

Coping Strategies of farm women during Corona pandemic in North Karnataka

■ Geeta P. Channal and Rekha Rayangoudar

Received: 09.10.2020; Revised: 08.11.2020; Accepted: 25.11.2020

■ **ABSTRACT** : Indian population depends on agriculture for their livelihood and they face many problems like flood, drought but COVID-19 was new challenge to the farmers. It created many problems like non availability of labour, equipments, transport facilities, storage facilities, marketing and many more. The study was conducted in Dharwad district of Karnataka during 2020 for 60 farm women from two villages of Hubli taluk by simple random method. The results revealed that 55 per cent of the farm women were in the age group of 31-50 years with medium sized family. Around 88.00 per cent knew COVID-19/Corona is a viral disease and cent per cent of the respondents knew that cough and fever were the symptoms of Corona and should stay at home and not to go for work also. Three fourth of the farm women (78.33) expressed that they used to consume hot water. Indigenous practices like turmeric in hot water and ginger tea are the regular practice of the people and regularly they wash all vegetables and fruits before consumption. Eighty per cent said they are aware of only few things to develop immunity against Covid-19. Efforts by different departments should be made to create awareness regarding farming families health and other problems.

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

Geeta P. Channal
University of Agricultural
Sciences, Dharwad (Karnataka)
India
Email : geetrajpatil@yahoo.co.in

■ **KEY WORDS**: Corona, Pandemic, Coping strategies, Farm women

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Channal, Geeta P. and Rayangoudar, Rekha (2020). Coping Strategies of farm women during Corona pandemic in North Karnataka. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 15 (2) : 357-360, DOI: 10.15740/HAS/AJHS/15.2/357-360. Copyright@ 2020: Hind Agri-Horticultural Society.

Women constitute the first line of vulnerable class in any crisis but COVID-19 has made their life highly challenging and complicated. As millions of people have been forced to stay at home due to pandemic caused lockdown, women's livelihood stands standstill but the burden of work has increased at home. Impact of livelihood loss due to COVID-19, we must examine not only the direct effects on women's earnings but also the indirect effects on intra-household dynamics and vulnerabilities, such as food insecurity, depletion of

savings and assets, social isolation, and mobility loss. Agricultural systems in India are in the midst the coronavirus crisis. During this period seeds and other farm inputs have to reach to the farmers for this kharif season, while India needs about 250 lakh quintals of seeds (Gupta *et al.*, 2020). Because, everything may wait, not the farming season and hunger. The impacts may be particularly severe for female farmers because of existing inequalities that constrain women's agricultural productivity and access to markets. For example,

temporary school closures and increased susceptibility of the elderly to the virus will increase women's disproportionately large unpaid domestic and family care responsibilities. In rural areas, this will result in even less time available for women to farm the land, travel to markets to buy inputs and sell produce, and participate in development programs. In India there are 120 million small farmers and farm women who contribute 40 per cent of the food production and almost half of the population in India depends on agriculture for their livelihood (Dahdah *et al.*, 2020). Every year Indian farmers and farm women face risks such as drought, flood, price volatility and rising debts. But risks from the Corona pandemic was new challenges in front of a farming community who were already under threat. The nationwide lockdown came at an unfortunate time for farmers as it was the harvesting season and it created many problems like non availability of labour, equipments, transport facilities, storage facilities, marketing and many more. The Covid-19 has affected the livelihoods of the farming communities hence the study was conducted to know the coping strategies of farm women during COVID-19.

■ RESEARCH METHODS

To analyze the coping strategies of farm women during Covid-19, All India Co-ordinated Research Project on Home Science Extension, Dharwad conducted a rapid assessment survey through telephone interviews of 60 farm women from Hubli taluka. Two villages namely Kundgol and Sulla were selected for the study. Thirty one farm women from Sulla village and 29 farm women from Kundgol village were selected.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The detailed analysis of the study were presented under the following heads

Socio-economic profile of the farm women:

Age:

The results in Table 1 reveals that 55 per cent of the farm women were in the age group of 31-50 years, around thirty two per cent (31.66%) were below 30 years and remaining 13.34 per cent were old (above 50 years).

Education:

An equal per cent of the respondents (43.33%) had

Table 1 : Socio-economic profile of the farm women (n=60)

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Young (less than 30 years)	19	31.66
	Middle aged (31 to 50 years)	33	55.00
	Old (above 50 years)	08	13.34
Education	Illiterate	08	13.34
	Primary and Middle	26	43.33
	Matric and Hr Sec	26	43.33
	Graduate and Post graduate	--	
Family Size	Small (less than 5 members)	12	20.00
	Medium (5 – 8 members)	33	55.00
	Large (9 members and above)	15	25.00
Occupation*	Agriculture	54	90.00
	Business	06	10.00
	Service	02	3.33
	Others		
	Dairy	21	35.00
	Poultry	04	6.66
	Goat rearing	06	10.00
Other	-		

*multiple answers are possible

primary to secondary education. None of them are graduates and 13.34 per cent were illiterates.

Family size:

Fifty five per cent had medium family size (5-8 members) and one fourth (25%) of the farm women were from large family (9 members and above) and 20.00 per cent had small sized families (less than 5 members)

Family occupation:

It was observed from the Table 1 that 90.00 per cent of the family occupation was agriculture. Out of which 35.00 per cent of the farm women have taken dairy enterprise, ten per cent of farm women are doing goat rearing, 6.66 per cent have adopted poultry and remaining farm women are doing business (10.00%) and service (3.33%).

Understanding of Carona Virus / COVID -19 and the lockdown:

The Table 2 showed that 88.33 per cent knows COVID-19/Corona is a viral disease and cent per cent of the respondents knew that cough and fever were the

symptoms of Corona and should stay at home and not to go for work also. Cent per cent of the farm women perceived that lockdown was difficult to manage but it was the only solution, we have to accept it to stop fast spreading of this COVID-19/Corona.

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
It's a viral disease	53	88.33
One gets cough and fever	60	100.00
One should not go out of the house	60	100.00
It spreads very fast	60	100.00
Go out when necessary	60	100.00
Not to go out to work	60	100.00
Difficult to Manage	60	100.00
It is the only solution	60	100.00
Do not have any other solution/	60	100.00
Difficult to adopt other measures		

Household needs and food consumption pattern during lockdown period by farm women:

The data regarding purchase of groceries during lockdown period by farm women was indicated in Table 3 which showed that cent per cent did not had sufficient amount of grocery in their home and purchased from nearby grocery store in the village and 85.00 per cent did not use green leafy vegetables only fifteen per cent said they used green leafy vegetables daily which was available in the village through mobile van.

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
From nearby grocery store	60	100.00
From the grocery store in the city	00	00.00
Very less availability	60	100.00
Sufficient availability in the house	00	00.00
Not cooking green vegetables daily	51	85.00
Cooking green vegetables daily	09	15.00
Source of availability		
Kitchen garden	00	00.00
Market	00	00.00
Mobile van/rehris/etc.	09	15.00

Awareness regarding food for immunity awareness and type of food consumed:

The data in Table 4 depicts the awareness level of farm women regarding the type of food to be consumed

to increase the immunity. Three fourth of the farm women (78.33) expressed that they used to consume hot water. Indigenous practices like turmeric in hot water and ginger tea are the regular practice of the people and regularly they wash all vegetables and fruits before consumption. Eighty per cent said they are aware of only few things to develop immunity against Covid-19. None of them had knowledge about AYUSH.

	Frequency	Percentage
Hot water, fruits, vegetables, ginger, turmeric, indigenous medicines	47	78.33
Only know about few things	48	80.00
Learnt from the directives of AYUSH	00	00.00
Do not know	00	00.00
Consumption of cold food items	60	100.00

Utilization of free time during lockdown:

The information in the Table 5 shows that cent per cent of the farm women watched television during lockdown and watched news and films during free time while 56.66 per cent watched religious matters, almost 57.00 per cent (56.66%) watched news, religious programmes and films and 35.00 per cent used whatsapp for exchange of information and chatting.

Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Free time is available	60	100.00
Watch television during free time	60	100.00
Type of programs watched		
News	60	100.00
Religious	34	56.66
Films	60	100.00
All the above	34	56.66
Use of WhatsApp	21	35.00

Effects of lockdown and problems faced by women during lockdown:

The Data from the Table 6 revealed that cent per cent of farm women expressed the increased household work load, stress and lack of medical facilities. There was decrease in the income of the family and only 13.33 per cent expressed about domestic fights.

According to the Table 7 around 42 per cent (41.66%) expressed the problem of non conducive

Table 6: Distribution of the farm women according to their perception of ill effects of the lockdown on their lives (n=60)

Particulars	Frequency		Percentage	
Increase in household workload	60		100.00	
Decrease in income	60		100.00	
Domestic fights	08		13.33	
Lack of medical facilities for the sick	60		100.00	
Stress	60		100.00	

household environment. Regarding financial problems seventy per cent do not have savings, are not able to get loan to run the house and not able to carry out the farm activities because of non availability of farm labour. Thirty per cent of farm women said they are using household savings and around 32.00 per cent (31.66%) used

Table 7: Distribution of the farmwomen according to problems faced by women during lockdown (n=60)

Categories	Before	
	Frequency	Percentage
Household level		
Harassment by family members	08	13.33
Non conducive household environment	25	41.66
Financial		
Do not have savings	42	70.00
Using household savings	18	30.00
Taking loan to run the house	42	70.00
Using government help	19	31.66
Using help from NGO's /Charity	00	00.00
Have to work as farm labour	41	68.33
Help from landlord	11	18.33
Selling vegetables/fruits/milk/poultry	00	00.00
Living on friends / relatives	00	00.00
Any other	00	00.00

government help and nearly eighteen per cent (18.33%) took land owner's help during COVID-19 to over come their day today and health problems.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the above results that many farming families have been affected by COVID-19. They need to be educated to strengthen their health by following the instruction given by the government. Efforts by different departments should be made to create awareness regarding farming families health and other problems. There is a large scope for farming families to increase the farm income by adopting different enterprises to support their livelihoods.

Authors' affiliations:

Rekha Rayangoudar, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad (Karnataka) India

■ REFERENCES

Dahdah, M., Ferrry, M., Gueria, I. and Venkatasubramanian, G. (2020). The Covid19 Crisis in India. Retrieved from : <https://booksandideas.com>.

Gupta, A., Zhu, H., Doan, M.K., Michuda, A. and Majumder, B. (2020). Economic Burden of COVID-19 Lockdown on the Poor. Retrieved from : <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers>.

Shekhar, V. Covid 19 and demand for maternal health services. *The Indian Express*. 2020. <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/covid-19-and-demand-for-maternal-health-services-6410678/>

Smith, J. and Morgan, R. (2020). COVID-19: The Gendered Impact of the Outbreak. Retrieved from : <https://www.thelancet.com/journals>.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ of Excellence ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
15th Year