

AN ANALYSIS ON SOCIO – ECONOMIC PROFILE OF BACKYARD POULTRY FARMERS IN THENI DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

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Abstract: A study was conducted to assess the socio-economic status of back yard poultry farmers of Theni district of Tamil Nadu. This study was targeted at 100 backyard poultry farmers grouped into small, medium and large farmers depending on their holding capacity viz., 1 to 50, 51 to 100 and more than 100 respectively. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the farmers for the study purpose and the data were collected through a semi-structured interview schedule as well as self observation. The results of the study showed that majority of the farmers rearing backyard poultry were graduates and less than 35 years of age. Married males reared the birds as subsidiary occupation and the women participation was consistently very low as similar to that of other livestock farming. Backyard poultry farmers had less than one hectare of land, low level of experience (less than five years) and used their own lands to rear the backyard poultry. Majority of the respondents who rear backyard chicken had small sized (less than 5) nuclear family and both male & female respondents equally responsible for taking a major decisions.

Keywords: Socio-economic, Backyard poultry, simple random sampling.

INTRODUCTION

Poultry farming in India has reached remarkable growth especially in commercialized and integrated farming activities like a broiler and layer with the average growth rate of 4 to 6 per cent and 8 to 10 per cent respectively per year (Chatterjee and Rajkumar, 2015), but the growth is still limited in the traditional way of poultry rearing called backyard poultry rearing. The major reason quoted was low productive nature of backyard poultry. Even then backyard poultry rearing is more popular in rural areas of Tamil Nadu, mainly because of the higher price fetched by meat and egg. Still majority of the family income and nutritional requirement (Dhaka, *et al*, 2017) are fulfilled mainly by the backyard poultry farming. In India, 25 per cent (Vetrivel and Chandrakumarmangalam, 2013) of total poultry population is contributed by desi chicken, which also makes a limited contribution to the GDP. The awareness created among the younger generation motivates the farmers to rear desi chicken in rural areas. The governmental and non govt agencies promotes the farmers to rear backyard poultry to a considerable per cent, even then the population of desi chicken is not

remarkable due to the socio-economic background of backyard poultry farmers. Keeping this in view, a survey work was carried out to assess the socio-economic character of backyard poultry farmers of Theni district of Tamil Nadu.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Poultry farmers attending regular training programmes in our centre and also the backyard poultry farmers in Theni district were identified for the study purpose. A total of 100 farmers were selected by simple random sampling and the data were collected through a semi-structured interview schedule. The selected farms were classified as small, medium and large as per bird capacity viz., 1-50 birds, 51 – 100 birds and more than 100 birds respectively. Basic preliminary informations on level of education, age in completed years, sex and occupation of the farmers were collected. The status of the farmers as individual ownership or partnership, land holding particulars, category of farmers, type of family, family size and decision makers were noted with the use of semi-structured interview schedule. The data collected were subjected to statistical analysis (Snedecor and Cochran, 1989).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Education

Highest number of respondents (28) are graduates; whereas 24 and 23 respondents are studied up to school level and Illiterates respectively as shown in Table 1. A small proportion of respondents have studied upto higher secondary (14) and diploma level (11). More than seventy per cent farmers are educated which will be highly useful to understand the technical aspects of poultry rearing. This study is not in agreement with Mandal *et al*, (2006) who reported that majority of the backyard poultry farmers have a low level of education in Breilly district of UP.

Age

Proportionately most numbers of farmers belong to young age group (45.00) followed by middle (33.00) and old age (22.00) group. These results are not in favour with Bikash *et al.*, (2010) and Singh and Jilani, (2005). The awareness created among the younger generation about backyard poultry rearing could have motivated them to rear desi chicken. Since, younger age group are involved in desi chicken farming, they have the power to implement newer technology.

Gender

Women participation in backyard poultry rearing was very low (16.00) when compared to male (84.00). The finding is in agreement with N.A. Jatto (2012). The author

reported that the proportion of female in backyard poultry rearing was low because of poor labour efficiency.

Occupation

Majority (84.00 per cent) of the respondents were rearing the backyard poultry as subsidiary occupation to earn additional income, while 16 per cent of the respondents were running the farm as main occupation. This finding is in agreement with the earlier result of Bikash *et al*, (2010) who observed that major per cent of the respondents in Assam were doing non - farming business than farming activity.

Table 1. Social status of farmers rearing Backyard poultry in Theni District of Tamil Nadu

S. No	Particulars	Small (n=79)	Medium (n=10)	Large (n=11)	Over all (n=100)	X ² -statistics	
1	Education	Illiterate	21 (27.00)	1 (10.00)	1 (9.09)	23 (23.00)	5.96 ^{NS}
		Upto high School level	18 (23.00)	4 (40.00)	2 (18.18)	24 (24.00)	
		Higher secondary	9 (11.00)	2 (20.00)	3 (27.27)	14 (14.00)	
		Diploma	9 (11.00)	1 (10.00)	1 (9.09)	11 (11.00)	
		Graduate	22 (28.00)	2 (20.00)	4 (36.37)	28 (28.00)	
		Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
2	Age group	Young (≤ 35 yrs)	37 (46.84)	2 (20.00)	6 (54.55)	45 (45.00)	4.22 ^{NS}
		Middle (36-45 yrs)	25 (31.64)	4 (40.00)	4 (36.36)	33 (33.00)	
		Old (> 45 yrs)	17 (21.52)	4 (40.00)	1 (9.09)	22 (22.00)	
		Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
3	Gender	Male	65 (82.28)	9 (90.00)	10 (90.91)	84 (84.00)	0.83 ^{NS}
		Female	14 (17.72)	1 (10.00)	1 (9.09)	16 (16.00)	
		Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
4	Occupation	Main	11 (13.93)	4 (40.00)	1 (9.09)	16 (16.00)	4.93 ^{NS}
		Subsidiary	68 (86.07)	6 (60.00)	10 (90.91)	84 (84.00)	
		Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	

5	Marital status	Yes	64 (81.01)	10 (100.00)	11 (100.00)	85 (85.00)	-
		No	15 (18.99)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	15 (15.00)	
		Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	

Figures in parentheses indicate respective proportions in per cent. NS – Non significant

Table 2. Socio – Economic status of farmers rearing Backyard poultry in Theni District, Tamil Nadu

S. No	Particulars	Small (n=79)	Medium (n=10)	Large (n=11)	Overall (n=100)	X ² - statistics
I	Type of family					15.40**
1	Nuclear Family	57 (72.15)	9 (90.00)	2 (18.18)	68 (68.00)	
2	Joint Family	22 (27.85)	1 (10.00)	9 (81.82)	32 (32.00)	
	Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
II	Family size					15.62**
1	Small (< 5 members)	59 (74.69)	8 (80.00)	3 (27.28)	70 (70.00)	
2	Medium (6 – 8)	16 (20.25)	1 (10.00)	4 (36.36)	21 (21.00)	
3	Large (> 8 members)	4 (5.06)	1 (10.00)	4 (36.36)	9 (9.00)	
	Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
III	Decision maker					-
1	Male	43 (54.43)	3 (30.00)	1 (9.09)	47 (47.00)	
2	Female	5 (6.33)	-	1 (9.09)	6 (6.00)	
3	Both	31 (39.24)	7 (70.00)	9 (81.82)	47 (47.00)	
	Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
IV	Land holding					4.87^{NS}
1	Marginal (< 1 hectare)	36 (45.57)	4 (40.00)	3 (27.27)	43 (43.00)	
2	Small (1-2 hectare)	27 (34.18)	2 (20.00)	3 (27.27)	32 (32.00)	
3	Large (> 2 hectare)	16 (20.25)	4 (40.00)	5 (45.46)	25 (25.00)	
	Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
V	Experience of the farmers					-
1	Low (≤ 5 years)	3 (3.79)	1 (10.00)	1 (9.09)	5 (5.00)	
2	Medium (6 – 10 years)	68 (86.08)	9 (90.00)	9 (81.82)	86 (86.00)	
3	High (>10 years)	8 (10.13)	-	1 (9.09)	9 (9.00)	

	Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	
VI	Land ownership					1.33^{NS}
1	Own land	73 (92.41)	9 (90.00)	9 (81.82)	9 (90.00)	
2	Lease	6 (7.59)	1 (10.00)	2 (18.18)	1 (10.00)	
	Total	79 (100)	10 (100)	11 (100)	100 (100)	

Figures in parentheses indicate respective proportions in per cent NS - Non significant.

Marital Status:

85 per cent of the backyard poultry farmers were married, whereas 15 per cent farmers were unmarried. This is mainly because of age, where most of the respondents were over 36 years old. This finding was in agreement with Choudhury, 2002.

Type of Family

It was observed that majority (68 per cent) of the farmers belonged to the nuclear family than joint family. The type of family was found to be highly significant in relation to farm size. Similar finding was observed by Bikash *et al*, (2010) where majority of the family involved in poultry rearing belonged to nuclear family than joint family in Assam.

Family size

Higher number of farmers had small size family (70 per cent), whereas 21 per cent farmers are belonging to medium size family. Nine per cent farmers belonged to the large family size. The family size found to be highly significant in respect to farm size, where small sized farmers rearing lesser number of poultry than medium and large size family. The result of this study is not in agreement with Singh and Jilani, (2005) who reported that majority belonged to medium family size.

Decision maker

It is observed from the table 2, equal proportion (47%) of both (male & female) and male farmers are equally responsible while taking major decision, where as the 6 per cent of females farmers taking decision as their own wish. A different trend was noticed as mentioned by Sathyanarayan *et al*, (2010) who stated that more than three fourths (81.54%) of the respondents were men who were the decision makers of the family, followed by women (15.39%) and together (3.08%). This means a social change among farming community.

Experience of the farmers

Majority of the farmers rearing backyard chicken were having medium level of experience (between 5 – 10 years) in Theni district. This is in agreement with Mandal *et al*, (2006) who reported that majority of the poultry owners (47.92%) had been rearing poultry for more than 6 years, followed by 32.50 per cent and 13.33 per cent with 5-6 years and 3-4 years of poultry farming experience, respectively.

Land Holding and Land Ownership

It is noted from the Table 2, Majority of backyard poultry farmers utilising their own land (90 per cent) for poultry rearing and they were categorised as marginal farmers possessing less than 2.5 Acres of land than other categories. Similar finding were observed by Mandal *et al*, (2006) who revealed that nearly half of the respondent having less than one hectare land which will be highly useful to get subsidiary income by adopting Animal husbandry activities.

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