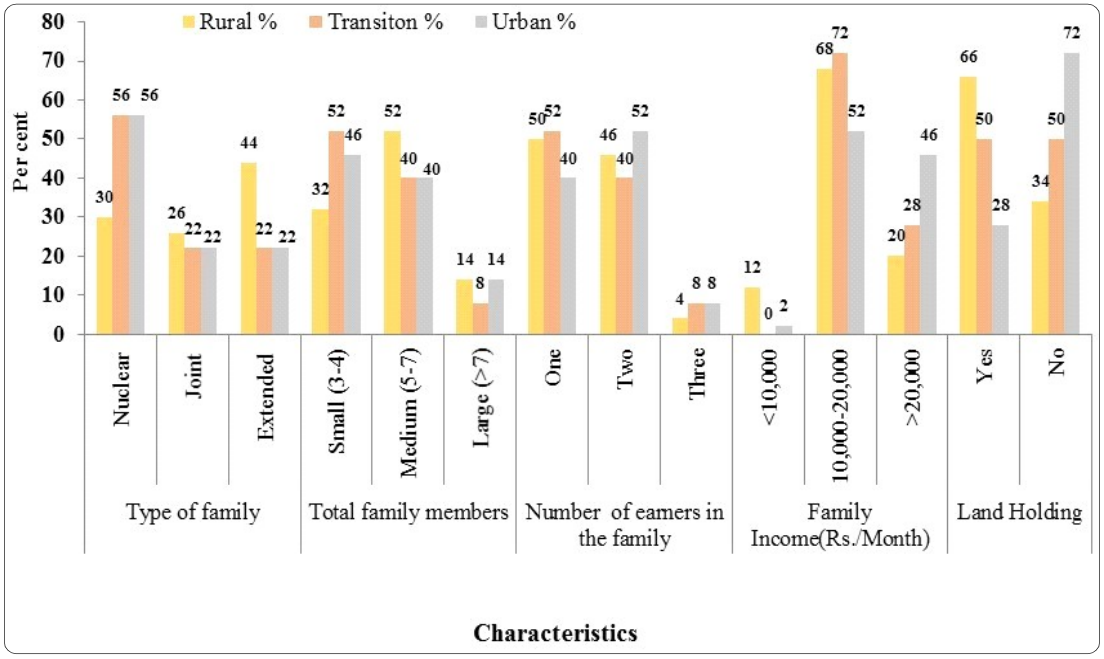

Fig. 1 : Family characteristics of north transect households (n=150)

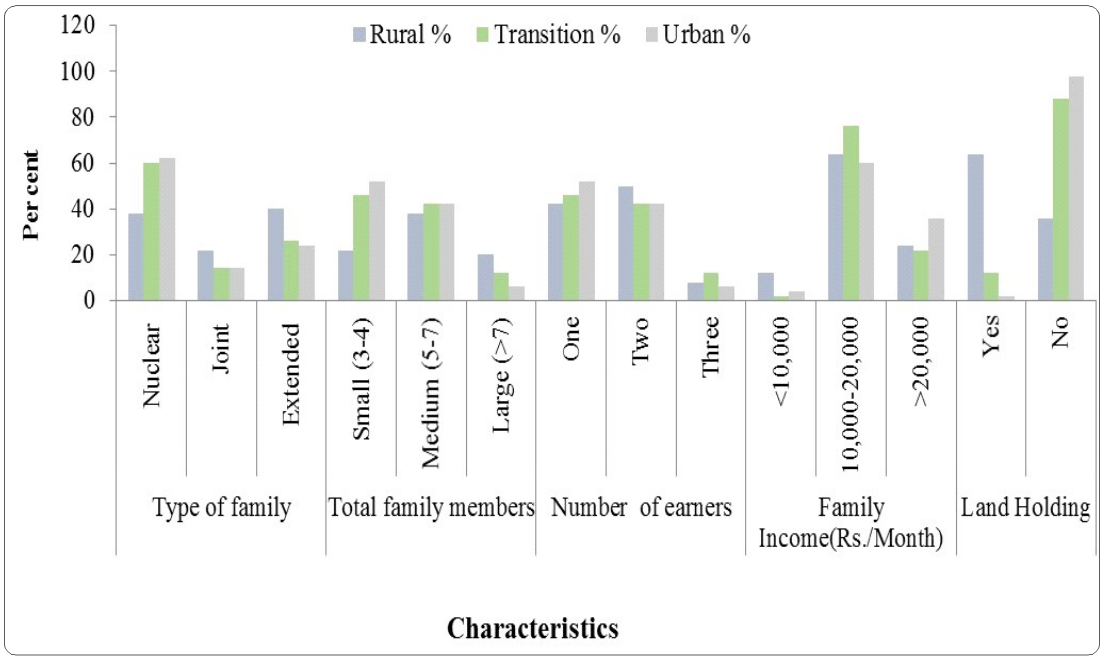

Fig. 2 : Family characteristics of south transect households (n=150)

dual earners were more in urban (52%) followed by rural (46%) and transition (40%). Majority of the households had family income between Rs. 10,000 to 20,000 per month. But 46, 28 and 20 per cent of urban, transition and rural households had more than Rs.20,000 per month income. Land holdings were observed to be in decreasing trend from rural (66%) to urban (28%). Statistical analysis reveals that, urbanization has influenced on family type (÷2=10.48*), monthly income (÷2=13.44*) and land

holding (÷2=14.58*) significantly across rural urban interface of north Bengaluru.

Quite similar findings were observed in south transect also. Nuclear families were predominant in transition (60.00%) and urban (62.00%) with small family size. Whereas rural families were characterized by more of extended families (40.00%) with medium family size. Due to medium family size, two earning members were more in rural (50.00%) compared to transition (42.00%) and urban (42.00%). Most of the families had their monthly income between Rs.10,000 to 20,000. Among rural households 64 per cent of families had land holding and there was sharp decrease in transition (12.00%) and urban (2.00%). However, these family characteristics did not differed significantly across the study areas indicating the prevalence of urban scenario in transition and rural areas too, with respect to family structure. Whereas land holding significantly (÷2=57.58*) decreased from rural to urban as evidence of urbanization.

These findings reflect on changing family characteristics along rural-urban interface of Bengaluru. Joint families are disintegrating and more of extended and nuclear type of families are existing. Large family sizes are replaced with medium and small families. Dynamic process of urbanization and industrialization are responsible for social and economic changes which leads to rural urban migrations and thus influence on family structure. Satterthwaite (2010) reported that, urban expansion inevitably covers some agricultural land while changes in land values and land markets around cities often result in land left vacant as the owners anticipate the gains they will make from selling it or using it for non-agricultural uses. In the present study, these findings are exhibited in diminishing land holdings across rural-urban interface of both north and south transects of Bengaluru. Though there exist some differences in family characteristics across rural-urban interface of north transect there are changes associated to urbanization were seen. But in south transect, these changes are more evident as no significant differences were notices with respect to family characteristics across rural-urban interface except for land holding. The changes driven by urbanization including socio-demographic and other environmental factors needs to be studied through multidisciplinary approach (Seifollahi-Aghmiuni *et al.,* 2022).

These findings suggest that, the socio-demographic characteristics are changing across rural urban interface of Bengaluru and are reflected in nuclear type of family, decreasing family size, changes in occupational patterns, income and land holdings. These changes indicate urbanization implications on socio-demographic structure of lower middle income families across rural-urban interface of Bengaluru and further it is essential to address impact of these changes on food consumption trends, nutritional status and lifestyle pattern of the households in order to frame policy recommendations to overcome the unfavorable effects of urbanization.

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