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Socio-economic profile of organic farmers in Chhatarpur district of Madhya Pradesh

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Abstract

Green revolution has increased the production of food grains through the use of chemical fertilizers but it has been realized that increased production was achieved at the cost of soil health. To overcome from this problem we will have to move towards organic farming. The present study was conducted in Chhatarpur district of M.P. selected purposively on a sample comprises 120 farmers in the study. The data were collected through personal interview schedule and analyzed by the frequency and percentage. Majority of farmers belong to middle age group, male, medium sized family, OBC caste and having secondary education, pakka house, three sources of information, 0-5 years of experience, agriculture as occupation, Rs 1,00,000 – 1,50,00 annual income, marginal size of land holding.

Keywords: Organic farming, Socio – economic profile, Biofertilizer, Soil health

Introduction

Agriculture is the backbone of many developing countries. A large amount of population depends directly or indirectly on farming for their livelihood. After the green revolution was launched in India, substantial increase in the production of food grains was achieved through the use of improved crop varieties and higher levels of inputs fertilizers and plant protection chemicals. But it has now been realized that the increase in production was achieved at the cost of soil health. Sir Albert Howard known as “Father of Organic Farming” is widely credited with pioneering the organic farming philosophy. According to the latest edition of the world of Organic Agriculture 2025 published by FiBL – Research Institute of Organic Agriculture and IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) organic agriculture is practiced in 188 countries (Ghildiyal & Mallai, 2024) ^[2].

The total area under organic practices has reached 96.4 million hectares globally. Share of global agricultural land under organic farming around 2%. There are almost about 4.3 million organic farmers globally. The top 10 countries roughly contribute 82% of the world's total agriculture area. India's rank in terms of area under organic farming is IInd, covering approximately 4.7 million hectares and its rank in terms of organic farmer is Ist, (Willer *et al.* 2024) ^[9].

The area of Madhya Pradesh is 10.13 lakh hectares, Maharashtra has an area of 9.66 lakh hectares followed by Rajasthan and Gujarat. Sikkim is India's first fully organic state in January 2016, where chemical fertilizers are completely banned. (Sharma & Shingvi 2017) ^[8].

Organic farming is a production system that avoids or limits the use of synthetic compounded fertilizers, pesticides,

growth regulators and other chemicals. The main aim of organic farming is to maintain the health of soil, plants, animals, humans, and the environment while ensuring long-term agricultural productivity. Organic farming includes food quality, human health, animal welfare and socio- economic goals in addition to the holistic interplay of the soil, plants, and environment.

Eight different ways of composting are recommended in Madhya Pradesh. They are Indore method, NADEP compost, vermicompost, Bhabut Amrit Pani, Amrit Sanjeevni, Pitcher Khad, Biogas slurry, Green manure and Biofertilizer.

Review of literature

Jaganathan reported that majority of the farmers (70.00%) were in the middle age group, 25.60 percent were in the old age group and 04.40 per cent were in the young age group.

Deshmukh reported that majority of the farmers (75.00%) were in the middle age group, 15.00 percent were in the young age group and 10.00 percent were in the old age group.

Nazari reported that majority of the farmers (93.20%) were males and only 06.80 percent were females.

Deshmukh reported that majority of the respondents (79.17%) had secondary level of education followed by 13.33 percent of them belonged to primary level of education and 07.50 percent had college and above level of education.

Panchbhair reported that majority of the respondents have (77.00%) medium family size followed by 15.00 percent and 08.00 percent who were in large and small family size, respectively.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Chhatarpur district, Madhya

Pradesh. There are 8 blocks in the district Chhatarpur. Out of these 2 blocks, namely Chhatarpur and Nowgong were selected purposively for the study. Total 8 villages were selected namely Alipura, Sarsed, Galan, Lahdra, Isanagar, Basata, Barkoha and Mau. From each village 15 farmers were selected through purposive sampling. Thus, a total of 120 respondents were included in the study. There were 15 Independent variables and 2 Dependent variables selected for the study. The independent variables were – Age, Gender, Education, Size of family, Organic farming experience, Farm size, Annual income, Livestock possession, Source of information, Type of house, Caste, Occupation, Membership of organization, Source of irrigation, Source of drinking

water. Keeping in view the review of relevant literature available and consultation with literature, 15 independent variables were included in the study. The data were collected by the investigator herself employing personal interview at the residence or field of the farmers with the help of structured interview schedule.

Results and Discussion

The Socio – economic approach is mainly concerned with the social, economic, and political aspects of individuals or social groups in society. The findings of the study have been presented in the table1, sub head: Profile of Organic farmers.

Table 1: Profile of Organic farmers

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age		
Young (18-30 years)	20	16.67
Middle (31-50 years)	66	55.00
Old (51 years or above)	34	28.33
Gender		
Male	87	72.50
Female	33	27.50
Education		
Illiterate	7	5.83
Primary Education	34	28.33
Secondary Education	43	35.83
Higher Secondary Education	28	23.33
Graduate and above	8	6.67
Family size		
Small (1-4 members)	41	34.17
Medium (5-8 members)	54	45.00
Large (more than 8 members)	25	20.83
Type of house		
Kachcha	26	21.67
Pakka	53	44.17
Mixed (Kachcha + Pakka)	41	34.16
Caste Category		
General	38	31.67
OBC	51	42.50
SC	17	14.17
ST	14	11.66
Source of Information		
Only one	28	23.33
Two sources	23	19.17
Three sources	39	32.50
Four sources	23	19.17
Five sources	7	5.83
Organic farming Experience		
0-5 years	65	54.17
6-10 years	40	33.33
More than 10 years	15	12.50
Occupation		
Agriculture only	54	45.00
Agriculture + Dairy farming	27	22.50
Agriculture +Caste occupation	12	10.00
Agriculture + Business	9	7.50
Agriculture + Service	8	6.67
Agriculture + govt. service	10	8.33
Annual Income		
Rs. 1,00,000 – 1,50,000	66	55.00
Rs. 1,51,000 – 2,50,000	41	34.17
Rs. 2,50,000 and above	13	10.83

Land Holding Size		
Marginal (less than 1 ha)	55	45.83
Small (1-2 ha)	43	35.83
Medium (2-4 ha)	16	13.34
Large (more than 4 ha)	6	5.00

Age

Data shows that 16.67% of farmers are in the young age class of 18- 30 years, 55.00% are middle age 31 to 50 years (highest class), Also 28.33% are within the age of 51 years and above. The study reported that majority of the farmers (61.00%) were in the middle age group, 22.00 percent were in the young age group and 17.00 per cent were in the old age group. (Sakti Devi, 2017) ^[7].

Gender

Data shows that 72.50% are male (highest) and 27.50% are female. The study reported that majority of the farmers (95.83%) were males and only 04.17 percent were females. (Deshmukh, 2018) ^[1].

Educational Status

The study reveals that the largest proportion of respondents (35.83%) had secondary level education, followed by primary education (28.33%), higher secondary (23.33%), graduate and above (6.67%), and illiterate (5.83%). The study reported that majority of the respondents (79.17%) had secondary level of education followed by 13.33 percent of them belonged to primary level of education and 07.50 percent had college and above level of education. (Deshmukh, 2018) ^[1].

Family Size

Data shows that 45.00 per cent of the respondents had a medium-sized family (5–8 members) highest, followed by small family (34.17%) and large family (20.83%). The study of Panchbhai et al. (2017) ^[6] reported that majority of the respondents have (77.00%) medium family size followed by 15.00 percent and 08.00 percent who were in large and small family size, respectively.

Type of house

Shows that the majority of respondents (44.17%) resided in pakka houses, followed by mixed type (34.16%) and kachcha houses (21.67%).

Caste Category

Data shows that OBC respondents constituted the largest proportion (42.50%), followed by General category (31.67%), SC (14.17%), and ST (11.66%).

Source of Information

Data shows that the largest proportion of respondents (32.50%) had access to three information sources. Only 5.83 per cent had access to five or more sources including scientists and KVK officials, while 23.33 per cent depended on a single source.

Organic farming Experience

Data shows that the majority of respondents (54.17%) had 0–5 years of organic farming experience, indicating that a large proportion of farmers are still in the early stages of organic

transition. Only 12.50 per cent had more than 10 years of experience.

Occupation

that 45.00 per cent of respondents were engaged in agriculture as their sole occupation, followed by agriculture combined with dairy farming (22.50%). These findings indicate that for a majority of respondents, farming is the primary livelihood activity, which explains their relatively high commitment to organic farming practices.

Annual income

Data shows that 55.00 per cent of the respondents had annual income in the range of Rs. 1,00,000–1,50,000, followed by Rs. 1,51,000–2,50,000 (34.17%) and above Rs. 2,50,000 (10.83%).

Land Holding Size

that the majority of respondents (45.83%) were marginal farmers with less than 1 hectare of land, followed by small farmers (35.83%), medium (13.34%), and large farmers (5.00%). The study reported that majority of the respondents (54.17%) had marginal land holding followed by 36.67 per cent small and 09.16 per cent large land holding categories (Kumar, 2017) ^[4].

Conclusion

A majority of organic farmers were middle aged (31-50 years) and males. They had good education indicating that majority of farmers have secondary education. Majority of them have medium (5-8 members) in their family, pakka house, OBC caste. The organic farmers have mainly three sources of information indicating that they obtain information from neighbours, extension agents and NGOs. They had poor experience of organic farming and mainly depend on agriculture for their source of income. The predominance of lower income group farmers underscores the need for financial assistance and subsidies to enable them to invest in organic inputs, training, and certification. The majority of farmers had marginal land holding. Socio-economic profile is important to provide valuable insight and has the potential to provide critical inputs for the design and implementation of support programmes to promote organic farming for rural development.

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