



## SOCIO-ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT OF RURAL WOMEN THROUGH SKILL TRAININGS

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### ABSTRACT

Women play a vital role in the socio-economic transformation of the country. It is being increasingly realized that mobilizing women to take up entrepreneurial activities can ensure an economic change. Through entrepreneurship development, a woman can not only generate income for herself but also her family, will have freedom of choice, a sense of self-confidence and self-efficacy, ability to educate her children and reshape her own life. The present is a follow up study of five years after imparting skill trainings to rural women organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Vijayapur. Socio-economic status of the respondents was collected using the scale developed by Aggarwal (2005). Self esteem was measured using the scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). Pre and Post test was conducted to see the impact of skill development programme. Frequency and percentage was used for data analysis. There was increase in the knowledge gained by the women on stitching activities like drafting, cutting and stitching new garments. Women with no education had also gained the skill of tailoring which helped them to earn decent amount of money for their livelihood lifelong. Tailoring has transformed the lives of these rural women to set up a profitable venture for themselves and become self-dependent. The sense of self-reliance, increase in family income, rise in living standards has improved their self esteem. The skill development training on tailoring has helped the women improve their financial status, self esteem, decision making power, confidence, status, and respect in the family and society.

**KEYWORDS :** Skill, tailoring, rural, women, Socio-economic status, Knowledge, self-esteem

### INTRODUCTION

Women play a vital role in the socio-economic transformation of the country. It is being increasingly realized that mobilizing women to take up entrepreneurial activities can ensure an economic change. Through entrepreneurship development, a woman can not only generate income for herself but also her family, will have freedom of choice, a sense of self-confidence and self-efficacy, ability to educate her children and reshape her own life. In recent past government has placed special emphasis on economic empowerment of women to create sustainable and productive employment and safeguard their livelihood support system. It envisaged that through need based short term skill training, a reasonable level of competence may be achieved and people may either become "employable" or "self-employed". Clothing is a basic need and it will forever continue to be. Thus tailoring is a profession that can be taught to any woman or a group of women irrespective of her education so that women can have a continuous source of income. Thus the study was undertaken to equip the rural women with the skill of tailoring and see its impact on the livelihood of rural women. The objectives of the study were to create livelihood opportunity for rural women, to focus on experiential learning through hands on training, to compare the socio-economic status of rural women prior to and after skill development and to assess the self esteem of rural women after skill development.

### METHODOLOGY

The present is a follow up study of five years after imparting skill trainings to rural women organized by Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Vijayapur by selecting Arkeri, Utal and Hitnalli village of Vijayapur taluk, Karnataka. The criteria for selection of the trainees was that they should have basic knowledge of pedaling the machine. Interested women were selected and divided into batches of 20 each. Finally the total sample comprised of 110 women with few dropouts. The skills of women were enhanced through hands on training at KVK Vijayapur by teaching new techniques and designs in tailoring. Pre-test and post- test design to collect the data on

enhancement of SES, knowledge and self-esteem. Interview technique was used for data collection. Socio-economic status of the respondents was collected using the scale developed by Aggarwal (2005). The status was divided into categories such as upper high, high, upper middle, lower middle, poor and very poor. Self esteem was measured using the scale developed by Rosenberg (1965). The score ranges from 0-30. Score less than 15 indicates low self esteem and more than 25 indicates good self esteem. Pre and Post test was conducted to see the impact of skill development programme. Frequency and percentage was used for data analysis.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic characteristics revealed that 34 per cent of the respondents belonged to 26-30 years age group followed by 29 per cent in the age group of 21-25 years, 23 per cent in 16-20 age group and 14 per cent in 31-35 age group. Among the respondents, 74 per cent of them were married, 22 per cent were unmarried and 4 per cent were widow. Further, among the respondents, 50 per cent of them had completed primary education, 43 per cent had completed their high school, 5 per cent were illiterates and 2 per cent were graduates. The size of the family of the respondents revealed that more than half (56%) of them belonged to small size family followed by 33 per cent to medium size family and 11 per cent to large family. Further size of land holding of the respondents revealed that 61 per cent had 1-5 acres of land, 25 per cent had less than one acre, 8 per cent were landless and 6 per cent had 6-10 acres of land.

**Table 1: Distribution of the respondents on the basis of reasons for attending the training programme**

Sl. no	Reason	Frequency	Percentage
1	To contribute to family income	34	30.91
2	To establish a new enterprise	12	10.91
3	Out of interest	11	10.00
4	To acquire new skills	20	18.18
5	To utilize free time	4	3.64

6	As per the advise of friends and neighbours	9	8.18
7	Inspired by other successful entrepreneurs	14	12.73
8	To become independent	6	5.45

Comparatively higher percentage (30.91%) of the respondents attended the training programme to contribute to their family income, followed by 18.18 per cent to acquire new skills, and 12.73 per cent were inspired by other successful entrepreneurs. Other reasons included beneficiaries aspiring to establish new enterprise, taking tailoring as interesting activity, advise of friends and neighbors, to become economically independent and to utilize free time. Similar findings were reported by Purohit *et al.* (2016). They found that the women beneficiaries perceived cutting and tailoring training as good and increased their knowledge about stitching activity. Trainees learnt drafting and stitching of new garments and acquired efficiency.

**Table 2: Benefits perceived by respondents after the training programme**

Sl. no	Benefits perceived	Frequency	Percentage
1	Increased knowledge	85	77.27
2	Learned new skills	102	92.73
3	Acquired efficiency in tailoring	87	79.09
4	Helped in establishment of self enterprise	79	71.82
5	Clarified doubts related to enterprise	98	89.09
6	Increased confidence	65	59.09
7	Got new information in tailoring	90	81.82
8	New exposure	96	87.27

Results presented in table 2 reveal that, an overwhelming percentage of women who attended training programme opined, the training was effective in learning new skills (92.73%), for clarification of doubts related to enterprise (89.09%), training was a new exposure (87.27%), got new information in tailoring (81.82%), acquired efficiency in tailoring (79.09%) and this training helped in establishing self enterprise (71.82%). Findings are in line with the findings of Joshi (2002) and Purohit *et al.* (2016), these studies report that vocational training programme provided knowledge and skill about various income generating activities such as embroidery, tailoring, carpet weaving, handicrafts, saffron and cardamom production.

**Table 3: Annual profit earned by the respondents from tailoring**

Sl. no	Profit range (Rs.)	Frequency	Percentage
1	6000 - 25000	12	14.63
2	25001 - 50000	24	29.27
3	50001 - 75000	32	39.02
4	75001 - 100000	9	10.98
5	100001 - 125000	3	3.66
6	125001- 150000	2	2.44

\* Multiple responses

Table 3 depicts that, about 39.02 per cent of the women have earned a profit of Rs. 50001 to 75000 per year followed by 29.27 per cent who earned Rs. 25001 to 50000. It was positive note to reveal that, altogether about 68 percent of the women beneficiaries were making profit of at least Rs. 25000 to the maximum of 75000 per annum. The findings of Purohit *et al.* (2016), also reported that, vocational training programmes enhanced income level of rural women.

**Table 4: Utilization of earned income by women entrepreneurs**

Sl. no	Reason	Frequency	Percentage
1	To clear debt	30	36.59

2	For children's education	43	52.44
3	Purchase of household material	66	80.49
4	Upgradation of established enterprise	16	19.51
5	Other family requirements	68	82.93
6	Savings	14	17.07

The results presented in table 4 revealed the utilization of earnings gained in the tailoring activity after undergoing training. It was clear that, majority of women (82.93%) utilized the earned amount for family requirements, while 80.49 per cent used the amount to purchase household material and 52.44 per cent utilized the money for children's education, while 36.59 per cent used the earned amount to clear debt. It is also evident from the World Bank report(2011) that, when women control more household income, either through their own earnings or through cash transfers, children benefit as a result of more spending on food and education. Kumar and Kumar (1992) revealed that rural women's income in a family is very essential and important in relation to the nutritional economic and educational upliftment of family.

**Table-5: Impact of training on Socio-economic status of the respondents**

Socio-economic status	Pre-test	Post-test	Percentage increase/decrease
High (61-75)	8 (10)	14 (17)	7
Upper middle (46-60)	12 (15)	35 (43)	28
Lower middle (31-45)	47 (57)	28 (33)	- 24
Poor (16-30)	15 (18)	5 (7)	-11

\* Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage

Results presented in table 5 shows the increase in income over a period of five years of training. A positive trend in the increased income was noted, as the percentage of women in high level of SES increased from 10 to 17 per cent, and women in upper SES level increased from fifteen per cent to 43 per cent. However the percentage of women in both lower middle and poor category declined over a period of five years. The results of studies conducted by Purohit *et al.* (2016).

**Table-6: Self-esteem of the respondents**

Self esteem	Pre-test	Post-test	Percentage increase/decrease
Low (<15)	36 (44)	7 (8)	- 36
Medium (15-25)	41 (50)	63 (77)	27
High (> 25)	5 (6)	12 (15)	11

\*Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage

Results on levels of self esteem as indicated in table 6 revealed that, the percentage of women in high self esteem increased from 6 per cent to 15 percent indicating impact of training and earnings which boosted up the self esteem, similarly the percentage of women in middle level of self increased from 50 per cent to 77 percent, and the percentage of women in low level of self esteem decreased from 44 to 8 per cent. The results of the study is supported by the study conducted by Basha (2017) who concluded that economically empowering women and giving independence enhanced the self esteem of rural women.

**CONCLUSION**

There was increase in the knowledge gained by the women on stitching activities like drafting, cutting and stitching new garments. Women with no education had also gained the skill of tailoring which helped them to earn decent amount of money for their livelihood lifelong. Tailoring has transformed the lives of these rural women to set up a profitable venture for themselves and become self-dependent. The sense of self-

reliance, increase in family income, rise in living standards has improved their self esteem. Women's economic participation and their ownership and control of productive assets speeds up development, helps overcome poverty, reduces inequalities and improves children's nutrition and health.

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