

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

Quality of life of young awardee farm women of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad

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SUMMARY : Indian economy is predominantly rural and agriculture oriented supporting 50 per cent of its population. Increasing population and declining trend in the average size of land holding poses a serious problem to the Indian farmers for maintaining a decent quality of life. Quality of life is the degree to which a person enjoys the important possibilities of his/her life. The ultimate aim of an individual is to lead a happy life. A happy life is one in which the basic needs are met with at least some comforts. The present study deals with the quality of life of young awardee farm women. This study was conducted in Dharwad, Gadag and Haveri districts of Karnataka. The woman who had received Yuva Shresta Krishi Mahile award during 2014-2017 was purposively selected. A total of 60 young awardee farm women were selected as a sample for the study from 17 talukas conferred by the UAS Dharwad. Pre-structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. Suitable statistical tools like frequency, percentage and indices were used for analysis of the data. The important findings of the study revealed that, cent per cent of the awardee farm women belonged to young age group (< 35 years) had high school education and from big family size (43.33 %) belonged to joint family (51.67 %), had medium farming experience (60.00 %) and had big land holding (38.33%). Around 72.00 per cent of the respondents had high quality of life, 28.33 per cent had medium quality of life and none of the respondents belonged to low quality of life.

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Agriculture plays an important role in economic growth and poverty reduction. More than 50 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture to boost the productivity, sustainability and profitability. Women in rural India can be considered as farmers, as they work as agricultural labourers, unpaid workers in their farm and in combination of these two. Now a days due to rapid urbanization, men

and youths in rural areas are migrating towards the highly paid jobs in industries and construction works. Hence, the agricultural work is left on the shoulder's of the women. Women are involved in almost all the agricultural activities carried out by men and have become pioneers in domesticating crops to meet the requirements of the farming community. Farming is increasingly becoming a challenging issue for their sustainability. For

subsistence and maintaining a good quality of life they have to look out for other avenues. The best enterprises for such families are allied agriculture activities, which complement rather than compete with agriculture.

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad is playing a vital role in identifying the unique efforts of youth who are adopted and trying out innovative technologies in farming. It also encourages the remarkable progress of the youth in the agriculture and allied sectors by honoring awards. Hence, this study was taken up to know the socio-economic profile and quality of life of young awardee farm women.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

Present investigation was conducted in Dharwad, Gadag and Haveri districts of North Karnataka under the jurisdiction of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. Purposive sampling method was used to select the respondents. All farm women who have been given Yuva shresta krishi mahile award during 2014-2017 constituted the population for the study, a total of sixty awardee farm women were selected as sample for the study. Pre-structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. Frequency and percentage are used to know the socio-economic profile. Quality of life of awardee farm women was studied on four aspects namely; nutrition and health, social participation and recreational, personal and educational. A total of 18 statements were included. The quality of life (QOL) index was calculated by using the formula:

$$\text{Quality of life index} = \frac{\text{Nutrition and health} + \text{social and recreational} + \text{personal} + \text{education} \times 100}{\text{Maximum score for quality of life}}$$

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been summerized under following heads:

Age:

Age is one of the criteria for selection of farm women for award competition. Table 1 indicates that, 41.67 per cent of the young awardee farm women belonged to moderately young age group (29-32 years). Around 37.00 per cent of them were young age group (26-29 years), 13.33 per cent belonged to late young age group (32-35 years) and only 8.33 per cent belonged to very young

age group (23-26 years).

Young farm women are probably most risk taking and adventure oriented. They tend to explore more and easily accept the changes when compared to other age groups and they are more energetic, enthusiastic, have more work efficiency and innovative than the other farm women. The above finding gets support from the study conducted by Shivacharan *et al.* (2017).

Education:

It is observed from Table 1, 63.33 per cent of the respondents had education upto High School, 11.67 per cent completed PUC, 10.00 per cent had primary school education, 8.33 per cent were graduates and only 6.67 per cent had middle school education (5th to 7th standard).

This is because rural people are still believing and following traditional customs. They generally do not prefer to send their children to colleges and they expect their children to assist in farm and household activities. The distance of higher study centers from the villages also might have prevented the parents from providing higher education to their children. The result is in line with the study conducted by Vimalraj (2010).

Family type:

It could be noticed from Table 1 that, 51.67 per cent of the awardee farm women belonged to joint families, while 48.33 per cent were from nuclear families.

Indian tradition of the joint family system continues to prevail in rural societies with a belief in co-operative way of living. Agriculture was the main occupation of all young awardee farm women. Agriculture needs more hands to work on the farms and hence they like to hold on to the joint family system. The result of the finding is in consonance with finding of Pushpa (2006).

Family size:

It was noticed from Table 1 that, 43.33 per cent of the respondents had large size families (9 and above), 41.67 per cent had small size families (1-4 members) and 15.00 per cent had medium sized families (5 to 8 members).

The probable reason for finding large families could be that the small family norm is not yet accepted to a large extent by rural people. The other reason might be that agriculture is the main occupation which needs teamwork, requiring more number of persons for the

labour intensive farm work. The result is in confirmation with the finding of Kumari (2018).

Farming experience:

It is clear from Table 1 that, 60.00 per cent of young awardee farm women had medium level (10-15 years) of farming experience, 23.33 per cent had high level (>15 years) farming experience and 16.67 per cent had less (<10 years) farming experience.

The reason might be that farm women taking active

part in farming with guidance of elders she has reached the stage of taking independent decision on farming and has reached the stage of getting awards. They are playing dual roles *i.e.* family and farming responsibilities, actively involved in post harvest activities, weeding, transplantation and winnowing etc. and partially involved in purchase of seeds and fertilizer and marketing. These are the other reasons for medium level of farming experience. The results are in accordance with Reddyprasad (2003); Vimalraj (2010) and Sujaykumar (2012).

Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of young awardee farm women			(n=60)
Sr.No.	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age			
1.	Very young (23-26 years)	05	08.33
2.	Young (26-29 years)	22	36.67
3.	Moderately young (29-32 years)	25	41.67
4.	Late young (32-35 years)	08	13.33
Education			
1.	Illiterate (Nil)	-	-
2.	Primary school (1 - 4 th)	06	10.00
3.	Middle school (5 th -7 th)	04	06.67
4.	High School (8 th - 10 th)	38	63.33
5.	PUC (11 th and 12 th)	07	11.67
6.	Graduation and above (>12)	05	08.33
Family composition			
Family Type			
1.	Nuclear	29	48.33
2.	Joint	31	51.67
Family size			
1.	Small (1-4 members)	25	41.67
2.	Medium (5-8 members)	09	15.00
3.	High (9 and above)	26	43.33
Farming experience			
1.	Less (<10 years)	10	16.67
2.	Medium (10 -15 years)	36	60.00
3.	High (>15 years)	14	23.33
Land holding			
1.	Marginal farmer (Upto 2.5 acre)	07	11.67
2.	Small (2.5 – 5.0 acre)	13	21.67
3.	Medium (5.0 – 10.00 acre)	17	28.33
4.	Big (>10.00 acre)	23	38.33
Annual income			
1.	Low (BPL) Upto Rs. 1,32,000	47	78.33
2.	Medium Rs.1,32,000 to Rs. 5,72,000	07	11.67
3.	High (APL) Above Rs. 5,72,000	06	10.00

Land holding:

A glance at Table 1 also indicates, 38.33 per cent of the awardee farm women were from large land holding (> 10 acre), 28.33 per cent were from medium land holding (5.0-10 acre), 21.67 per cent households possessed small lands (2.5-5.0 acre) and only 11.67 per cent owned farms upto 2.5 acre (marginal land holding).

The probable reason could be that, they had their ancestors' property and farming is the main occupation of the family. Large land holding allows them to take risk so they adopted innovative technologies that leads to development in farming might be reason for extend their landholding. The result is in confirmation with the finding of Mergewar *et al.* (2017).

Annual income:

The data in the Table 1 indicates 78.33 per cent of the young awardee farm women had low level annual income (Upto Rs.1,32,000), 11.66 per cent were in medium level income category (Rs.1,32,000 to Rs. 5,72,000), while 10.00 per cent of the awardee farm women had high level of income (Above Rs. 5, 72,000).

The reason for the above result might be high initial investment for adopting different technologies with trial and error method. Moreover, from the past four-five years, farmers are facing drought which leading to low yields and low income. The results of the study are in line with Patil and Nagnur (2018).

Table 2: Quality of life of young awardee farm women					(n=60)
Sr. No.	Statements	Regular	Occasional	Never	Index
Nutrition and health					
1.	Consumption of cereals /Pulses	59 (98.33%)	01 (01.67%)	-	99.17
2.	Consumption of vegetables and fruits	49 (81.67%)	11 (18.33%)	-	90.83
3.	Consumption of animal foods like, milk, meat, fish etc.	58 (96.67%)	02 (03.33%)	-	98.33
4.	Going to health checkup	08 (13.33%)	51 (85.00%)	01 (01.67%)	55.83
5.	Suffer from fever, cold and cough	03 (05.00%)	57 (95.00%)	-	52.50
6.	Stressed and worked up	05 (08.33%)	19 (31.67%)	36 (60.00%)	24.17
Nutrition and health index					70.13
Social participation and recreational					
1.	Attending meeting conducted by Gram Panchayat	13 (21.66%)	46 (76.67%)	01 (01.67%)	60.00
2.	Participation in fairs, field days and festivals at village	22 (36.67%)	38 (63.33%)	-	68.33
3.	Participation in SHG activities	21 (35.00%)	39 (65.00%)	-	67.50
4.	Visit to nearby cities for shopping	25 (41.67%)	29 (48.33%)	06 (10.00%)	65.83
5.	Visit to nearby tourist places	08 (13.33%)	43 (71.67%)	09 (15.00%)	49.17
6.	Visit to cities to watch movies	03 (05.00%)	08 (13.33%)	49 (81.67%)	11.67
Social participation and recreational index					53.75
Personal					
1.	Purchase of clothes for birthdays, festivals etc	25 (41.67%)	35 (58.33%)	-	70.83
2.	Purchase of jewelry	09 (15.00%)	51 (85.00%)	-	57.50
3.	Purchase of cosmetics	21 (35.00%)	29 (48.33%)	10 (16.67%)	59.17
Personal index					62.50
Educational		Very important	Important	Not important	Indices
1.	Education of children	35 (58.33%)	25 (41.67%)	-	79.17
2.	Equal opportunities for education of boys and girls	33 (55.00%)	27 (45.005%)	-	77.50
3.	Coaching and tuitions for children in academic and extracurricular activities	25 (41.67%)	35 (58.33%)	-	70.83
Educational index					75.83
Overall quality of life					65.55

Category	Indices
Nutrition and health	70.13
Social and recreational	53.75
Personal	62.50
Educational	75.83
Overall quality of life index	65.55

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (0 to 18)	-	-
2.	Medium (18 to 36)	17	28.33
3.	High (>36)	43	71.67

Quality of life:

Quality of life of awardee farm women was studied on four aspects namely; nutrition and health, social participation and recreational, personal and educational.

Nutrition and health:

The information in Table 2 shows overall index for nutrition and health as 70.13. It is clear that the indices were high for consumption of cereals/pulses (99.17), consumption of animal foods like, milk, meat, fish etc. (98.33), consumption of vegetables and fruits (90.83). The least index was found for stress and getting worked up (24.17).

Social participation and recreation:

The result in Table 2 indicate social participation and recreation. The overall index was to the extent of 53.75 per cent. It is clear that the indices were high for participation in fairs, field days and festivals at village, followed by participation in self-help group activities (67.50) and visit to nearby cities for shopping (65.83). The least index was found for visit to cities to watch movies (11.67).

Personal:

The information in Table 2 shows empowerment on personal aspects. The overall index was to the extent of 62.50 per cent. Indices were high for purchase of clothes for birthdays, festivals etc. (70.83), followed by purchase of jewelry (57.50) and purchase of cosmetics (59.17).

Educational:

Educational empowerment is also seen in Table 2.

The overall index was to the extent of 75.83 per cent. It is clear that the indices were high for education of children (79.17), equal opportunities for education of boys and girls (77.50) and coaching and tuitions for children in academic and extracurricular activities (70.83).

Data in Table 2a explains the quality of life on the different aspects. While overall quality of life was to the extent of 62.50 per cent. The highest index was for education (75.83), followed by nutrition and health (70.13). Next was personal with an index of 62.50 and the least was for social and recreational with an index of 53.75.

The data presented in Table 2b depicts the categorization based on quality of life. It can be seen that 71.66 per cent of the respondents had high quality of life, 28.33 per cent had medium quality of life and none of the respondents belonged to low quality of life.

The reason might be due to women are empowered and free to spend their money. When women are earning money through agriculture there is no need for them to depend on their family for anything. They can take decisions on various aspects of food consumption, health, education, social well being and recreation. The findings are in line with the findings of Patil and Nagnur (2018).

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the study that even though the indices of quality of life of young awardee farm women to the extent of 65.55 as lightly higher indices were seen for education. Since the quality of life indices ranges between 62.50 to 75.83 the indices need to be improved by social and recreational and personal aspects.

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