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Demographic Features of Farm Women

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ABSTRACT

The women performance in farm operation contributed a lot in uplifting social economic status of their own family, accelerates the face and rural development for progressive agricultural developments. As agriculture being a family activity women contributed significantly the development of region and state with enhancing agricultural production to change the rural scenario. However, women from low socio-economic status families work on wages which may not be sufficient to meet their family food requirement to protect rural farm household the greater is their contribution in agriculture. Vidarbha being known for its rainfed farming with major crops sown are cotton, soybean and pigeonpea. In few areas *Kharif* jowar and *Rabi* wheat is cultivated. Majority of the crops are labour oriented that to women as key labourer. The present study is an attempt to focus in demographic characteristics as age, education, employment generation and income. To study the age of farm women and to study the educational level and number of days of work on farm. Majority of the farm women are in the age group of 30-40 years. The educational level and the employment days of farm women are less. Investigation was carried in 3 villages of Akot tahsil in Akola district during 2025-2026. A sample of 50 rural farm women in the age of 20-60 years, who were involved in various farm activities were included in the study. The data was collected with the help of self structured and pre tested interview schedule.76% women are in the age group of 30-60 years. The overall farm women education level was poor. 64% women belonging to nuclear family, while 36% from joint family. Young farm women labouris relatively higher educated than senior, while the educational level of farm women from nuclear family was significantly better than in joint family. The hypothesis stated were accepted.

Keywords: Farm women, Socio-economic status, Demographic profile

INTRODUCTION

In Indian farming women are supposed as backbone of agricultural workforce with vital part in farm economy. However, it is not being accepted as key input in agriculture development and their contribution in food productive and food security. Women are active partners in farming and undertake the farm management along with men majority of farm operations are being contributed by women. Women had contributed significantly in agricultural development and management across the country. Hence, the hiring women labourer force with lower wages has become practice. Now-a-days, the poorer the farm household are greater in their contribution in agriculture with women share in farm labourer to the extent of 70% stay their contribution to the farm sector is ignored few attempts were made to recognize female labourer contribution in farm management and farm activities. The 2001 census data indicates that abut 38.9% women are working as agricultural labourers along with their household activities as such, their role in farming system is important as wage labourers. The interest of women in farm activities is day by day declining due to the low wage rate and life insecurity in addition to it the skill in operating farm equipment is being least acquired, as such these per cent contribution to farm labourers is declined.

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their own family, accelerates the face and rural development for progressive agricultural developments. As agriculture being a family activity women contributed significantly the development of region and state with enhancing agricultural production to change the rural scenario. However, women from low socio-economic status families work on wages which may not be sufficient to meet their family food requirement to protect rural farm household the greater is their contribution in agriculture. However, the women contribution has not been duly recognized and their actual participation in various crop production, cultivation and sowing is unnoticed. The activities by female labour in agriculture as well as in allied fields such as farm safety, family work, unhygienic farm condition are considered as constraints faced by farm women.

Farm women awareness on mechanized equipments needs to be increased for which farming as well as the implements be provided to farm women for their expertise especially in cotton placing weed having mechanized sickle for harvesting vegetable ring cutter mechanized thresher animal dunk collection trollies which will help them in minimizing their physical labour and increased waste efficiency.

Vidarbha being known for its rainfed farming with major crops sown are cotton, soybean and pigeonpea. In few are as *Kharif*, jowar and *Rabi* wheat is cultivated. Majority of the crops are labour oriented that to women as key labourer. The present study is an attempt to focus in demographic characteristics as age, education, employment generation and income.

Objectives

1) To study the age of farm women and
2) To study the educational level and number of days of work on farm.

Hypothesis

1) Majority of the farm women are in the age group of 30-40 years.
2) The educational level and the employment days of farm women are less.

Need of study:

The study on demographic features of farm women carries special significance in Vidarbha region. The area is broadly rainfed and hence the farm labourer faced hard situations during each crop season from land preparation, sowing to harvesting and about 80% work being performed by women labourer. As such the key input is deprived from the basic needs, skill and comforts on the other hand wages paid are not to the satisfactory levels. As such the farmer women are hardly supporting their economy of bread and butter from the wages. Hence, it fetches the need of study on their education, age and days of working and wages received.

Review of Literature

Chaudhary (2004), rural women locked the knowledge skill, information and decision making powers. They have no role in important decision making they are not consulted in any matter of their own life and cant opine about farm matter. They are considered as unpaid labour, no policy addresses them, negligible number of organizations disburse credit directly to rural women and no extension services are available.

Kalyani *et al.* (2005) the rural farm women have multiferious role which demand more time and efforts. The present study makes an attempt to analyze the demographic factors of farm women. The total sample of the study comprised of 240 farm women drawn by purposely by quota sampling method from 12 different villages of 4 Mandals from two districts (Guntur and Kurnool) of Andhra Pradesh. The demographic variables (age, education, caste, income, land holding, socio-economic status, farming experiences, age at marriage, marital status and number of children) were studied through a general of information schedule. The profile analysis farm women with respect to the demographic characteristics revealed that a majority of farm women were middle aged, illiterates had low income belongs to small farmer category had low material possession with low socio-economic status, medium family size, nuclear families, married earlier, with a high farming experiences.

Fabiyi *et al.* (2007), showed that women were involved in all farm activities from land clearing to harvesting, processing and marketing of produce.

Olojede *et al.* (2007). Labour employment was higher in small and medium farms. Female family labouor decreased with increase in farm size. Factors positively related to rural female employment were size of operational holdings and percentage of cash crops to the toal cropped area found that the occupation. Farm size and land of expected income exerted positive and significant influence on agricultural production by women farmers. As farm size and level of expected farm income

increased the agricultural output also increased.

Zend *et al.* (2009), observed that activities such as weeding cotton, picking, dibbling etc. were solely performed by women. Women spent more than six hours per day in the field. They performed all agricultural tasks in tradition of manner and were unaware of the new technologies.

Rao *et al.* (2010) studied the farming women in the age group of 15 to 35 years in Pune district. A sample of 418 was selected for the study. Most were from subsistence farming community and residing in extended family with in laws. Majority were educated upto primary level upto 20 % were educated upto 10^{th} and 12^{th} class.

Wavhale (2010) conducted study on 160 women in the age group of 25 to 45 years with socio-economic status low 45% were educated upto middle school and remaining upto college level. However, none of them were graduate. The family size of 42% respondent women was 5 to 8 and remaining belonging to the large and extended family. The monthly income of the family was Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000/- in 36.8% women and Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000/- for 30% families, respectively, 16% family were drawing more than Rs. 15,000/- per month.

Dhore (2011) conducted study on 120 Banjara women in Patur tahsil of Akola district in the age of 35 to 40 years. Illiteracy per cent was 37.67% majority of the farm women were working on farm daily 6 to 7 hours and the nature of work was sedentary to heavy type.

Patel (2012), farm women do make certain decisions on their own, while others are made jointly with their husbands or other family members and others are made solely by others. In an agrarian nation like India their is currently a need to empower farm women in decision making. As a result, the decision made by farm women at the right time affects the ventures success. Women can food yield by 20% to 30% increasing the overall agricultural output in poor nations by 2.5 % to 4% if they have came timely, convenient and dependable access to resources as males. In addition to raising women income.

Singh (2012) the share of women labour force in agriculture is expected to be 55% by 2025 A.D. Women contribution to the farm sector has been ignored and inadequately underestood. In our economy very few scientific attempts has been made to examine the actual participation of female labour in crop production and other subsidiary activities at the farm level while developing and deseminating appropriate agricultural technologies for the small and marginal farmers, proper understanding of gender issues becomes all more important. If it is overlook, then the adoption of new agricultural technologies is likely to be very low, in view of the above discussion.

Dahiya and Vishwanathan (2015), the health, nutrition and capacity to breast feed and care for children of women may be severely impacted by excessive agricultural workloads, pathogen exposure and child care responsibility. Also, studies show that, socio-economic background determine nutritional adequacy.

Dominic *et al.* (2023) women in agriculture is a widely discussed arena, but nutrition of women in agriculture is yet to be explored thoroughly. The current paper focuses on farm women aspirational districts. These are the districts identified by NITI Ayog, which are the purely performing in a states in various developmental dimensions. Hence, the current paper aims at understanding the nutritional status and socio-economic profile of farm women in these districts assuming their higher vulnerability to mal-nutrition. Survey design was used for the current study. The study was conducted in Tamilnadu from 2018-2022 as part of Ph.D. research work, affiliated to National Dairy Research Institute.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was carried in 3 villages of Akot tahsil in Akola district during 2025-2026. A sample of 50 rural farm women in the age of 20-60 years, who were involved in various farm activities were included in the study. The data was collected with the help of self structured and pre tested interview schedule with open and closed questions in depth the women were interviewed while data collection simple tabular analysis was used for presentation of data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frequencies and percentage presented indicated that majority of the farm women (76%) are in the age

Table 1 : Distribution of farm women according to their age

Sr. No.	Age group	Frequency	Per cent
1.	20-30	9	18
2.	30-40	13	26
3.	40-50	15	30
4.	50-60	10	20
5.	60-70	3	6
	Total	50	100

group of 30-60 years. The age group 60 and above contributes only 6% farm labourers while the contribution of youngsters below 30 years was 18% (Table 1).

The Table 2 present the distribution level according to their educational level.

It is surprising to note that 56% of farm women are illiterate, while 60% are having their educational level 10th to undergraduates, 12% are educated upto 7th and 10th standard while 14% upto 4th standard. The overall farm women education level was poor.

Table 2 : Distribution according to their education

Sr. No.	Education Level	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Std.4th	7	14
2.	Std.7th	6	12
3.	Std. 10th	6	12
4.	Above 10th	3	6
5.	Illiterate	28	56
	Total	50	100

The distribution according to family type indicated that 64% age belonging to nuclear family, while 36% from joint family. Nuclear family farm women are significant contributor. The Table 3 presents the average number of days of employment per year.

Table 3 : Distribution according to their family type

Sr. No.	Family Type		Frequency	Per cent
1.	Nuclear	1	32	64
2.	Joint	2	18	36
	Total		50	100

68% of the farm women were employed during a year upto 180 days, 6% could get employment upto 150 days per year, while 12,6 and 18% could secure employment of 120, 90 and 60 days per year, indicating upto 75% of the farm women employment days were satisfactory, according to season of farm cultivation and harvesting.

The following Table 4 presents the value of Karl person correlation coefficient between the selected variables.

The values of Karl person and correlation indicated that significant negative correlation was observed between age and education level as well as family type and educational level concluding young farm women labour are relatively higher educated than senior, while the educational level of farm women from nuclear family was significantly better than in joint family.

The hypothesis stated were accepted.

Table 4 : Karl person correlation and coefficient between the personal characters

Sr. No.	Features	Age	Education	Family type
1.	Age	1		
2.	Education	0.7285*	1	
3.	Family type	0.3218	0.6318*	1

Conclusion

1) 76%women are in the age group of 30-60 years
2) The overall farm women education level was poor.
3) 64% women belonging to nuclear family, while 36% from joint family.
4) Young farm women labour are relatively higher educated than senior, while the educational level of farm women from nuclear family was significantly better than in joint family.
5) The hypothesis stated were accepted.

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