

## **SOCIO-PERSONAL STATUS OF BROILER FARMERS IN LAKHIMPUR AND SONITPUR DISTRICTS OF ASSAM**

**RUPJYOTI HAZARIKA, K. P. KALITA, K. K SAHARIA, J. D. MAHANTA AND N. SAIKIA**

**College of Veterinary Science, Assam Agricultural University, Khanapara,  
Guwahati-22, Assam, India**

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### **ABSTRACT**

A study was conducted to find out the socio-personal status of broiler farmers in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur districts of Assam. Fifty numbers of broiler farmers from each district were selected for the study. The data were collected through a well developed and pre-tested interview schedule. The study showed that in both the districts majority of the broiler farmers were Assamese Hindu community, married and having formal education. Averages of 54 per cent farmers were practising broiler farming as a main source of income. Average annual family income was found to be lower in Lakhimpur (Rs. 1.688 lac) than that of Sonitpur (Rs 2.793 lac) district.

**Key words :** Broiler farmers, Socio-personal status, Assam

Broiler farming might have gained popularity among the rural mass due to certain advantages like operational convenience, low investment, early return and high market demand. With an objective to know the socio-personal status of the broiler farmers the present study was undertaken in two districts – Lakhimpur and Sonitpur, of Assam.

The study was conducted in two districts - Lakhimpur and Sonitpur of Assam for a period of six months. For this study two blocks from each district and five villages from each block was considered. Ten broiler farmers having minimum 100 numbers of birds were selected from each village was considered for the study; altogether, fifty numbers of respondents from each district were considered for the study. The data related to the socio-personal status of the broiler farmers were obtained by direct questioning through a pre-tested interview schedule.

From the table 1 it could be observed that the majority of the respondents belong to Assamese Hindu community i.e. 80 per cent in Lakhimpur and 86 per cent in Sonitpur district with an average of 83 per cent. The respondents belonging to Assamese Muslim community was 20 per cent and 14 per cent in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur district, with an average of 17 per cent. The reason might be due to the fact that study was conducted in the Hindu community dominated area. The findings of the present study were in

agreement with a study conducted in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal where 66 per cent of the farmers were Hindus<sup>3</sup>.

The mean age of the farmers in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur district was  $37.38 \pm 1.63$  and  $34.84 \pm 1.10$  years respectively, with an average of  $36.11 \pm 0.98$  years. On an average 72 per cent of the farmers under study were married (Lakhimpur 68 and Sonitpur 76 per cent) with a family size of  $5.94 \pm 0.23$  in Lakhimpur and  $6.04 \pm 0.29$  in Sonitpur district with an average of  $5.99 \pm 0.22$ . 52 per cent of respondents in Lakhimpur district and 66 per cent in Sonitpur district (average 59 per cent) live in joint family which might be due to the fact that the large joint family may be a dominating culture in rural areas. Similar findings were reported by other workers<sup>1,2</sup>.

From the study it could be observed that percentage of farmers who has passed middle school, high school/higher secondary and graduation in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur district were 18 and 7 per cent, 58 and 58 per cent, and 24 and 26 per cent, with an average of 16, 58 and 26 per cent respectively. All the respondents were literate in both the district which might be due to the availability of more number of schools in the study area and the education sector getting a fast leap due to various Government schemes. The present findings are in good agreement with other workers<sup>1</sup>.

## Socio-personal status of broiler farmers

The average annual income of the farmers in Sonitpur and Lakhimpur districts was found to be Rs. 2.793 lac and 1.688 lac respectively, which differ significantly ( $P < 0.01$ ). The broiler farmers in Lakhimpur district are more affected by the losses due to flood in comparison to the farmers of Sonitpur district, which might be the probable reason for variation in the average annual income among the farmers of both the district. The variation in the income was also reported by other workers<sup>3</sup>.

It was also observed that the broiler farming is the main source of income for 52 per cent and 54 per cent farmers in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur district respectively with an average of 54 per cent.

This might be due to ever increasing unemployed youths and eagerness to become self-employed. In addition, low investment and quick return on investment might have attracted towards broiler farming. However, broiler farming is being practised as subsidiary income source along with business, service and others works at an average rate of 30, 10 and 6 per cent respectively. The poultry farming as main occupation was also reported in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal<sup>3</sup> and Bangladesh<sup>1</sup>.

From the present study it could be concluded that broiler farming has been taken up as a self employment avenue by the rural educated youth and as an income source for earning livelihood.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to distribution of different attributes on socio-personal status in Lakhimpur and Sonitpur district of Assam

| Attributes                            | Type                            | District       |                | Overall Mean   | t-value |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------|
|                                       |                                 | Lakhimpur      | Sonitpur       |                |         |
| Community (%)                         | Assamese Hindu                  | 80             | 80             | 80             |         |
|                                       | Assamese Muslim                 | 20             | 19             | 19             |         |
| Average age (yr.)                     |                                 | 37.36±1.60     | 34.84±1.1      | 36.11±0.98     | 1.56    |
| Marital status (%)                    | Married                         | 68             | 70             | 69             |         |
|                                       | Un-married                      | 32             | 30             | 31             |         |
| Average family size (nos.)            |                                 | 5.84±0.50      | 6.04±0.29      | 5.99±0.22      | 0.3     |
| Family type (%)                       | Joint                           | 52             | 65             | 58             |         |
|                                       | Nuclear                         | 48             | 35             | 41             |         |
| Average educational qualification (%) | Literate                        | 0              | 0              | 0              |         |
|                                       | Primary (upto class IV)         | 0              | 0              | 0              |         |
|                                       | Middle school (upto class VIII) | 18             | 14             | 16             |         |
|                                       | High school/secondary           | 58             | 58             | 58             |         |
|                                       | Graduation and above            | 24             | 28             | 26             |         |
| Average family income (Rs. in lac)    |                                 | 1.688<br>±0.17 | 2.793<br>±0.20 | 2.240<br>±0.14 | 8.07**  |
| Primary occupation                    | Business                        | 26             | 34             | 30             |         |
|                                       | Service                         | 12             | 8              | 10             |         |
|                                       | Farming                         | 52             | 56             | 54             |         |
|                                       | Any other                       | 10             | 2              | 6              |         |

\*\* Significant ( $P < 0.01$ )

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