
The main objectives of this study were 1) To assess the existing socio economic and health status and nutrition knowledge of women in Self Help Groups. 2) To study the anthropometric measurements, biochemical, clinical picture of the selected women. 3) To assess the impact of health, nutrition education and food technological practices on the nutritional status and income generation of the selected women in self help groups.

The major hypothesis tested were 1) The socio-economic status study and the democratic factors which influence the knowledge of SHG women towards nutrition and health 2) Intervention programme which would bring positive impact on the Nutrition and Health Knowledge level of the SHG women. 3) Attitude and dietary and food technological practices of the respondent with income generations.

The present study was carried out in Sivagangai district of Tamilnadu State with 500 successful SHG. The tool used for the collection of data was a pretested interview schedule.
Majority of respondents among SHG women were to the age group 30 – 50 had secondary level education and were from poor families. The percentage of income spent on foods was high and the cereals were the predominant foods. Very little protective foods were included in their foods. Boiling was the main method followed for cooking the foods. Even though unhygienic sanitary conditions prevailed prevalence of epidemic diseases was not observed.

Intake of energy, protein, calcium, vitamins and iron were lower than the Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA) values for the women of the corresponding age groups. Even though anthropometric measurement of the women were found to be normal, their nutrients intake was inadequate.

The clinical assessment of the SHG women showed the symptoms like spoon shaped nails, paleness of skin, puffiness of face, tiredness dyspnea on exertion etc. The study revealed that protective foods were lacking in the mothers diet and efforts should be made to educate the mothers with respect to nutrition, food habit and hygiene.

It was felt that nutrition and health education should be given to the SHG women with respect to hygiene sanitation and general development of good food habits.

The problems faced by SHG women in production and marketing were, lack of adequate money for investment which was the major problem. Lack of infrastructure, lack of knowledge of marketing, difficulty in meeting the
demand, lack of marketing avenues, training, storage facility and public transport facility were the other problems reported by them.

The recommendations based on the study would be i) Increasing loan amount, ii) Provision of training in more vocations, iii) Providing better infrastructure facilities and, iv) increasing more marketing avenues.