STUDY OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF DAIRY FARMERS ABOUT DAIRY TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Akola district of Maharashtra with 59 dairy farmers to their socio-economic status and measure level of knowledge about dairy technology. Socio-economic status of dairy farmers was poor and most of the respondents were observed with average knowledge level regarding dairy technology and from the study it is clear that extension agencies have to be more active to enhance the knowledge level through target oriented extension training programmes.

KEY WORDS: Socio-economic status, Knowledge level, Dairy farmer, Dairy technology, Rural

INTRODUCTION

About 70 per cent of the population of India is engaged in agriculture and rearing livestock, subsidiary to agriculture. There exists a symbiotic relationship in man-land livestock ecosystem. India posses about 56.8 per cent (97.10 million) of the world's buffalo population and is also a homeland for the best milk breed of buffaloes in the world. Livestock sector is providing not only food security but also the employment, especially in rural area. Rapidly growing markets for livestock products in general, and dairy products in particular (owing to rise in per capita incomes) are opening new avenues for enhancing rural incomes. Majority of rural population residing in peri-urban areas have casted their mode of livelihood with preparation of dairy products as a business to satisfy need of vast urban population. Buffaloes are considered more useful for quality butter and ghee because of its higher fat component in milk, ability to utilize agriculture by-produce and require fewer amounts of kilocalories to produce one kilogram milk. Preparation of dairy by-products like Curd, Paneer, Khoa etc. will be more fruitful if the dairy farmers adopt newer technologies at group level viz. Self help groups than working individually at domestic level using advanced dairy technologies the dairy farmers can enhance their level of production and thereby income (Mithlesh Kumar, 2006). Therefore, it is necessary to assess the knowledge level of dairy farmers about dairy technology. Hence, survey was conducted to study the knowledge level of dairy farmers about dairy technology alongwith the socio-economic status of dairy farmers.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A sample survey of 59 dairy farmers of village Sangavi Mohadi, Dist. Akola was conducted to know the socio-economic status and knowledge level of dairy farmers. The village Sangavi Mohadi was selected purposefully because it is located at 6 km. away from Akola city and the almost all villagers are dairy farmers and involved in supply of milk and milk products to Akola city. In total 59 dairy farmers were randomly selected as respondents for the study in the month of March 2012. Direct face to face interaction method was undertaken during data collection. A preformed questionnaire was designed to assess socio-economic status and knowledge level about milk product preparation, milch breed, milking method, clean milk production, hygiene, milk born diseases, importance of feed and diagnosis of adulteration in milk etc. Information was also collected to assess the impact of farmers training given by government officials and sources of information for latest dairy technologies. The primary data was analyzed using statistical tools like average, percentage etc.

The scores for knowledge level were assigned as poor (0 to 3), average (4 to 6) and good (7 and above) by judging correct answers given by dairy farmers during interview.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic status of dairy farmers

The socio-economic status of dairy farmers has been documented and summary is given in Table no. 1. Sample survey indicated the average age group of dairy farmers varied from 24 to 62 years

Table 1. Socio-economic status of dairy farmers

Sr. no.	Parameter	Types	Male (n=34)	Female (n=25)	Total	Percentage
1	Age	Upto 20 yr	0	0	0	0.00
		20 to 40 yr	21	20	41	**69.49**
		40yr and above	13	5	18	30.51
2	Literacy	Literate	34	19	53	**89.83**
		Illiterate	0	6	6	10.17
3	Occupation	Dairy farming	34	25	59	**100.00**
		Others	28	21	49	83.05
4	Land holding	Landless (o acres)	1	2	3	5.08
		Small (0 – 2.5)	18	12	30	**50.85**
		Marginal (2.5 -5.0)	10	6	16	27.12
		Medium (5.0 – 10)	3	4	7	11.86
		Large (Above 10)	2	1	3	5.08
5	Family size	Small (0-3)	5	3	8	13.56
		Medium (4-6)	28	10	38	**64.41**
		Large (7 and above)	1	12	13	22.03
6	Annual income	Low (below Rs. 20,000/-)	18	16	34	**57.63**
		Medium (Rs. 20,000 to 1,00,000/-)	10	7	17	28.81
		High (Above Rs. 1,00,000/-)	6	2	8	13.56
7	Animal flock size	Small (0-3)	22	19	41	**69.49**
		Medium (4-8)	10	5	15	25.42
		Large (9 and above)	2	1	3	5.08

and 69.49 % dairy farmers were under middle age group (20-40 years). Bainwad *et al.* (2007) observed the age group of dairy farmers as 41-50 in Latur district of Maharashtra. The mean family size was 4.29±0.09. Survey of dairy farmers revealed that both male and female were engaged in other allied businesses like agriculture, labour or shop etc. 50.85 % dairy farmers were having small (0 to 2.5 acres) land holder and 57.63 % dairy farmers were belonging to low annual income category. Most of the dairy farmers (69.49%) had small animal flock (0 to 3). These findings are similar with the findings of Shinde (2011).

Knowledge level of dairy farmers

The knowledge level of dairy farmers was assessed using a preformed questionnaire by interviewing them personally and presented in Table 2. All the respondents (100%) were interested in dairy business. Study revealed that respondents i.e. dairy farmers were having optimum knowledge about preparation of various household milk products (79.66%), proper milking method (71.19%), importance of quality feed and balanced ration for higher milk production (74.58%), however, the respondents had poor knowledge about good hygienic practices (18.64%), milk borne diseases (38.98%) and methods of detection adulteration in milk and its side effects (35.59%), respectively. The information about correct practices and concepts of hygiene, Zoonotic diseases and adulteration was given by academic staff members of institute during survey to improve the knowledge level of dairy farmers. Most of the respondents (93.22%) expressed the need of training in dairy technology area. The overall knowledge level of dairy practices was noticed higher in Male respondents than female respondents, which is indicative of need of more extension work amongst female dairy farmers. The sources of information for dairy husbandry practices were observed as State Agriculture and Veterinary Universities (49.15%), Sheti-shala (11.86%), Self Help Groups (3.39%) and 35.59% were not having any descript source, respectively. Similar findings were observed by Meena et al. (2007) and Gangasare and Karanjkar (2009), respectively.

Table 2. Knowledge level of dairy farmers about dairy technology

Sr. no.	Particular (Knowledge area studied)	Percentage of respondents *		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Preparation of milk products	**50.85** (30)	28.81(17)	**79.66**(47)
2	Milch breed	**40.68** (24)	32.20 (19)	**72.88** (43)
3	Hygiene awareness	**15.25** (9)	3.39 (2)	18.64 (11)
4	Proper milking method	**38.98** (23)	32.20 (19)	**71.19** (42)
5	Importance of feed	**44.07** (26)	30.51 (18)	**74.58** (44)
6	Milk borne diseases	**25.42** (15)	13.56 (8)	38.98 (23)
7	Adulteration in milk	13.56 (8)	**22.03** (13)	35.59 (21)
8	Need of training	**52.54** (31)	40.68 (24)	**93.22** (55)

* Figures in parenthesis are indicating number of observations in each category

The knowledge level was assessed by scoring the respondents according to the correct answers given by them, into three categories viz. poor, average and good. 67.80% respondents were

observed with average knowledge, followed by good (22.03%) and poor (10.17%). Though the share of female in average category was higher (37.29%) than male respondents (30.51%), the negligible share (1.69%) of female respondent in good category is suggestive that there is scope to enhance knowledge level of female dairy farmers.

Table 3 : Score of knowledge level

Category	Male	Female	Total
Poor (0 to 3)	6.78 (4)	3.39 (2)	10.17 (6)
Average (4 to 6)	30.51 (18)	37.29 (22)	67.80 (40)
Good (7 and above)	20.34 (12)	1.69 (1)	22.03 (13)

* Figures in parenthesis are indicating number of observations in each category

The need of target oriented training programme to enhance the level of knowledge in dairy farmers was underlined through survey. Extension agencies have to be more active in providing several exposures to the female dairy farmers regarding scientific dairy technology practices.

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