

Knowledge level of Devdasi women on selected income generating activities

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■ **ABSTRACT** : Knowledge entails access to information, resources, education, awareness building, training and capacity building. To raise women's knowledge and awareness of their own situation, social, economic and political forces of health, nutrition, reproductive rights and to make them independent, income generating trainings are very essential. Hence, the present study was conducted on Devdasi women in the year 2009-2010 in Hubli, Navalgund of Dharwad district and Nargund of Gadag district of Karnataka. The Devdasi women had appropriate knowledge index on candle making (78.17%), vessel cleaning powder preparation (57.20%), washing powder preparation (50%), phenyl preparation (71.73%) and Agarbatti making (47.75%). Majority of the respondents had high knowledge level in phenyl preparation (48.80%), candle making (43.80%) and Agarbatti making (40.0%). Medium level knowledge was observed in vessel cleaning powder (43.80%) and washing powder preparation (51.25%).

■ **KEY WORDS** : Knowledge, Devdasi, Income generating activities

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Devadasis are mostly young girls given to the temple by their parents. They are taught sacred dances and ceremonies pertaining to the God of the temple (Asha, 1993). Devadasi literally means God's female servant (Dasi), who is young, pre-pubertal girls 'married off' or 'given away' in matrimony to God or local religious deity of the temple (Prasad, 1990). The Devadasi is dedicated to the service of the temple deity for life and there is no escape for her. If she wants to escape, the society would not accept her.

According to UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund), "There are over one million child prostitutes in Asia" (Tandon and Kumar, 1994). An ethnographic study explained that between 1,000 to 10,000 girls are introduced into the Devadasi each year by their parents, communities and priests. Treena (2007) reported that Devadasi system has changed nowadays because of urbanization and western influence in India. The 'Devadasi' system depreciates the status of women, to eradicate this Government of Karnataka has come out with the 'Devadasi' Rehabilitation Programme, complete eradication of this practice and implementation of the economic and social

development programme for the old-'Devadasis' in the aforesaid ten districts is going on. Creation of awareness by means of extensive awareness programmes, campaigning, people's movement, creation of SHGs, health camps, etc. is taking place. Limited number of NGOs participation to upgrade the women standard are partly successes. Devadasi women have been organized into self-help groups (SHGs) for income generation activities, in addition to job training, they were also provided health services and education programmes with a special focus to overcome with their poverty (Sivaraman, 2008).

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A sample of 80 Devadasi women was purposively selected from Hubli (35), Nargund of Gadag district (25) and Navalgund of Dharwad district (20). At the time of interview, one Devadasi woman from each selected Devadasi family was randomly selected.

An interview schedule was developed by the researchers was used to collect the general information of the respondents. The knowledge test was used to measure the knowledge level of Devadasi women gained through trainings on five selected income generating activities namely, candle making, phenyl

preparation, vessel cleaning powder, washing powder preparation and Agarbatti preparation. The knowledge test consisted of twenty five statements. Further, the test was divided in to five statements for each income generating activity with multiple choice answers. The answers to the questions were quantified by giving one score to the correct answer and zero score to the wrong answer. Hence, the maximum score one could obtain for each activity was 5, so far five activities $5 \times 5 = 25$. Based on the total scores, the respondents were classified into three categories namely, low (less than - (mean-0.425 S.D.), medium (between - (mean \pm 0.425 S.D.) and high (more than- (mean+0.425 S.D.). This procedure was followed by Chikkannavar (2000).

Based on the total score obtained by all the beneficiaries, knowledge index was worked out by using the following formula :

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

The data were collected by personal interview method. The respondents were visited at their own villages and required information was gathered by taking their informed consent. The respondents were assured that the information provided by them will be kept confidential.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data in Table 1 indicate the knowledge of respondents on candle making. The data revealed that Devadasi women had appropriate knowledge to a larger extent in items 1, 2 and 3. They that are candle making requires raw materials like wax, thread and mould (88.80%), mould is used for candle making (73.80%) and twine thread is used in the mould for candle making (72.50%). They lacked knowledge in that drying of candle requires 3-4 hours (38.80%) and coconut and kerosene oil (in the proportion of 1:2) is smeared inside the mould (38.80%). The probable reason for less knowledge was that the respondents might not have attended the training

Table 1 : Knowledge of respondents about candle making		(n=80)
Sr. No.	Statements	Knowledge scores (%)
1.	Raw materials needed for candle making are wax, thread and mould.	88.80
2.	Mould is used for candle making.	73.80
3.	Twine thread is used in the mould as wick for candles.	72.50
4.	Drying of candle requires 3-4 hours.	38.80
5.	Mixture of coconut and kerosene oil (in the proportion of 1:2) is smeared inside the mould.	38.80
6.	Overall knowledge index	78.17

Table 2 : Knowledge of respondents about vessel cleaning powder preparation		(n=80)
Sr. No.	Statements	Knowledge scores (%)
1.	To prepare vessel cleaning powder raw materials required are calcite powder, washing soda and liquid soap	71.20
2.	The quantity of raw materials required for the preparation of 1 kg cleaning powder is - 800 calcite powder, 200 g washing soda and 200 g liquid soap	61.20
3.	Sealing of the polythene bags can be done easily through the sealing machine	41.20
4.	Fixing the price for the prepared cleaning powder is based on labour, quantity, quality, attractive packing and colours	57.50
5.	Marketing of the prepared powder can be done either through wholesale dealers or retailer or at door steps	50.00
6.	Overall knowledge index	57.20

Table 3 : Knowledge of respondents about washing powder preparation		(n=80)
Sr. No.	Statements	Knowledge scores (%)
1.	Washing powder can be prepared by using the main raw materials like washing soda, TSP, STPP, AOS, salt and acid slurry	30.00
2.	For the preparation of 1.5 kg of washing powder the quantity of materials required are washing soda 500 gms, TSP 10 g, STPP 10g, AOS 10 g, salt 1kg and acid slurry 50 g.	23.80
3.	The perfumes like jasmine, lime, rose can be added to the washing powder while preparing.	67.50
4.	Based on quality, quantity, labour and colour pricing can be fixed for the prepared powder.	78.80
5.	In addition to chemicals, perfumes and colours are required for the preparation of washing powder.	50.00
6.	Overall knowledge index	50.00

programme from first step to the last step. Any how overall knowledge index was 78.17 per cent.

Table 2 depicts the knowledge of respondents on vessel cleaning powder preparation. The data showed that majority of the respondents had an appropriate knowledge to a larger

extent in items 1, 2 and 4. To prepare vessel cleaning powder, raw materials required are calcite powder, washing soda and liquid soap (71.20%), the quantity required for the preparation of 1 kg powder is 800 g of calcite powder, 200g of washing soda, 200g of liquid soap (61.20%) and fixing the price for the

Table 4 : Knowledge of respondents about phenyle preparation (n=80)		
Sr. No.	Statements	Knowledge scores (%)
1.	Phenyle preparation requires the main raw materials like pine oil, turki red oil and water.	90.00
2.	Phenyle jel can be prepared by mixing the turki red oil and pine oil in 1:2 proportion.	86.20
3.	For the preparation of 1lt. of phenyle the jel required is 100 ml.	72.50
4.	Prepared phenyle can be filled in the plastic bottles or glass bottles.	58..75
5.	Pricing for the prepared phenyle can be done based on perfumes added or quantity.	51.25
6.	Overall knowledge index	71.73

Table 5 : Knowledge of respondents about agarbatti making (n=80)		
Sr. No.	Statements	Knowledge scores (%)
1.	Agarbatti making requires the raw materials like charcoal powder, sandal wood powder, gelatine powder and wood powder.	32.50
2.	To make dough sticky gelatine is added to it.	58.80
3.	Better the quality of perfumes better will be the price of Agarbatti.	56.20
4.	Pricing for the prepared Agarbatti can be done based on number of sticks packed , size of the sticks and perfumes added.	43.75
5.	Pricing for the prepared Agarbatti can be done based on number of sticks packed , size of the sticks and perfumes added.	38.00
6.	Overall knowledge index	47.75

Table 6: Knowledge level of devadasis on trainings organized (n=80)			
Sr. No.	Trainings organized	Knowledge categories	Frequency
1.	Candle making	Low(<50)	21 (26.20)
		Medium(50-74)	24 (30.00)
		High(>74)	35 (43.80)
		Total	80 (100)
2.	Vessel cleaning powder preparation	Low(<39)	20 (25.00)
		Medium(39-65)	35 (43.80)
		High(>74)	25 (31.20)
		Total	80 (100)
3.	Washing powder preparation	Low(<39)	17 (21.25)
		Medium(39-65)	41 (51.25)
		High(>65)	22 (27.50)
		Total	80 (100)
4.	Phenyle preparation	Low(<53)	16 (20.00)
		Medium(53-78)	25 (31.20)
		High(>78)	39 (48.80)
		Total	80 (100)
5.	Agarbatti making	Low(<28)	28 (35.00)
		Medium(28-54)	20 (25.00)
		High>54)	32 (40.00)
		Total	80 (100)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate per cent

prepared cleaning powder is based on labour, quantity, quality, attractive packing and colours (57.50%). They lacked knowledge in sealing of the polythene bags (41.20%) and marketing of the prepared powder through wholesale dealers or retailer or at door steps (50%). The reasons for this could be less attentive at the time of training and having less contact within the society and outside the society. Overall knowledge index was 57.20 per cent.

The data projected in Table 3 indicate that majority of the respondents had appropriate knowledge on preparation of washing powder such as quality, quantity, labour and colour. Pricing can be done for the prepared powder (78.89%), the perfumes like jasmine, lime, rose can be added to the washing powder while preparation (67.50%). They lacked knowledge in items 1, 2 and 5. For the preparation of 1.5 kg of washing powder the quantity of materials required are washing soda 500 g, TSP 10 g, STPP 10g, AOS 10 g, salt 1kg, acid slurry 50 g (30.00%) and in addition to chemicals, perfumes and colours are required for the preparation of washing powder (50.00%). The probable reason for lesser knowledge of the respondents may be due to the reason that methodology of preparation of washing powder was difficult to understand as this preparation requires more materials and chemicals. Overall knowledge index was 50.0 per cent.

Table 4 denotes the knowledge of respondents on phenyl preparation. The data revealed that majority of the respondents had appropriate knowledge to larger extent on 1, 2, 3 and 4 items. They are phenyl preparation that requires the main raw materials like pine oil, turki red oil and water (90.00%), phenyl jell can be prepared by mixing the turki red oil and pine oil in 1:2 proportion (86.20%), for the preparation of 1lt of phenyl, the jel required is 100g (72.50%) and prepared phenyl can be filled in the plastic bottles or glass bottles (58.75%). Only in one item respondents had low knowledge *i.e.* pricing for the prepared phenyle can be done based on perfumes added or quantity (51.25%). The probable reason might be that this technology does not require much expenditure and raw materials are also easily available. Overall knowledge index was 71.73 per cent.

A glance at Table 5 encompasses the knowledge of respondents on Agarbatti making. The data indicated that the respondents had appropriate knowledge in items 2 and 3. They are to make dough, the sticky gelatin is added (58.80%) and better the quality of perfumes better will be the price of Agarbatti (56.20). They lacked in their knowledge in the items 1, 3 and 4. Agarbatti making requires the raw materials like charcoal powder, sandal wood powder, gelatine powder and wood powder (32.50%), pricing for the prepared Agarbatti can be done based on number of sticks packed, size of the sticks

and perfumes added (43.75%) and marketing of Agarbatti can be made popular by giving gift offers and by maintaining good quality (47.50%). The probable reasons for this might be that the enterprise requires more finance investment of money. The preparation of kneading Agarbatti requires special skill, patience and time to practice. Agarbatti cannot be prepared in the rainy season. Overall knowledge index was 47.75 per cent.

The data projected in Table 6 indicate that majority (43.80%) of the respondents had high knowledge level in candle making followed by medium (30.00%) and low (26.20%). With regard to vessel cleaning powder preparation, about 43.80 per cent had medium level of knowledge while 31.20 per cent had high and 25 per cent had low knowledge. As far as washing powder preparation is considered, 51.25 per cent had medium level of knowledge followed by high (27.50%) and low (21.25%) Regarding the phenyl preparation, majority of the respondents had high (48.80%) knowledge level followed by medium (31.20%) and low (20.00%) . A close examination of the findings revealed that about 40 per cent of respondents had high knowledge level in preparation of Agarbatti followed by low (35.00%) and medium (25.00%). Knowledge can be overwhelmed with education, interest, experience and training. Understanding of the training is also an important factor for high knowledge level.

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