

Case Study

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Family Review on Community Awareness and Attitudes toward COVID 19 Virus in Rural Areas of Telangana

Kampasati Veeraiah*

Department of Political Science, Osmania University, Hyderabad, Telangana, India

*Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

The present study is intended to evaluate the awareness levels of the contagion virus Covid 19 among farm women in rural areas of Munagala Mandal of Suryapet District, including their attitude and understanding of lock down taken in their lives. A well-structured questionnaire was designed to collect data in two parts of a: General Information, b: awareness on the virus and status of farm activities during lockdown etc. A total number of 75 active farm women from 5 belonging to Munagala Mandal of Suryapet district were studied. Out of 75 farm women nearly 55 percent of Members are in middle age group (53.33%) with Middle / high School (53%) and majority (69%) of them belongs to small families. Cent percent (100%) of the farm women understood that Covid is a virus born disease and the main symptoms caused by this virus are cough and fever. It is witnessed that farm activities during lockdown have been cut down due to the effect of virus resulting only two (vegetables and fodder) types of crops were sown in lock down periods in a small area (50 acres) of farm lands along with the storage problems of the harvested produce as they can store them at homes only for 1 -2 months prompting the essentiality to address the requirement community storage facilities at village /Mandal levels.

Keywords

Covid 19 virus,
community
awareness, attitude

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Introduction

World widely, India is also one of the countries bounded by the most affected countries for cases and deaths of Covid 19 since January 2019 with lot of communal distress. As of 10 May 2020, there were 41, 472 active Cases in India among which 19,357cured / discharged and 2109 deaths were reported. Out of which in Telangana state 1326 active cases were reported and 832 cured and discharged while 32 cases were

found to be deaths (India Situation Report - 15, Coronavirus Disease, 2020).

Pandemics are outburst that affects millions of people, disturbing civilization and destroy financial systems. Corona virus infection is an unmatched hazard that affects endurance and has put an unforeseen sum that makes worse the socioeconomic situations throughout the world. The novel SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus came into sight in the city of Wuhan, China, last year and has since rooted a great COVID-

19 epidemic and extended to more than 70 other countries. The recent studies found that respiratory coronaviruses were associated with a variety of respiratory illnesses; however, their pathogenicity was considered to be low. The predominant illness associated with infections was an upper respiratory infection with occasional cases of pneumonia in infants and young adults. These viruses were also shown to be able to produce asthma exacerbations in children as well as chronic bronchitis in adults and the elderly. On December 31 of last year, Chinese authorities alerted the World Health Organization (WHO) of an occurrence of a novel strain of coronavirus causing severe illness, which was subsequently named SARS-CoV-2. As of February 20, 2020, nearly 167,500 COVID-19 cases have been documented, although many more mild cases have likely gone undiagnosed. The virus has killed over 6,600 people

Coronavirus disease is an unmatched natural risk that affects survival and has put an unexpected amount of stress on the socioeconomic institutions throughout the world. WHO and country relevant agencies have been issuing advisories and strict quarantine counter measures. The Indian government is looking at unique ways to make citizens aware of the coronavirus disease in India. In a new move, the government has decided to use our smart phone to inform more people about the disease. The Department of Telecom (DoT) has asked telecom operators to put coronavirus awareness messages as a caller tune instead of the regular ringtone. "The Union Health Ministry has made functional 52 laboratories for testing samples while 57 labs have been designated for helping in sample collection for COVID-19 to enhance capacity for diagnosis and detection of the disease," said a report by new agency *PTI*. (TIMES OF INDIA.COM) Hence, in order to enhance the knowledge, improve the attitude and practice of the specific control

measures, there is a need to find out the existing awareness regarding COVID 19 virus among the general population, especially in rural areas. Thus the study was proposed to study the understanding, awareness, attitudes, and practices of Carona virus among farm women belonging to Munagala Mandal of Suryapet District, Telangana state.

Data Collection

Study was piloted in five villages Munagala Mandal of Suryapet District, viz. Aakupamula, Barakathgudem, Mukundapuram, Gardepally and Thadvai villages. A total of 75 farm women data was studied for their understanding and awareness of Covid from these respective villages.

Results and Discussion

Personal profile

Out of 75 farmwomen nearly 55 percent of Members are in middle age group (53.33%) and aged 31 to 50 years and more than thirty percent (32.00 %) are belonging to young age ie less than 30 years.

Nearly 55 percent (53%) percent of the group's members are with Middle / high School followed by primary schooling (28%) and illiterates were only among (8%) of members and a least percent of members (1.33%) with Higher education. This might be as the members are situated in a block/Mandal where it is very near to the city and also know the importance of education.

General profile reveals that a great majority (69%) of them belongs to small families showing the deprivation of joint family systems in the present days, while nearly twenty-five percent (24%) of the members belonged to medium families with 5 to 8 members in it and only 5 percent of members are living with large families.

Cent percent (100%) of the members were having farming as their primary source of income and are actively participating in agricultural activities while, few of the respondents are also into agriculture allied sectors like dairy, poultry and goat rearing also with (5 %,4% and 10.66 %). Whereas only less percent (16%) of respondents are into business and services (9%).

Understanding of Corona Virus / COVID - 19 and the lockdown.

It is observed that cent percent (100%) of the farm women understood that Covid is a virus born disease, the majority of the participants identified the disease correctly as a viral disease and the main symptoms caused by this virus are cough and fever. While only 10 percent of respondents (12%) knows that one should not go out of the house in order to prevent the spread or outbreak of the virus. This can be decided as the constructive effects of awareness programmes conducted by the departments as well the media. The findings are in consistency with the results given by Khowaja *et al.*, 2011, in his study that awareness regarding pdm H1N1 was not adequate among students regarding disease transmission, preventive measures, and vaccinations, resulted in a worldwide public health problem and risk of outbreak, increased awareness would be a solution to avoid spread and complications of a pandemic. Yuvaraj Krishnamoorthy *et al.*, 2018, in this study approved that Education and advice from health-care professionals were found to be the major predictors of knowledge and attitude toward prevention of dengue infection. Balkhy *et al.*, (2010) in his study on awareness levels on pandemic also opined that due to the low level of knowledge about the disease among the public may increase the public

transmission and frequent communication between physicians and the public is recommended to help dispel myths about the disease and to spread better information in limiting the spread of the disease.

Data pertaining to understanding of lockdown among farm women was found that cent percent (100%) of farm women understood not to go to work and have to go out only when needed, while 90% of farm women understood not to go out at all. The results are in concurrence with Balkhy *et al.*, (2010) in his study stated majority of participants agreed that the government should isolate patients with pandemic in special hospitals, avoid inviting workers from areas where the disease is prevalent, restrict travel to and from such areas, and be ready to close schools if number of cases dramatically increases. More than one-half of participant's preferred not to travel during epidemic and to stay at home.

It is observed that farm activities during lockdown have been cut down due to the effect of virus resultant only two (vegetables and fodder) types of crops were sown in lock down periods in a small area (50 acres) of farm lands. The results are in agreement with Amitha Gaire (2020). Institute of Agriculture and Animal Sciencethat sector like agriculture is largely affected due to this pandemic because several agriculture activities are halted and none of the farmers are being able give their best for this. Results also revealed that due to lock down the harvested products (Paddy, vegetables) were unable to get processed and facing the storage problems as they can store them at homes only for 1 -2 months. There is no community storage facilities in the adopted villages displaying the necessity to address the requirement as to cope up with situations like wise whenever occurs.

Table.1 Distribution of the farmwomen according to age (n = 75)

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Young (less than 30 years)	24	32.00
Middle aged (31 to 50 years)	40	53.33
Old (above 50 years)	11	14.67

Table.2 Distribution of the farmwomen according to their education (n = 75)

Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	6	8.00
Primary & Middle	21	28.00
Matric & Higher Sec	40	53.33
Graduate	3	4.00
Postgraduate	1	1.33

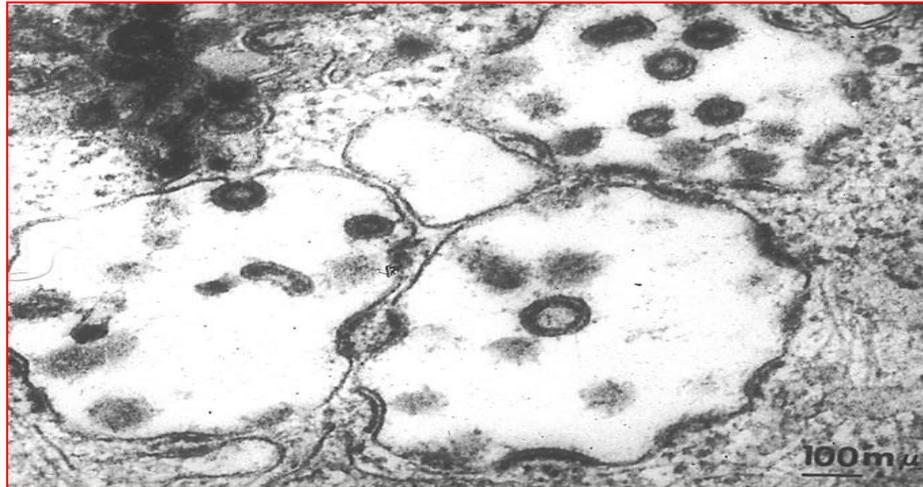
Table.3 Distribution of the farmwomen according understanding of Corona virus (N=75)

Understanding of Corona virus	Frequency	Percentage
It's a viral disease	75	100.00
One gets cough and fever	75	100.00
One should not go out of the house	9	12.00
Do not know	63	84.00

Table.4 Distribution of the farmwomen according to other animal husbandry activities during lockdown (n = 75)

Husbandry activities	Percentage	Frequency
No of animals owned	21	28.00
Cows/buffaloes	16	21.33
Goats	5	6.67
Poultry	-	-
Who does animal husbandry activities		
Husband	12	16.00
Yourself	4	5.33
Jointly	6	8.00
Hired help	-	-
In case animal gets sick		
taking to vet clinic	42	56.00
calling doctor	26	34.67
use indigenous methods/medicine	7	9.33

Fig.1



Source : History and Recent Advances in Coronavirus Discovery

Fig.2

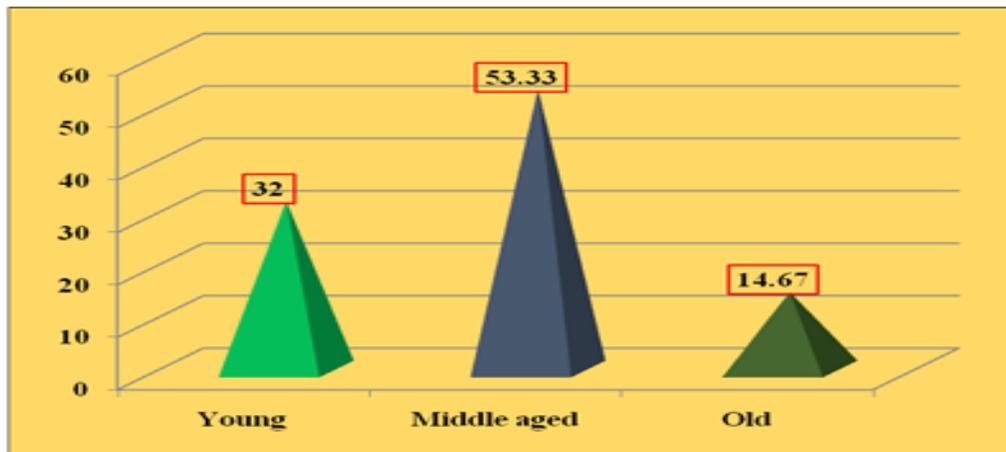


Fig.3

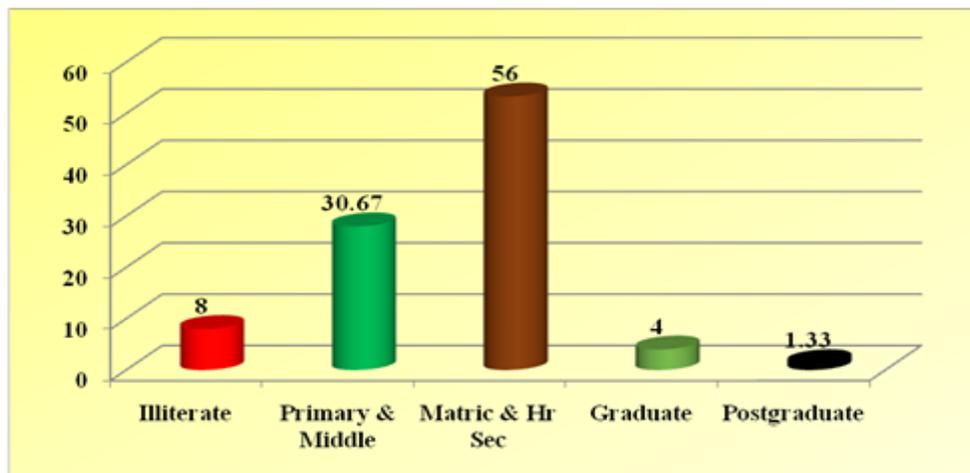
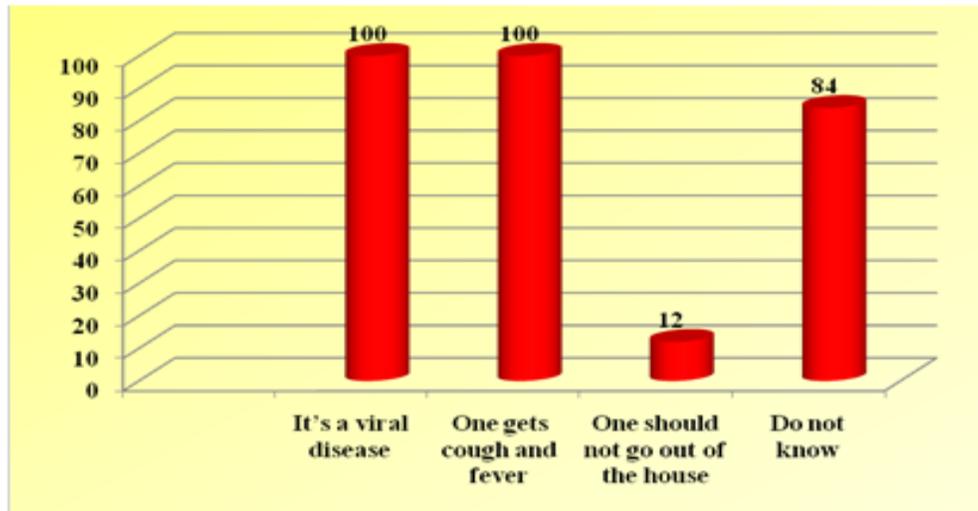


Fig.4



This marks are in harmony with Radhakrishnan, 2020, that due to pandemic corona virus people are advised not to come outside from the home, not allowed to sell their products. Vegetables are perishable so ordinary farmer cannot store his/her products in his house. Farmers goods were not get transported from one place to another place which leads to the poor income for the farmer's community.

Small and marginal farmers will be badly affected if they are unable to continue working their land, earn remunerative product prices, and gain access to markets for purchase or sale World agricultural prices show signs of a rise. Despite such price rises, farmers are unlikely to be the beneficiaries; most benefits are expected to flow to wholesale and retail traders as well as other middlemen. *R. Ramakumar is NABARD Chair Professor, 2020.*

Animal husbandry activities were also reported to be reduced during lockdown as 16 percent of respondents have needed their husbands to work at dairy and could not take any hired persons help due to the virus. Although in case of sickness of cattle majority

(56%) of them reported to take them to the nearby veterinary hospitals followed by thirty percent (34.67%) by calling a veterinary expert to home for treatment showing the interrupted availability of veterinary medical services among the villages. This may be decided as impact of new schemes being introduced in the state.

Should we worry? Nowhere to go. The word "pandemic" gives an impression that there are many people dying every day; this impression may cause populace to be anxious, to fill special covid hospitals, and to disrupt normal life and economic activities. The general public should know that Corona virus is a global but can be prevented by practicing some precautions. The present study reveals that Cent percent of the farm women understood that Covid is a virus born disease and the main symptoms caused by this virus are cough and fever. It is observed that due to lockdown farm activities have been cut down resulting only two (vegetables and fodder) types of crops were sown in lock down periods in a small area (50 acres) of farm lands along with the storage problems of the harvested produce as they can store them at homes only for 1 -2 months prompting the

essentiality to address the requirement community storage facilities. Therefore it is very clear that keeping spread of information and ramping up efforts to incline awareness of the pandemic and control measures among the people is the only approach to cope with the virus.

Let's spread the word, not the virus.

Limitations

Study to assess the awareness regarding the Covid virus disease among rural farm women noted that they are more aware about the outbreak of disease as most of them are situated very near by to the city and are in access with news channels and networks receiving awareness and updates on daily outbreaks of the pandemic. It is unfair to collect data or measures the awareness regarding disease only in specific time and a group of the society instead of different parts of the society in the different periods. As the district is under lock down and restricted movement data was collected only on phone in calls and not in person reflecting in missing of some information so this survey may not accurately reflect respondents' real world responses.

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