Socio-Economic Assessment of farmer in 'Kandi' region of Jammu

Parveen Kumar[1], S. K. Kher[2], M. S. Nain[3], P. S. Slathia[4]

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in four districts of Jammu region to find out the socio-personal profile, the awareness regarding various programmes and the various information sources used by the farmers. The findings of the study revealed that more than one third of the respondents were illiterate, agriculture was the occupation of sixty percent of the respondents, 72.50 per cent of the respondent belonged to marginal category having less than one hectare of land. As far as social participation is concerned, 89.32 per cent of the respondents were without membership of any organization. The respondents had a low awareness regarding various programmes. The findings of the study also revealed that among the localite sources, input agencies were the main source of information followed by progressive farmers. Among the personal cosmopolite sources, the Junior Agriculture Assistant was the main source of information followed by Agricultural Extension Officer. Among the Impersonal cosmopolite sources 2.55 per cent got information from newspapers followed by radio and least in order was television.

Key words: Socio-personal, information, localite, cosmopolite, input dealers, marginal,

INTRODUCTION

Information is a key component in the process of development. Adereti (2006) defined information as data that have been put into a meaningful and useful context which is communicated to receipt that uses it to make decision. Access to information is identified as one of the key enablers of enhancing agricultural productivity growth. It plays a predominant role in creating awareness regarding the adoption of new technologies and welfare schemes. It assists the farmers to take decisions and appropriate action for further development. The real challenge is not producing information or storing information but making people to use information (Chandra, 2012). Communicating information and knowledge from the information resources or developers to the extension clientele is an integral part of extension process (Babu *et al.,* 1997; Blackburn and Flaherty, 1994). Timely availability of relevant information is vital for the farming community to plan their field as well as managerial functions. Various studies have shown the relative importance of different information sources used by the farmers. Oto Jacob Okwu and Shimayohol Daudu (2011) reported that interpersonal communication channels were generally found to be more available,

accessible and used by the farmers than the mass media to obtain information on improved farm technologies. Relatives/ friends/neighbors constituted the most regularly available, accessible and used interpersonal channels although extension agents and television were mentioned by the farmers. The study done by Yadav et al (2011) revealed that among different personal cosmopolite sources and channels of agriculture information the agriculture supervisor was most utilized by all the categories of fenugreek growers. The findings further revealed that among different impersonal cosmopolite sources and channels of agriculture information the television / film shows was most utilized source for getting information about improved fenugreek cultivation.

Studies have revealed that sources of information, including extension, enhance the adoption of technology (Abebaw and Belay, 2001). Adoption of technology is further influenced by physical, socio-economic, and mental factors including, agro ecological conditions, age, family size, education, source of information, and farmer's attitudes towards the technology (Neupane *et al.,* 2002; Rogers, 2003). There exist a gap between information available and its dissemination and thus a

[1] Senior Research Fellow, DLRSS, SKUAST-J, [2] Professor and Assoc. Professor, Division of Agricultural Extension Education, SKUAST-J, [3] Sr. Scientist IARI, Division of Agricultural Extension Education, New Delhi

need for finding out better and faster means of communication (Lal, 2012). The NSSO (2005) survey also revealed that only 40 per cent of farmer households have access to one or more sources of information. Despite call claims being made about the information inclusiveness, the situation at the ground level is totally different. The 59th round of the National Sample Survey (NSSO, 2005) provided valuable insights. The data collected from 51,770 households in 6638 villages showed that sixty percent of farmer households did not access any information on modern technology that year. For the farmers who accessed information, progressive farmers and the input dealers were the main source of information (Bhagat *et al.,* 2004 , Nain *et al* 2015). Broadcast media was also used a great deal to obtain information, which included radio, television and newspapers. The public sector extension worker was a source of information for only 5.7 per cent of farmer households interviewed. This was followed by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) which was an extension source for only 0.7 per cent of the sample farmers. Only 0.6 per cent of the farmers accessed the extension services through Private agencies and NGO's. The present study thus was conducted with the following objectives, to identify the socio-personal profile of the respondent, to assess the awareness of the respondents regarding different agricultural related programmes and to document the various information sources used by the respondents for agriculture related information

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was carried in rain fed Kandi belt of Jammu region comprising four districts of Jammu, Kathua, Udhampur and Rajouri covering 240 respondents. From each district two blocks were selected and from each block two Panchayats were selected. From each Panchayat two villages were selected and from these two villages fifteen respondents were selected based on proportional representation of number of households from each village. From each block thirty respondents were selected. Thus from each district sixty respondents were selected ultimately taking the final sample size to 240.

Data collection

The data was collected from the respondents by direct personal interview with the help of a well prepared interview schedule.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-personal Profile

The background information of respondents was collected to know the socio-personal profile of the respondents. Different age categories were formed based on Singh's (1975) Cube root method of categorization. On the basis of their land holdings the farmers were categorized into marginal, small, semi-medium, medium and large. These five categories of land holdings were based on agriculture census, 2001, Government of Jammu and Kashmir (Bhatt and Poddar, 2008). The data in table 1 reveals that 56.25 per cent of the respondents fall in the age group 51-85 years. More than one third (35.41%) of the respondents were illiterate. These were followed by primary (32.50%) and high school (13.75%). The table further depicts that agriculture was the occupation of sixty percent of the respondents followed by agriculture along with private job (19.17%), agriculture with government job (8.75%), and agriculture with own business was the major occupation of remaining 12.08 percent of the respondents. The data further revealed that 72.50 percent of the respondents belonged to marginal category having less than one hectare of land. These were distantly followed by small category (18.75%) having 1 to 2 hectare of land and the remaining (8.75%) fall in the semi medium category having 2 to 4 hectare of land. None of the respondents had medium (4-10 ha) or large size of holdings (>10 ha). The average number of family members engaged in farming was 2.20. As far as social participation is concerned, a high (89.32%) of the respondents were without membership of any organization while a low (9.59%) of the respondents were members of only one organization and only (1.09%) of the respondents were members of more than one organization. Further the data also divulges that majority (65.50%) of the respondents were Brahmins followed by Schedule castes (19%), Schedule tribes (9%), Rajputs (4%) and Sikhs (2.50%). All the respondents were married.

Table1: Socio-personal profile of the respondents

n=240

Particulars	
Age (farmers %)	
i. Age group (25-39)	08.75
ii. Age group (39-51)	35.00
iii. Age group (51-85)	56.25
Average age in years	51.99 (±9.74)
Education (farmers %)	
i. Illiterate	35.41
ii. Primary	32.50
iii. Middle	11.66
iv. High	13.75
v. High school	03.33
vi. Graduate	03.33
Average number of formal schooling years	7.39 (±3.81)
Size of family (farmers %)	
i. Up to 5 member	67.50
ii. More than 5 member	32.50
Average size of family members	5.99 (±1.28)

Occupation (farmer %)	
i. Agriculture only	60.00
ii. Agriculture + private job	19.17
iii. Agriculture + government job	08.75
iv. Agriculture + business	12.08
Operational land holding (farmers %)	
i. < 1ha (marginal)	72.50
ii. 1-2ha (small)	18.75
iii. 2-4ha (semi-medium)	08.75
Average operational land holding in ha	0.76 (±0.50)
Average no. of family members engaged in farming	2.20
Social Participation (farmers %)	
i. Member of no organization	89.32
ii. Member of one organization	09.59
iii.Member of more than one organization	01.09
Marital status (farmers %)	
i. Married	100
ii. Unmarried	0.00
Caste (farmers %)	
i. Brahmin	65.50
ii. Schedule Caste	19.00

Table 2: Awareness of the respondents regarding different agriculture related schemes

n=240

Name of scheme	Awareness of the scheme (%)
Kissan Credit card	17.90
Crop Insurance	23.70
Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana	7.50
Water Harvesting	4.50
Livestock insurance	32.50
Dairy Loan	32.50
Horticulture technology mission	21.60
Sericulture	
Incentives for growing Mulberry Plants	18.70
Free inputs	15.40
Construction of rearing sheds	12.90
Training from sericulture department	32.50
Establishment of Goatry unit	17.50
Establishment of Fish pond	13.30

Regarding awareness of the respondents, a list of various programmes started by the government was made and accordingly administered to the respondents to know whether they are aware of such programmes. The data in the table 2 reveals that respondents had a low awareness regarding different schemes. Only 17.90 percent of the respondents had awareness about Kissan Credit Card, 23.70 per cent had awareness about crop insurance, 7.50 per cent were aware of Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, 21.60 per cent were aware of horticulture technology mission, 18.70 per cent were aware of incentives for growing mulberry plants, 15.40 percent had awareness regarding provision of free rearing kits, 12.90 percent were aware of scheme regarding construction of rearing sheds for silkworm rearing.

Sources of agriculture related information

Agbamu (2006) describes agricultural related information as all published or unpublished knowledge in all aspects of agriculture. The data in the table 2 shows the various sources of information used by the respondents in the study area. It reveals that among the Localite sources, input agencies were the main source of information for 30.41 per cent of the respondents. The input dealers were followed by progressive farmers who were source of information for 25.41 per cent of the respondents followed by friends who were the main source of information for 9.58 per cent of the respondents. From the Personal cosmopolite sources, the junior agriculture assistant was the main source of information for 9.16 per cent of the respondents followed by Agricultural Extension Officer (5%). Among the Impersonal cosmopolite sources a meager (2.55%) got information from Newspapers followed by Radio (1.66%) and least in order was Television (1.25%). Rest of the respondents had not used these sources. Demonstration which is one of the best methods for motivating people to adopt a new technology was not used at all.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their source of information

n=240

Source of Information	No. of respondents	Percentage
Localite		
Input dealers	73	30.41
Progressive farmers	61	25.41
Friends	23	09.58
Peer group	3	01.25
Neighbor	8	03.33
Cosmopolite		
Personal Cosmopolite		
Village level worker	0	00.00
Junior Agriculture Assistant	22	09.16
Agriculture Extension Officer	3	05.00
Demonstrations	0	00.00
Impersonal Cosmopolite		
Radio	4	01.66
Television	3	01.25
Newspapers	6	02.50

CONCLUSION

The sixteen different sources for accessing information on modern technology for farming, about 16.7 per cent of the farmers got their information on a daily basis from other progressive farmers in their villages. Farmers also consider input dealers (13.1%), radio (13.0%) and television (9.3%) as important sources of information. The result of the NSSO survey were in congruence with the present study where 30.41 and 25.41 percent of the respondents got information from input dealers and progressive farmers respectively. Hence there is a need to impart training to the input dealers and progressive farmers regarding new technologies which they could further disseminate to the farming community. At the same time there is also a need to aware the farmers

of the latest programmes launched for their benefit. It has been found that awareness of the people about the programmes is low. Many of the provisions of the programme remain unimplemented or are wrongly implemented due to various constraints facing the implementing agencies such as shortage of staff, lack of training and exposure to best practices, weak monitoring and vigilance as expressed by Kakadia, 2012. This calls for providing the relevant information about the objectives of different schemes through use of farm literature, organizing regular agricultural workshops, camps at village or Panchayat level and making use of Information and communication technology.

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