

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

# Empowerment of young awardee farm women of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad

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**SUMMARY :** Empowerment is recognized as an essential strategy to strengthen the well-being of individuals, families and communities. The present study deals with the empowerment 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%). A majority of the respondents had low annual income (78.33 %), the overall empowerment of awardee farm women was to the extent of 50 per cent only. Among the various components the highest index of 70.00 was for leadership, next was production with an index of 59.09 followed by income 50.10. The lowest was for resources *i.e.* only 29.77 indicating that they owned resources only to the extent of 30 per cent.

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## **BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES**

In India majority of the people live in rural areas and mainly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. The recent trend is that people are not interested in agriculture and are migrating towards urban areas in search of profitable high income jobs hence, the agriculture work is left on the shoulders 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. However, there is also the need to empower young farmwomen for achieving high productivity in agriculture as well as augment their income through and subsidiary sectors of farming. Indian rural women share substantial responsibilities and perform a wide spectrum of duties in most of the family related activities, farming related activities as well domestic chores. Therefore, the rural women

are considered as backbone of India economy. Women usually contribute in harvesting of crops, weeding, threshing, field irrigation and post-harvesting processes. Moreover, 60 to 80 per cent of total agriculture operations are performed by women. They work with male members and participate in different farming activities putting much more hours of productive manual labour daily. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which enables individuals or groups the realization of their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. Empowered women contribute to the health and productivity of whole families and communities. Women play a important role in agricultural growth hence, the present study was envisaged with the following objective:

- To study the socio-economic profile of young awardee farm women.
- To study the empowerment of young awardee farm women.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

### Yuva shresta krishi mahile award:

*Krishimela* is a mega event organized by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad for the benefit of the farming community. University has 7 districts under its jurisdiction. Every year farmers are identified and honored them as “Shreshta Krishika” and “Shreshta krishimahile” during *Krishimela* from each district. Similarly best young farmer and best young farm woman at taluka level.

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. Sixty awardee farm women were selected as sample for the study. Pre- structured interview schedule was used to collect the data. Frequency, percentage, class interval and index were used to analyze the data. Women empowerment has been studied on four important dimensions *viz.*, production, leadership, resources and income and index was calculated by using the formula:

$$\text{Empowerment index} = \frac{\text{Scores obtained}}{\text{Obtainable scores}} \times 100$$

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

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

### Age:

Data presented in Table 1 indicates that age of the respondents, 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). The probable reason might be that women in the young age group are mostly risk taking and adventure oriented. They tend to explore all possible information and easily accept the changes when compared to other farm women. They are more energetic, enthusiastic, have more work efficiency and innovative hence the findings are in line with the results of Shivacharan (2017) and Chayal *et al.* (2013).

### Education:

It is observed from Table 1 that, 63.33 per cent of the respondents had education upto high school, 11.67 per cent completed PUC, 10 per cent had primary school education, 8.33 per cent were graduates and only 6.67 per cent had middle school education (5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> 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 line with the findings of 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 and rest of them belonged to nuclear families. In 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 findings are in consonance with the findings of Pushpa (2006); Rathod *et al.* (2011) and Patil

and Nagnur (2016).

### 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 only 15 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) and Patil and Nagnur (2015).

### 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

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

(>15 years) farming experience, 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 findings of Reddy prasad (2003); Vimalraj (2010) and Sujaykumar (2012).

### 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 (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 that 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 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 line with Chayal and Dhaka (2010) and Patil and Nagnur (2016).

### Women empowerment:

Table 2 shows the empowerment of awardee farm women. In this study the women empowerment was studied mainly on four aspects namely; production, leadership, resources and income.

With regard to production (Table 2a) the overall production index was to the extent of 59.09 per cent. Indices were high for purchase of inputs/ equipments (90.83), selection of seeds/plant variety (75.56) followed by selection of crop (71.67). The least index was found for determination of price (46.11). In a male dominated society this level could be considered as quite good. The reason could be that young awardee farm women had large land holding and they had enough knowledge about inputs and other services related to agriculture. Both men and woman involved in taking the decisions related to agriculture. The result is line with the finding of Goudappa (2012).

The details presented in Table 2b shows that, the

Table 2 : Empowerment of women						
Table 2a: Production: Input in productive decision / autonomy in production (n=60)						
Sr. No.	Items	Participation in decision making				Indices
		Always	Frequently	Rarely	Never	
1.	Selection of seeds/plant variety	24 (40.00%)	29 (48.33%)	06 (10.00%)	01 (01.67%)	75.56
2.	Selection of crop	20 (33.33%)	31 (51.67%)	07 (11.67%)	02 (03.33%)	71.67
3.	Allocation of acreage	10 (16.67%)	34 (56.66%)	13 (21.67%)	03 (05.00%)	61.67
4.	Allocation of food crops v/s cash crop	08 (13.33%)	28 (46.67%)	22 (36.67%)	02 (03.33%)	56.67
5.	Adoption of new technologies	11 (18.33%)	24 (40.00%)	23 (38.34%)	02 (03.33%)	57.77
6.	Distribution of tasks	18 (30.00%)	31 (51.67%)	9 (15.00%)	02 (03.33%)	70.00
7.	Purchase of inputs/ equipment's	13 (21.67%)	29 (48.33%)	12 (20.00%)	06 (10.00%)	90.83
8.	Purchase of chemicals/ fertilizers	08 (13.33%)	25 (41.67%)	19 (31.67%)	08 (13.33%)	51.67
9.	Whom to sell	07 (11.67%)	25 (41.66%)	21 (35.00%)	07 (11.67%)	51.11
10.	Where to sell	05 (08.33%)	25 (41.67%)	20 (33.33%)	10 (16.67%)	47.22
11.	Determination of price	08 (13.33%)	21 (35.00%)	18 (30.00%)	13 (21.67%)	46.11
	Production index					59.09

Empowerment of young awardee farm women

**Table 2b: Leadership: Involved in farmer organizations, co-operatives, committees as members**

Sr. No.	Statements	Always	Sometimes	Never	Indices
1.	Member of these organization	39 (65.00%)	21 (35.00%)	-	45.00
2.	Holds leadership positions	45 (75.00%)	15 (25.00%)	-	41.67
3.	Taking/ participating in multi stakeholder platforms	28 (46.67%)	32 (53.33%)	-	51.11
4.	Involved in meetings at village level/ taluk level/district level	32 (53.33%)	28 (46.67%)	-	48.88
	Leadership index				46.66

**Table 2c: Resources: Ownership of assets and access to services (Financial and BDS)**

Sr. No.	Statements	Full ownership	Partial ownership	No ownership	Indices
<b>How is the distribution of ownership of assets and access to services (Financial and Business Development Services)?</b>					
1.	Owning land	13 (21.67%)	40 (66.66%)	07 (11.67%)	45.00
2.	Owning farm equipment	08 (13.33%)	45 (75.00%)	07 (11.67%)	49.17
3.	Owning cattle, goats, sheep, piggery, poultry	20 (33.33%)	33 (55.00%)	07 (11.67%)	39.16
4.	Owning means of transportation: bicycle, motorcycle, car	32 (53.33%)	21 (35.00%)	07 (11.67%)	29.16
5.	Deciding on sale or transfer of these assets?	39 (65.00%)	13 (21.67%)	08 (13.33%)	24.16
<b>Availing to following financial services</b>					
6.	Availing to SACCOS ( Saving and Credit Co-operatives)	24 (40.00%)	23 (38.33%)	13 (21.67%)	40.83
7.	Availing to group lending	39 (65.00%)	14 (23.33%)	07 (11.67%)	23.33
8.	Availing to extension services	40 (66.66%)	13 (21.67%)	07 (11.67%)	22.50
9.	Availing to farmer field schools	40 (66.66%)	13 (21.67%)	07 (11.67%)	22.50
10.	Availing to demonstration plots	46 (76.66%)	07 (11.67%)	07 (11.67%)	17.50
11.	Availing to trainings ( management, leadership, etc.)	49 (81.67%)	05 (8.33%)	06 (10.00%)	14.16
	Resource index				27.29

**Table 2d: Income: Control over use of income**

Sr. No.	Statements	Always participates	Frequently participates	Rarely participates	Never participates	Indices
<b>Decision on expenditure related to,</b>						
1.	Food	07 (11.67%)	09 (15.00%)	44 (73.33%)	-	46.11
2.	Education/ Children's school fee	20 (33.33%)	13 (21.67%)	27 (45.00%)	-	62.77
3.	Home improvement	06 (10.00%)	24 (40.00%)	30 (50.00%)	-	53.33
4.	Health care	03 (05.00%)	28 (46.67%)	29 (48.33%)	-	52.22
5.	Clothing	05 (8.33%)	11 (18.34%)	44 (73.33%)	-	45.00
6.	Household utensils	10 (16.66%)	07 (11.67%)	43 (71.67%)	-	48.33
7.	Energy (Fuel, electricity, other)	09 (15.00%)	08 (13.33%)	43 (71.67%)	-	47.77
8.	Leisure	04 (06.67%)	14 (23.33%)	42 (70.00%)	-	45.56
	Income index					50.13

**Table 2e : Over all empowerment of awardee farm women**

Category							(n=60)
	Low		Medium		High		Index
	F	%	F	%	F	%	
Production	04	06.66	43	71.67	13	21.67	59.09
Leadership	09	15.00	31	51.67	20	33.33	70.00
Resources	50	83.33	07	11.67	03	05.00	29.77
Income	07	11.67	47	78.33	06	10.00	50.19
Over all women empowerment index							50.21

overall leadership index was to the extent of 46.66 per cent. The index was found to be 51.11 for participation in multi stakeholder platforms, followed by involvement in meetings at village/taluka/district level, membership in organizations (45.00) and holding leadership positions (41.67). The probable reason might be that, now-a-day's women are becoming the members of one or the other SHG groups. The self-help group provides an appropriate platform for initiating and sustaining income generating activities for women. So, they take leadership role in the maintaining the groups. The results are in line with the findings of Patil and Nagnur (2016).

The data recorded in Table 2c shows resources, ownership of assets and access to services. The overall resource index was to the extent of 27.29 per cent. Indices were between 45-50 for owning farm equipment (49.17) and land (45.00). Availing credit from co-operatives (40.83). The least index was for availing to trainings (14.16). The possible reason might be that, the ownership of agricultural assets and availing to financial services not fully owned by women. Another reason for low access to credit and loan may be because few women have lands on their names and banks hesitate to lend when there is no collateral. The results are line with the findings of Patil and Nagnur (2016).

The information in Table 2d depicts, control over use of income. The overall income index was to the extent of 50.13 per cent. The index was fairly high for children education (62.77) followed by home improvement (53.33), health care (52.22) and household utensils (48.33). This is because decisions for expenditure are mainly regarding household items like food, clothing, shelter, health, purchase of household items, fuel source and education of children and leisure. These decisions were often considered as the responsibility of the women and men do not generally interfere. Moreover, income in the hands of the woman for all practical purposes will be spent by her for the family well-being *i.e.* both husband and children. That is why women were given more freedom in spending their money. The results are line with the findings of Patil and Nagnur (2016).

Table 2e shows that the overall empowerment of awardee farm women was to the extent of 50 per cent only. Among the various components the highest index of 70.00 was for leadership, next was production with an index of 59.09 and followed by income 50.1. The lowest was for resources *i.e.* only 29.77 indicating that

they owned resources only to the extent of 30 per cent.

### Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the study that over all women empowerment index was to the extent of 50.21. The indices ranges between 29.77 to 70.00. Farm women are lacking behind in owning resources. The indices need to be improved by resources aspect. The study also revealed that age, farming experience and land holding were the major factors that influenced the young awardee farm women to empower in agriculture.

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