

Socio-Economic Status of Women in Rural Udaipur, India

Abstract

In our country, rural women – the wives of farming family heads – account for almost 80% of the overall female population. They constitute about half of the total rural population and, as such, are quantitatively capable of playing a significant role in the rural economy. The demographic profile of women in general, and rural women in particular, paints a depressing image of educational backwardness, poverty, deprivation, bad health, and a lack of possibilities for economic, political, and social development. Rural women have a variety of roles that need more time and effort. **The present study makes an attempt to analyze the demographic factors of rural women. The total sample of the study comprised of 180 farm women drawn by random sampling method from six villages of Mavli and Vallabhnagar Block.** The demographic variables viz., age, education, caste, family type, family size, land holding, housing pattern, occupation, income and material possession were studied through a general information schedule. The profile analysis of rural women with respect to the demographic characteristics revealed that majority of the respondents (83.34%) had medium socio-economic status while 16.67 per cent respondents belonged to low socio-economic status. None of the respondent fall in the high socio-economic category.

Key word: socio-economic, Female labour, Rural Women, Rural Development

Introduction

“Women form about half of the population of the country, but their situation is in a poor state. For centuries, they have been deliberately denied opportunities of growth in the name of religion and socio-cultural practices. Before independence, women were prey to many abhorrent customs, traditional rigidities and vices due to which their status in the society touched its nadir and their situation was all round bleak. They were victims of widespread illiteracy, segregation in the dark and dingy rooms in the name of purdah, forced child marriage, indeterminable widowhood, rigidity of fidelity and opposition to remarriage of widows turning many of them into prostitutes, polygamy, female infanticide, violence and force to follow Sati, and the complete denial of individuality” (Zameer Ahmad Bhat, 2014).

Numerous socioeconomic aspects at the home level must be considered in order to fully comprehend the complicated nature of female labour force participation (Chaudhary and Verick, 2014). This covers things like level of education, social standing, income, the presence of children, and the spouse's employment situation. The current imperative is for women to be empowered holistically and critically, and all parties involved should work together to take practical action. The study is made to examine the socio-economic status of selected 180 rural women of Udaipur district in Rajasthan.

Methodology

The present study was conducted in Udaipur district of Rajasthan State. There are 20 panchayat samities in Udaipur district out of which 16 panchayat samities are tribal and 4 are rural panchayat samities. Out of 4 rural panchayat samities, two panchayat samities i.e. Vallabhagar and Mavli were selected randomly. From each selected panchayat samiti, three village i.e. *Daroli, Toos Dangiyaan and Mandesar* from Vallabhagar and *Junawas, Khemli and Aasna* from Mavali was selected randomly.

For selection of sample, a village-wise list of rural women was prepared for all the villages. From the list, a sample of 30 rural women from each village, who were willing to participate, ready to answer and cooperate with the researcher were selected randomly. Thus, the total sample consisted of 180 rural women. The personal interview technique was used by the researcher for the purpose of the data collection.

Results and Discussion

“The status of the women is sort of paradox. If on one hand she is at the peak of the ladder of success, on the other hand she is suffering from many difficulties in her life. As compared with past women in modern time have achieved a lot but in reality they have to still travel a long way. Their path is full of armored with their talent”. (Agarwal,2013)

The reason for disadvantageous position of women is extreme social restriction of freedom of movement and activities. Women are socially and physically suppressed. They are confined to the domain of the household and suffer from various restrictions even within that domain. Low female participation in education is one aspect of this general pattern of women limited interaction with the outside world. Women's limited opportunity to acquire education and information is bound to affect their ability to play an informed role in the family and in the society.

Data in Table 1 show that 41.67 per cent respondents belonged to the age group of 25-35 years whereas 33.33 per cent respondents were in the age group of 35-45 years and rest of the respondents (25%) were in the age group of 20-25 years. Data regarding marital status portray that majority of the respondents (86.67%) were married, 11.67 per cent respondents were unmarried and one respondent was divorced. It is evident from the data presented that nearly sixty per cent respondents (59.99%) had farming as their main family occupation, 33.33 per cent were non-wage earner and 6.67 per cent were involved in service sector. According to the field survey conducted by Sangeeta (2019) most of the respondents are in the age group of 30-40 year. Majority of the respondents get their marriage in their 20 years. Majority of the respondents are house wives. According to the field survey only 4.28 percent respondents are include in govt jobs and the highest percentage of the respondents are housewives which is 65.72 percent.

Table 1 Distribution of the respondents by their personal variables

n=180

S. No.	Personal variables	F	%
1.	Age		
	20-25 years	45	25
	25-35 years	75	41.67
	35-45 years	60	33.33
2.	Marital status		
	Unmarried	21	11.67
	Married	156	86.67
	Divorced	3	1.67
3.	Occupation		
	Non-wage earner	60	33.34
	Farming	108	59.99
	Service sector	12	6.67
4.	Education		
	Primary	72	40
	Middle	60	33.33
	Secondary	30	16.67
	Sr. Secondary	18	10

Table 1 further reveal that 40 per cent of the respondents were educated up to primary standard whereas one third of the respondents (33.33%) were educated up to middle, 16.67 per cent were secondary standard and rest were educated up to senior secondary standard (10%). Yasaswini *et. al* (2017) found that “most of the women are not educated and it is necessary to address socio-economic development of women in this Arepalli Rangampet,

Chandragiri Mandal, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh”. The findings of Kafura (2016) indicate that “most of the respondents were young aged (54%), having secondary education (48%), small family (65%) and farm size (53%) followed by short-term service experience (62.2%)”. Kumawat and Bansal (2017) also reported in their study, 47 per cent respondents belonged to age group of 31-45 years.

Table 2 Distribution of the respondents on the basis of social variables

n=180

S. No.	Social variables	f	%
1.	Caste		
	SC/ST	18	10
	OBC	108	60
	Middle	27	15
	Upper middle	27	15
2.	Family structure		
a)	Family type		
	Nuclear	72	40
	Joint	108	60
b)	Family size		
	Small (up to 4 members)	60	33.33
	Medium (5-8 member)	108	60
	Large (More than 8)	12	6.67
3.	Organization membership		
	No Membership	150	83.33
	Member of a formal organization	30	16.67

With regard to caste of the respondents, data presented in Table 2 reveal that majority of the respondents (59.99%) belonged to other backward caste, 15 per cent of the respondents were from middle and upper middle caste and rest of the respondents (10%) were from schedule caste/schedule tribe. Table 2 highlight that 60 per cent respondents belonged to joint family whereas 40 per cent respondents were from nuclear family. With regard to size of the family, Table 2 depicts that more than half of the respondents belonged to medium size family consisting of 5 to 8 members (60%), one third of the respondents had small size family (33.33%) and 6.67 per cent respondents belonged to large family size consisting of more than 8 members.

Data presented in Table 2 portray that majority of the respondents (83.34%) had no organizational membership while only 16.67 per cent of the respondents were member of self-help group. With regard to land holding, data presented in Table 3 reveal that majority of

the respondents (73.33%) had 1.0 to 2.5 acres of land, 16.67 per cent of the respondents had land holding between 2.5-5 acres while 10 per cent of the respondents had no land holding. Looking into housing of the respondents, Table 3 portray that majority of the respondents (76.67%) had pucca house while 23.34 per cent respondent had mixed house. None of the respondents was holding a kutcha house.

Table 3 Distribution of the respondents on the basis of economic variables

n=180

S. No.	Economic variables	f	%
1.	Land holding		
	No land	18	10
	1.0 to 2.5 acres	132	73.33
	2.6 to 5.0 acres	30	16.67
2.	Housing		
	Kutcha house	0	0
	Mixed house (Partially kutcha + pucca house)	42	23.33
	Pucca house	138	76.67
3.	Livestock ownership		
	Small herd size	108	60
	Medium herd size	60	33.33
	Large herd size	12	6.67
4.	Dwelling for livestock		
	Open/Nil	12	6.67
	Thatched / Kutcha	96	53.33
	Pucca	72	40

Visualisation of Table 3 reveal that 60 per cent of the respondents had small herd size, 33.33 per cent had medium herd size and a few of the respondents (6.67%) had large herd size. Data presented in Table 3 further reveal that more than half of the respondents (53.33%) had thatched dwelling for their livestock. About 40 per cent of the respondents had pucca dwelling followed by 6.67 per cent respondents with open dwelling for livestock. It is evident from Table 4 that all the respondents possessed television at their home while 20 per cent respondents were subscriber of newspaper or magazine. None of the respondents possessed radio or transistor.

Table 4 Distribution of the respondents according to communication media possession

n=180

S. No.	Communication Media	f*	%
1.	Newspaper/ magazine	36	20
2.	Radio/ transistor	0	0
3.	Television	180	100

*multiple response

Communication media: It is evident from Table 5 that all the respondents possessed television at their home while 20 per cent respondents were subscriber of newspaper or magazine. None of the respondents possessed radio or transistor.

Table 5 Distribution of the respondents according to farm assets n=180

S. No.	Particulars	f*	%
1	Desi / Wooden plough	112	62.22
2	Improve disc plough / Bullock drawn tiller	5	2.77
3	Tractor tiller/farm machinery attachments	5	2.77
4	Land leveler/ patella	4	2.22
5	Pump set	10	5.55
6	Hand tools	180	100.00
7	Sprayer / duster	80	44.44
8	Chaff cutter	180	100
9	Thresher	2	1.11
10	Winnower	180	100.00

*multiple response

Farm assets: It portray from Table 5 that cent per cent respondents were having hand tools, chaff cutter and winnower. Majority of the respondents (62.22%) were having desi plough and sprayer/duster (44.44%). Only 1.11 to 5.55 per cent of the respondents possessed thresher, land leveller/patella, tractor tiller/farm machinery attachments, improve disc plough / Bullock drawn tiller and pump set.

Table 6 Distribution of the respondents according to distinctive features n=180

S. No.	Particulars	f*	%
1	Transport		

	Nil	43	23.88
	Bullock/Mule/Camel cart	68	37.77
	Improvised cart	9	5
	Bicycle	73	40.55
	Scooter / Motor Cycle	150	83.33
	Tractor trolley / four wheeler	15	8.33
2	Electricity		
	At home	180	100
	On farm	60	33.33
3	Household items		
	Smokeless chullah / Kerosene stove	82	45.55
	Gas stove	170	94.44
	Pressure cooker	140	77.77
	Improved kitchen tools (peeler, grater etc.)	102	56.66
	Small equipment (fan, iron, mixer etc.)	118	65.55
	Large equipment (cooler, washing machine, churner)	60	33.33
	Refrigerator	68	37.77
	Sewing Machine	90	50

*Multiple responses

Distinctive features: Regarding distinctive features, Table 6 indicates that 83.33 per cent of the respondents had motorcycle and only 5 per cent of the respondents possessed improvised cart and tractor trolley/four wheeler. Regarding electricity, cent per cent of the respondents were having electricity at their home while electricity at farm was possessed by 33.33 per cent of the respondents. Regarding household assets, 94.44 per cent of the respondents possessed gas stove at their home while 77.77 per cent of the respondents possessed pressure cooker, small equipment at their houses (65.55%). sewing machine (50%), refrigerator (37.77%) and large equipments (37.77%).

Table 7 Distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic status

n=180

S. No.	Socio Economic Status	f	%
1.	Low	30	16.67
2.	Medium	150	83.33

3.	High	0	0
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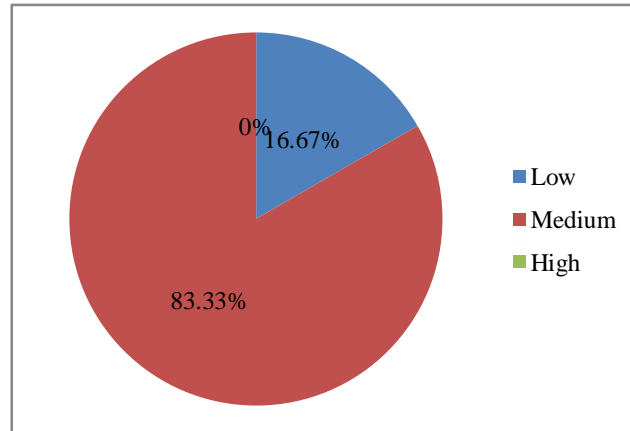


Fig 1 Socio economic status of rural women

Socio economic status: On the basis of scores obtained by the respondents in different aspects of socio-economic status scale, the respondents were categorized as having high, medium and low socio-economic status. Data in Table 5 and Fig 1 point out that majority of the respondents (83.33%) had medium socio-economic status while 16.67 per cent respondents belonged to low socio-economic status. None of the respondents was in the category of high socio-economic category. Devadarshini and Jena (2020) reported that “majority of the farmers (63.14 %) were under BPL (Below Poverty Line). When male wage rate was compared to female wage rate for agricultural activities, females represented a lower value Rs. 186.66 / day compared to male workers (Rs. 235.57+15.31), and it was statistically significant ($Z=11.71^{**}$ $p < 0.01$) for male workers”.

Conclusion

On the basis of findings it can be concluded that the status of rural women is intimately connected with their economic status, which in turn, depends upon education, roles and opportunity for the participation in economic activities. On the basis of scores obtained by the rural women in different aspects of socio-economic status scale, it is found that majority of the respondents (83.34%) had medium socio-economic status while 16.67 per cent respondents belonged to low socio-economic status. None of the respondents was in the category of high socio-economic category. Most of the women depend on their husbands for her small choice and decisions. Women in rural area are less aware of legal rights but hardly seek help to other. Education or literacy has been playing always important role in sustaining life and economic development in any state or country or place. It also causes the lesser

economic increases or also decreases the per capita income in any place. In the place where the literacy rate is high, their lifestyle and economic promotion is high. So, should increase the literacy rate because it is related to human development and socio-economic development. It also will be become women job and active the female working participation in any place. The government should be taken the initiative self-depending steps for development of rural women. It can be solved the economic problem of working women and increase their economic condition. The government launched the various schemes and law for women's. The awareness should be spread among the rural women. The government should be spread scheme sincerely to rural women. So, all the women are benefitted by it .

Conference disclaimer:

Some part of this manuscript was previously presented in the conference: 3rd International Conference IAAHAS-2023 "Innovative Approaches in Agriculture, Horticulture & Allied Sciences" on March 29-31, 2023 in SGT University , Gurugram, India. Web Link of the proceeding: <https://wikifarmer.com/event/iaahas-2023-innovative-approaches-in-agriculture-horticulture-allied-sciences/>

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