

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF DAIRY FARMERS OF HISAR DISTRICT

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Abstract: The study was conducted on 120 dairy farmers of Hisar district to ascertain their socio-economic and psychological characteristics. A well structured interview schedule was developed to collect the data from the dairy farmers. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the respondents were middle aged, literate having nuclear family with medium family size. Majority of the respondents were falling under small land holding and some of them were landless with small and medium herd size. Further study revealed that majority of dairy farmers was having low extension contact as well as low level of mass media exposure. Majority of them had medium economic motivation but showed very poor social participation.

Keywords: Profile characteristics, extension contact, mass media exposure and economic motivation.

Introduction

Livestock sector has been playing an important role in Indian economy and is an important sub sector of Indian agriculture. The number of milch animals (in-milk and dry), cows and buffaloes, has increased from 111.09 million to 118.59 million, an increase of 6.75% (Livestock Census, 2012). India has achieved the distinction of becoming the largest milk producing country in the world. In spite of India's position as the highest producer of milk, the average annual milk yield from cattle and buffalo is only 1214 kg as against the world average of 2104 kg per lactation (Planning commission, 2012). Improved productivity of milch animals and higher returns of dairy farmers crucially depend on the quality of extension services. The focus of extension is on improving the capacity of the people. This capacitating calls for providing access to information, innovation and appropriate technologies, skill and knowledge building which requires integrated, need-based and timely delivery of services as close to the people as possible (Vidya, 2009). A clear understanding of the situational and psychological realities of the dairy farmers is of paramount importance in designing need based and farmer centred extension programmes to improve their knowledge and skill in bringing about better productivity of the milch animals. Considering these facts,

the present study was conducted to know the antecedent characteristics of dairy farmers of Hisar district of Haryana.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state selected purposely keeping in view the fact that the district has highest population of livestock. From the nine blocks of this district, two blocks namely, Adampur and Hisar-II blocks were selected following simple random sampling technique. Two villages were then randomly chosen from each of the two blocks using simple lottery method. Thus, a total of four villages were selected in all. The selected villages were Kabrel and Siswal from Adampur block and Shahpur and Aryanagar from Hisar-II block. Thirty farmers practising dairy farming were selected randomly from each village as respondents for the study. Therefore, the total sample size for this study was 120 dairy farmers. The data were collected with the help of pre-tested structured interview schedule during 2013-14.

Results and discussion

The results of the investigation carried out are presented through the Table 1 showing the profile of the dairy farmers:

1. Age

Results in Table 1 indicate that majority of the respondents (67.5%) belonged to middle age group. The reason for the above results may be due to the fact that dairy as a profession demands a good deal of managerial experience with physical fitness. Middle age is considered as productive time period in the life of an individual moreover younger generation is less interested in taking up dairy farming as its occupation. Further dairying is a recurrent income generating enterprise. Almost similar findings were also observed by Saha *et al.* (2010) and Raval and Chandawat (2011).

2. Education

It could be observed that about 84.17 per cent of the respondents in the study were literates. Majority of dairy farmers (57.5%) were having primary or high and secondary level of education. However, 15.83% respondents were illiterate. The probable reason for this finding might be that the facility for primary to higher secondary education available at the village and nearby cities might have encouraged the dairy farmers to study up to that level. The fact revealed that the livestock farmers started schooling, tried to reach at least primary school before he has been drop out. Sabapara *et al.* (2014) observed that the percent level of

illiterate, upto primary, secondary and above secondary upto college level were 37.00, 29.67, 28.33 and 5.00, respectively, in dairy husbandry practices in Surat district of Gujarat.

3. Family type

It was noticed that 73.33 per cent of dairy farmers belonged to nuclear family while 26.67 per cent hailed from joint family. Similarly, Mande and Thombre (2009) and Sathyanarayan *et al.* (2010) found that 63.33 per cent of the respondents were having nuclear type of family in Latur district. Mali and Ligade (2015) also found that 88.67 percent livestock farmers were having the nuclear family.

4. Family size

Most of the dairy farmers (54.16%) had medium family size followed by small (30%) and then large (15.84%) family size. The findings of Sathyanarayan *et al.* (2010) showed that 53.85 per cent of the farmers belonged to medium family size category followed by small (40%) and then large family size (6.16%). Again the results of the present study are similar to the findings of Meena *et al.* (2012). This implies that the respondents were aware of the advantages of family planning.

5. Land holding

Majority (70.83%) of the respondents possessed land. Of these, 45.83 per cent possessed small land holding while 19.17 and 5.83 per cent were medium and large land holders, respectively. However, 29.17 per cent of them were landless. This implies that comparatively small land holders and landless are more involved in dairy farming. These findings are in contradiction to those reported by Rathod *et al.* (2012) who revealed that 76.67 per cent respondents were medium land holder followed by small (12.67 %) and larger land holding (10.66 %) farmers.

6. Herd size

It is evident from the Table-1 that the majority (81.66 %) of dairy farmers were having either small or medium herd size. Only 18.34 per cent dairy farmers were having large herd size. Vidya *et al.* (2009) found that a high majority (88.33 %) possessed small herd and the rest (11.67 %) had large herd.

7. Social participation

The data indicated that majority (66.67%) of respondents were having no participation. About 19 per cent of the respondents were having medium level of participation followed by 8.33 and 5.83 per cent in low and high level of participation category, respectively. Similar findings were also observed by Saha *et al.* (2010) in their study who found that about 70 per

cent of the farmers were not linked with any institution. Only 17.92 per cent farmers were office bearer. It was also revealed that about 12 per cent farmers were associated with one or more organizations. Again the results of the present study were contradicted to those of Rathod *et al.* (2012) who found that 68 per cent were members of one organization followed by 30.33 per cent farmers having membership in more than one organization while 1 per cent did not participate in any social activities.

8. Economic motivation

It was noticed that majority (73.34%) of the dairy farmers had medium economic motivation while 23.33 per cent of respondents were having high economic motivation. On the contrary, it is essential that farmers need to be oriented towards dairy farming as a viable economic activity as majority of their income is derived from this sector which in turn is responsible for their economic upliftment. Rathod *et al.* (2012) found that 72 per cent of the dairy farmers had medium economic orientation followed by 16 per cent farmers in high economic orientation category. This finding is also in conformity with the findings reported by Vidya *et al.* (2009) in a study conducted in Kannur district in Kerala.

9. Mass media exposure

Majority of respondents had low mass media exposure category with 91.67 per cent while 8.33 per cent of them were hailed to the medium level of mass media exposure category. None of the respondents had high level of mass media exposure. This thing is undesirable and is indicative of limited information access especially about improved dairy husbandry practices including animal welfare. Again, Bhanotra *et al.* (2016) found that majority (55.00%) of the farmers were having low access to mass media sources followed by 35.83 per cent having medium exposure in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir.

10. Extension contact

The data presented in Table 1 reveals that majority of dairy farmers were in low level of extension contact category to the tune of 89.17 per cent whereas 10.83 per cent of them hailed to medium level of extension contact. Singh and Dalal (2006) who observed that majority of the respondents (74.19%) possessed low level of extension contact followed by moderate (22.91%) and high (2.9%) among buffalo owners in Hisar district. Again, the results of the present study were contradicted to those of Meena *et al.* (2012) who observed that most of farmers (71.67%) had medium level of extension contact followed by low (20.33%) extension contact. It may be due to the regional differences.

Conclusion

It is concluded that majority of the respondents were middle aged and literate up-to secondary standard of education having nuclear family with medium family size. Majority of the respondents possessed land with small and medium herd size. Majority of the dairy farmers had medium economic motivation. In this study region majority of respondents were having low extension contact and mass media exposure. It is implicated from the study that the reach of extension contact was found to be low. So it is need of the hour to strengthen the communication channels and various sources of information so that each technology is being developed in research institutes could reach the farmers at large which would uplift their socioeconomic status and livelihood status.

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Table 1 Socio-economic and psychological characteristics of dairy farmers

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage	Mean	SD
Age	Young (<30 years)	12	10	45.65	12.20
	Middle (31-55 years)	81	67.5		
	Old (>55 years)	27	22.5		
Educational qualification	Illiterate (0)	19	15.83	3.69	1.97
	Primary (1)	24	20.00		
	Middle (2)	17	14.17		
	High & 10+2 (3)	45	37.5		
	Graduate above (4)	15	12.5		
Family size	Small (up to 4 members)	36	30	6.1	2.55
	Medium (5-8 members)	65	54.16		
	Large (>8 members)	19	15.84		
Family type	Joint	32	26.67	1.73	0.44
	Nuclear	88	73.33		
Land holding	Landless (0)	35	29.17	1.7	1.37
	Small [up to 5 acres]	55	45.83		
	Medium [6-10 acres]	23	19.17		
	Large [> 10 acres]	7	5.83		
Herd size	Small (upto 2 animals)	49	40.83	1.77	0.74
	Medium (2-5 animals)	49	40.83		
	Large (more than 5 animals)	22	18.34		

Social participation	No participation (0)	80	66.67	1.93	0.66
	Low (1)	10	8.33		
	Medium (2)	23	19.17		
	High (3)	7	5.83		
Economic motivation	Low (6-13)	4	3.33	20.49	3.34
	Medium (14-21)	88	73.34		
	High (22-30)	28	23.33		
Mass media exposure	Low (0-5)	110	91.67	3.33	1.67
	Medium (6-10)	10	8.33		
	High (11-16)	0	0		
Extension contact	Low (0-5)	107	89.17	3.52	1.73
	Medium(6-10)	13	10.83		
	High (>10)	0	0		