

The Impact of Developmental Programmes on the Nutrition Awareness of Farm Women

K. Shantha Kumari and Shashikala Puttaraj

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, greater attention is being given to developmental programmes related to rural women in India (Anonymous, 1992). These programmes having multiple dimensions are being implemented with the idea of enhancing the family income (Dharma Rao, 1981). One of the important developmental programme that has been implemented since 1982, is WYTEP – Women Youth, Training and Extension a Danish assisted project in Karnataka. WYTEP has emphasis on agricultural development which in turn is expected to contribute for better living standard and welfare of the family. At present the programme offers three types of training programmes for farm women viz., 10 days Institutional Training Programme, 5 days Link Workers Training, 2 days Pre-seasonal training programme at village level (1995). Since, inception of the WYTEP programme the FTI in Bangalore has trained as many as 5106 farm women under Institutional Training and around 3991 farm women during pre-seasonal training programme organized at village level. (Annual Report, 1999).

Since WYTEP is designed on the assumption, that increased food production would improve the household economy, which in turn would automatically improve the household nutrition its curriculum has not included nutrition aspects along with agricultural education and training. However, the research studies have not supplemented this view. So far, systematic review of the programme has not been carried out to Analyse the role of WYTEP programme on health, diet, nutritional status, and life style of farm women. Therefore, the present study was under-taken to evaluate the impact of WYTEP training on the nutrition awareness of participating farm women. Since, it has been established that nutrition education is essential for promoting optimum good health for the family, on an experimental basis, the component of nutrition education was introduced in the curriculum along with training in agriculture in selected groups of farm women for comparative analysis. The impact of additional nutritional training on the

nutrition awareness of the farm women after a period of six months was also measured.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted over a period of one and half years covering aspects of evaluation of the training programme and the outcome of training and nutrition education on the nutrition awareness of farm women. The subjects for the study consisted of 200 trainee farm women along with 50 untrained farm women as a control group, drawn from a total of 43 villages in the three taluks of Bangalore district, South India. Among these 100 farm women had undergone training during the period from 1988 to 1993, the remaining 100 farm women were on the training currently were given nutrition education on an experimental basis along with agriculture training, as the regular training programme in agriculture did not have nutrition component in the curriculum.

Nutrition awareness of selected group of respondents was measured twice at the beginning and also after 6 months of the training programme. The awareness was measured by listing of the items in 2 parts, while 4 point scale was used for each item listed under part-A, Part-B consisted of items which were to be indicated “Yes” or “No”. Part-A consisted of general awareness regarding basic aspects of health and nutrition, problems, programme and health habits and Part-B consisted of specific items as related to function or deficiencies of nutrients.

The awareness scheduled was administered to all the selected 100 trainees on the First day of the training programme followed by a education programme in nutrition which was along with the agriculture training programme. At the end of 6 months period these trainees were assessed for their nutrition awareness at the village level in their own households. The nutritional awareness scores were computed to measure the nutritional knowledge.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

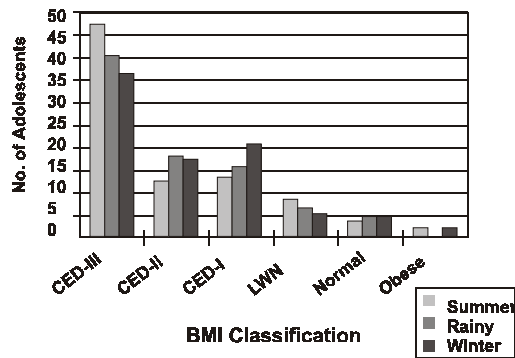
The scores obtained by the respondents on their nutritional awareness at the start of the

Table 1: Mean scores of pre and post test on nutritional awareness FWNT

Nutritional aspects	Statement	Response on nutritional awareness				t-value
		Pre test		Post test		
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Part A General	20	26.31	7.80	44.56	8.30	23.40**
Part B Specific	20	12.77	1.90	15.58	1.60	15.70**
Total	40	19.54	5.60	30.07	4.80	9.03**

** Significant at 1% Level

nutrition education and also after 6 months are shown in Table 1 and figure 1. Thirteen measured scores for their awareness in both general and

**Fig. 1. Nutrition awareness of respondents**

specific nutritional aspects were highly significant after nutrition education even after a period of six months. Table 2 shows the responses in aspects defined under both basic and applied aspects, while found to be significant, the basic concept

Table 2: Response of Nutritional Awareness of FWNT

Nutritional aspects	Pre test	Post Test	t-value
	Mean \pm SD	Mean \pm SD	
I. Basic Aspects			
Basic Concepts	10.81 \pm 2.50	16.08 \pm 3.80	3.43 *
Health/nutrition Problems	5.86 \pm 3.90	14.22 \pm 3.66	4.17**
Nutrition programmes	4.28 \pm 2.50	6.81 \pm 2.10	1.34 ^{NS}
Health habits	6.00 \pm 2.40	7.44 \pm 1.50	0.88 ^{NS}
II. Applied Aspects			
Basic	6.38 \pm 0.90	7.23 \pm 0.70	2.11 ^{NS}
General	4.18 \pm 1.20	5.96 \pm 1.30	3.86 ^{NS}
Specific Groups	2.22 \pm 0.70	2.38 \pm 0.80	0.30 ^{NS}

NS. Non-significant

*- Significant at 5% Level

** significant at 1% Level

and the aspects related to health/nutrition problems were found to be significant at the end of six months indicating the interest in the aspects related to personal benefits, neither the age nor education (literacy level) (Table 3) were found to influence the scores on the nutritional awareness of the farm women given nutrition education as-pect of the education component under WYTEP.

The inclusion of the nutrition component as part of the training programme showed a positive effect on the nutrition awareness of the trained farm women. The low scores obtained before nutrition education reflected a poor knowledge of nutrition which is very important for these women, they being the food providers of the family. Given the thrust on the total family welfare this emphasizes the importance of including relevant appropriate nutrition aspects in training programmes for agriculture development launched with a view to generate income and alleviate poverty. Study (Lunven and Sabr, 1981; Lunven, 1982; Sakorn et al., 1998) supports that all developmental programmes should be implemented on the basis of concept of good nutrition and health

Table 3: Relationship between age-nutritional awareness of FWNT

Nutritional aspect	Characteristic	Correlation coefficient between characteristics and nutritional awareness	
		Pre test	Post test
Part A			
General Knowledge On nutrition	Age	-0.2798NS	-0.2717 ^{NS}
	Education	0.4029NS	0.3828 ^{NS}
Part B			
Awareness on concepts	Age	-.03345NS	-0.2530 ^{NS}
	Education	0.4058NS	0.2624 ^{NS}

NS. Non significant

for proper utilization of increased food production and income.

The absence of nutrition education particularly in the women having low literacy the increased income alone may not improve the household nutrition in general, children and women themselves in particular. Since, the training curriculum under WYTEP has not included nutrition aspects along with agricultural training and education, despite the ultimate objective being directed towards promotion of food security and quality of life in which the major change being improved nutrition.

The findings of the study reinforce the fact that in the absence of other factors including knowledge of relevant nutrition aspects is essential to improve household women nutrition. It is therefore necessary to have consideration for the inclusion of appropriate practical nutrition aspects in such women oriented developmental programmes.

KEYWORDS Women. Agriculture. Training. Nutrition. Knowledge.

ABSTRACT Agricultural development programmes are initiated to bring about improvement in the nutritional status of the rural population. WYTEP- women youth training extension project introduced since 1982 onwards aims to promote the welfare of farm women through training in agriculture. However, the curriculum does not have nutrition

component. Hence, on experimental basis, a total of 100 farm women from 3 Taluks in Bangalore Dist., Karnataka were given nutrition education along with agricultural training and the nutritional knowledge was measured before and after over a period of 6 months. The training included both general and specific aspects of food and nutrition. The scores were found to be highly significant after the training as compared to initial scores. Education or age did not appear to influence the scores. The scores continued to be significant ever after a period of six months. Hence, it is stressed that all the training programmes should have nutrition component which can influence the nutrition of the household positively,

REFERENCES

- Annual Report of FTI: UAS, Hebbal, Bangalore (1999).
 Anonymous: Poverty estimate, unanswered question – occasional paper-3 Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi (1992).
 Dharma Rao, G.: How to reduce rural poverty. *Kurukshetra*, **30**: 9-13 (1981).
 Lunven, P.: The nutritional consequences of agricultural and rural development Projects. *Food and Nutrition Bulletin*, **4(3)**: 17-22 (1982).
 Lunven, P. and Sabr, Z.: *Introducing Nutrition into Agricultural and Rural Developmental Projects*. UN, New York (1981).
 Sakorn, Dhanamitta, Sawanee, Virojailee and Aree, Valyasevi: Implementation of a conceptual scheme for improving the nutritional status of the rural poor in Thailand. *Food and Nutr. Bull.* **Vo. 3 No. 3** (1998).
 Women, Youth, Training and Extension Project (Karnataka) An insight into the genesis and progress of the project. Prepared jointly by Danida Advisor and the Department of Agriculture (1995).

Authors' Addresses: **K. Shantha Kumari** Associate Professor, Division of Home Science, University of Agricultural Sciences, Hebbal, Bangalore 560 024, Karnataka, India
E. mail: Shanthakumari3@rediffmail.com

Shashikala Puttaraj, Department of Studies in Food Science and Nutrition, University of Mysore, Manasagangothri, Mysore, Karnataka, India