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### Attitude of farmers towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana

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#### Abstract

The present study was carried out in Latur district of Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. From Latur district, three tehsils namely Ausa, Latur and Renapur were selected purposively. From each selected tehsil, four villages were selected purposively. From each selected village, ten farmers who were beneficiaries of Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY) were selected purposively. Thus, a total of 120 farmers were selected for the study. The study was based on an ex-post facto research design. The study indicated that the majority of the farmers had a medium level of attitude towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY). Overall, the findings indicated that the majority of farmers had a favourable attitude (63.33%) towards MSKPY, followed by farmers with a highly favourable attitude (19.17%), whereas 17.50 per cent had an unfavourable attitude, suggesting satisfactory acceptance of solar-powered irrigation technology and the scheme among the beneficiaries.

The study identified several challenges encountered by farmers in accessing the benefits of the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY). The majority of farmers reported lack of timely repair and maintenance services (98.33%), followed by delay in installation of solar pumps after sanction (87.50%) and inadequate training on operation and maintenance of solar pumps (82.50%). These challenges indicate the need for timely technical services, prompt installation and adequate training to ensure effective access to and utilization of the benefits of MSKPY.

**Keywords:** Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana, farmers, attitude, solar irrigation

#### Introduction

The Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY) is an important initiative of the Government of Maharashtra aimed at promoting the use of solar energy for agricultural irrigation. The scheme provides solar-powered agricultural pumps to eligible farmers at subsidized rates, particularly supporting farmers who face difficulties in obtaining reliable conventional electricity for irrigation. The scheme aims to provide reliable daytime power for irrigation, reduce dependence on conventional electricity and diesel, lower irrigation expenditure and promote the use of clean and renewable energy in agriculture. Solar pumps can provide an independent and sustainable source of irrigation, thereby contributing to improved irrigation management, agricultural productivity and sustainable rural development.

Under the scheme, the beneficiary contribution is 10 per cent for farmers belonging to the general category and 5 per cent for farmers belonging to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe categories, while the remaining cost is supported through government subsidy. Solar agricultural pumps are provided in different capacities according to the landholding of the farmer. Generally, a 3 HP pump is provided for landholdings up to 2.5 acres, a 5 HP pump for 2.51 to 5 acres and a 7.5 HP pump for landholdings above 5 acres. The scheme also provides a repair guarantee with insurance, while

solar pumping reduces dependence on electricity bills and load shedding.

The benefits of MSKPY, however, depend not only on the provision of solar pumps and financial assistance but also on the acceptance and utilization of the scheme by farmers. Farmers may differ in their perceptions and responses towards the scheme depending upon their knowledge, experiences, economic conditions, access to information and confidence in solar technology. Therefore, understanding farmers' attitude towards MSKPY is important for assessing their level of acceptance and disposition towards the scheme. Attitude refers to the degree of favourable or unfavourable disposition of an individual towards a particular object, idea, technology or programme. In the context of MSKPY, farmers' attitude represents their favourable or unfavourable feelings, beliefs and willingness towards the scheme, particularly regarding the usefulness, reliability, affordability, benefits and future prospects of solar irrigation pumps. A favourable attitude may encourage farmers to accept the technology, utilize the solar pump effectively and appreciate its economic and environmental benefits. Conversely, an unfavourable attitude may lead to hesitation, limited acceptance or ineffective utilization of the technology.

Assessment of farmers' attitude is therefore important for

understanding the level of acceptance of MSKPY at the farm level. It can provide useful insights to implementing agencies and extension personnel regarding the need for awareness, information, technical guidance and improved service delivery. Understanding farmers' attitude can also help in strengthening the implementation of the scheme and encouraging its effective utilization among the farming community. Hence, the present study was undertaken with the objective of assessing the attitude of farmers towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY) in Latur district of Maharashtra State.

### Objectives

1. To assess the attitude of farmers towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana.
2. To identify the challenges encountered by farmers in accessing the benefits of the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana.

### Materials and Methods

The present study was carried out in Latur district of Marathwada region of Maharashtra State. From Latur district, three tehsils namely Ausa, Latur and Renapur were selected purposively. From each selected tehsil, four villages were selected purposively. From each selected village, ten farmers who were beneficiaries of Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY) were selected purposively. Thus, a total of 120 farmers were selected for the study. The research design followed for the study was Ex-post-facto research design. The collected data were analysed using frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

Attitude of farmers towards MSKPY was operationally defined as the degree of favourable or unfavourable disposition of farmers towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY). The attitude was measured using a

structured attitude scale consisting of favourable and unfavourable statements related to the usefulness, benefits, affordability, reliability, operation and overall acceptance of MSKPY. The responses were obtained on a five-point continuum viz., strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree, with scores of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1, respectively, for favourable statements. For unfavourable statements, the scoring was reversed as 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, respectively.

The scores obtained for all the statements were summed to obtain the overall attitude score of each farmer. A higher score indicated a more favourable attitude towards MSKPY, while a lower score indicated an unfavourable attitude. Based on the total attitude scores, the respondents were categorized into unfavourable, favourable and highly favourable attitude groups using the Mean  $\pm$  Standard Deviation method. Frequency and percentage were calculated for each category to assess the attitude of farmers towards MSKPY.

### Results and Discussion

#### 1. Attitude of farmers towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana

Attitude refers to an individual's predisposition to respond positively or negatively towards a specific object, technology, idea or programme. In the present investigation, farmers' attitude towards MSKPY was considered as their degree of favourable or unfavourable disposition towards the scheme and its solar-powered irrigation technology. It encompasses their views regarding the utility, dependability, economic feasibility, benefits and long-term prospects of solar pumps. A positive attitude is likely to facilitate acceptance and effective utilization of MSKPY, whereas a negative attitude may discourage acceptance and limit its proper use.

**Table 1:** Distribution of the farmers according to their attitude towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana

| Sr. No. | Statement                                                                              | Degree of statement |               |               |               |               |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
|         |                                                                                        | SA Freq (%)         | A Freq (%)    | UA Freq (%)   | DA Freq (%)   | SDA Freq (%)  |
| 1.      | MSKPY is less helpful in increasing agricultural production. (–)                       | 77<br>(64.16)       | 43<br>(35.83) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 2.      | MSKPY provides reliable and expert-supported irrigation solutions to farmers. (+)      | 49<br>(40.83)       | 61<br>(50.83) | 09<br>(07.50) | 01<br>(00.83) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 3.      | MSKPY is only a political scheme and does not truly benefit farmers. (–)               | 08<br>(06.66)       | 42<br>(35.00) | 31<br>(25.83) | 32<br>(26.66) | 07<br>(05.83) |
| 4.      | MSKPY acts as a comprehensive solution for irrigation and energy needs of farmers. (+) | 61<br>(50.83)       | 43<br>(35.83) | 16<br>(13.33) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 5.      | The beneficiary contribution under MSKPY is not affordable. (–)                        | 02<br>(01.66)       | 53<br>(44.16) | 30<br>(25.00) | 22<br>(18.33) | 13<br>(10.83) |
| 6.      | MSKPY is implemented properly at the district level. (+)                               | 98<br>(81.66)       | 21<br>(17.50) | 01<br>(00.83) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 7.      | Required technical guidance for MSKPY is not easily available. (–)                     | 63<br>(52.50)       | 54<br>(45.00) | 3<br>(02.50)  | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 8.      | Installation and service support under MSKPY are poor. (–)                             | 04<br>(03.33)       | 36<br>(30.00) | 44<br>(36.67) | 25<br>(20.83) | 11<br>(09.17) |
| 9.      | MSKPY promotes the use of renewable energy in agriculture. (+)                         | 88<br>(73.33)       | 30<br>(25.00) | 02<br>(01.67) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 10.     | Adoption of MSKPY has not influenced any improvement in my farming practices. (–)      | 16<br>(13.33)       | 75<br>(62.50) | 13<br>(10.83) | 11<br>(09.16) | 05<br>(04.10) |
| 11.     | Officials and technical staff under MSKPY are supportive and helpful. (+)              | 102<br>(85.00)      | 18<br>(15.00) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 12.     | MSKPY is just another subsidy scheme without real long-term benefits. (–)              | 00<br>(00.00)       | 02<br>(01.67) | 26<br>(21.67) | 55<br>(45.83) | 37<br>(30.83) |

|     |                                                                                 |               |               |               |               |               |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 13. | MSKPY is well recognized among farmers for improving irrigation facilities. (+) | 78<br>(65.00) | 42<br>(35.00) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) | 00<br>(00.00) |
| 14. | MSKPY duplicates existing irrigation schemes and is unnecessary. (-)            | 01<br>(00.83) | 19<br>(15.83) | 30<br>(25.00) | 34<br>(28.33) | 36<br>(30.00) |
| 15. | Beneficiaries are properly guided and attended during the MSKPY process. (+)    | 83<br>(69.17) | 35<br>(29.17) | 01<br>(00.80) | 01<br>(00.83) | 00<br>(00.00) |

**Note:** SA- Strongly Agree, A- Agree, UA- Undecided, DA- Disagree, SDA- Strongly Disagree

The data in table 1 revealed that, nearly two-third (64.16%) of the respondents strongly agreed that MSKPY is less helpful in increasing agricultural production, while more than one-third (35.83%) agreed with the statement. Half (50.83%) of the respondents agreed that the scheme provides reliable and expert-supported irrigation solutions to farmers, followed by more than two-fifth (40.83%) who strongly agreed, whereas only a few respondents remained undecided (7.50%) or disagreed (00.83%). More than one-third (35.00%) of the respondents agreed that MSKPY is only a political scheme and does not truly benefit farmers, whereas more than one-fourth (26.66%) disagreed, about one-fourth (25.83%) remained undecided, a few (06.66%) strongly agreed, and very few (05.83%) strongly disagreed. Slightly more than half of the respondents (50.83%) strongly agreed that MSKPY acts as a comprehensive solution for irrigation and energy needs of farmers, while more than one-third (35.83%) agreed and a small proportion (13.33%) remained undecided. Nearly half of the respondents (44.16%) agreed that the beneficiary contribution under MSKPY is not affordable, whereas one-fourth (25.00%) remained undecided, nearly one-fifth (18.33%) disagreed, about one-tenth (10.83%) strongly disagreed, and only a negligible proportion (01.66%) strongly agreed. A large majority of the respondents (81.66%) strongly agreed that MSKPY is implemented properly at the district level, while nearly one-fifth (17.50%) agreed and only a negligible proportion (0.83%) remained undecided. More than half of the respondents (52.50%) strongly agreed that the required technical guidance for MSKPY is not easily available, whereas nearly half (45.00%) agreed and only a negligible proportion (2.50%) remained undecided. More than one-third (36.67%) of the respondents remained undecided regarding the statement that installation and service support under MSKPY are poor, followed by nearly one-third (30.00%) who agreed, about one-fifth (20.83%) who disagreed, less than one-tenth (09.17%) who strongly disagreed, and only a few (3.33%) who strongly agreed. Nearly three-fourths of the respondents (73.33%) strongly agreed that MSKPY promotes the use of renewable energy in agriculture, while one-fourth (25.00%) agreed and only a negligible proportion (01.67%) remained undecided. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (62.50%) agreed that adoption of MSKPY had not influenced any improvement in their farming practices, followed by 13.33 per cent who strongly agreed, 10.83 per cent who remained undecided, less than one-tenth (09.16%) who disagreed, and very few (4.10%) who strongly disagreed. The vast majority of the respondents (85.00%) strongly agreed that the officials and technical staff under MSKPY are

supportive and helpful, while the remaining respondents (15.00%) agreed with the statement. Nearly half of the respondents (45.83%) disagreed that MSKPY is merely another subsidy scheme without real long-term benefits, followed by nearly one-third (30.83%) who strongly disagreed, more than one-fifth (21.67%) who remained undecided, and only a negligible proportion (01.67%) who agreed with the statement. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents (65.00%) strongly agreed that MSKPY is well recognized among farmers for improving irrigation facilities, while more than one-third (35.00%) agreed. Further, nearly one-third (30.00%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that MSKPY duplicates existing irrigation schemes and is unnecessary, followed by more than one-fourth (28.33%) who disagreed, one-fourth (25.00%) who remained undecided, 15.83 per cent who agreed, and only a negligible proportion (00.83%) who strongly agreed. Finally, more than two-thirds of the respondents (69.17%) strongly agreed that beneficiaries are properly guided and attended during the implementation process of MSKPY, while nearly one-third (29.17%) agreed, and only negligible proportions remained undecided (00.80%) and disagreed (00.83%).

**Table 2:** Distribution of the farmers according to their overall attitude towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (N=120)

| Sr. No. | Category                     | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------|------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1.      | Unfavourable (Up to 19)      | 21        | 17.50      |
| 2.      | Favourable (20 to 30)        | 76        | 63.33      |
| 3.      | Highly favourable (Above 30) | 23        | 19.17      |
|         | Total                        | 120       | 100.00     |

The data in table 2 revealed that, majority (63.33%) of the farmers had a favourable attitude towards the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY), followed by nearly one-fifth (19.17%) who had a highly favourable attitude, while 17.50 per cent of the respondents possessed an unfavourable attitude towards the scheme.

## 2. Challenges encountered by farmers in accessing the benefits of the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana

Challenges encountered by farmers refer to the difficulties and obstacles faced by farmers in applying for, obtaining, installing, operating and maintaining solar irrigation pumps under MSKPY. These challenges were assessed with respect to procedural, financial, technical, training, installation, repair and maintenance, and institutional aspects of the scheme. The reported challenges were quantified and ranked based on their frequency and percentage.

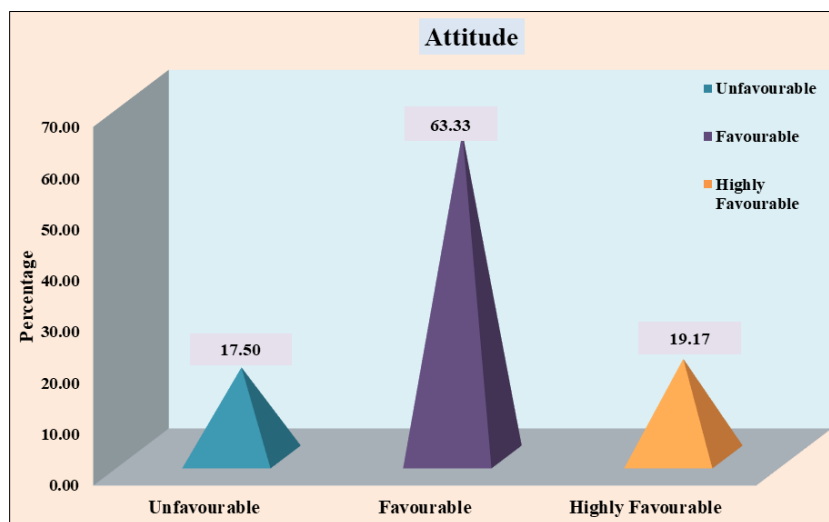


**Fig 1:** Distribution of farmers according to their attitude towards Mukhyamantri Saur Krush Pump Yojana

**Table 3:** Various challenges faced by farmers in accessing the benefits of the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana

| Sr. No. | Statements                                                                                                  | Yes Freq. (%)  | No Freq. (%)   | Rank |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------|
| 1.      | Lack of awareness about MSKPY eligibility, subsidy pattern, scheme benefits.                                | 75<br>(62.50)  | 45<br>(37.50)  | V    |
| 2.      | Complicated documentation, verification procedures and difficulty in completing online application process. | 53<br>(44.17)  | 67<br>(55.83)  | VI   |
| 3.      | Delay in approval of application.                                                                           | 42<br>(35.00)  | 78<br>(65.00)  | VII  |
| 4.      | Delay in installation of solar pump after sanction.                                                         | 105<br>(87.50) | 15<br>(12.50)  | II   |
| 5.      | Difficulty in arranging beneficiary contribution amount.                                                    | 18<br>(15.00)  | 102<br>(85.00) | IX   |
| 6.      | Lack of technical guidance during installation.                                                             | 67<br>(55.83)  | 53<br>(44.17)  | VI   |
| 7.      | Inadequate training on operation and maintenance of solar pump.                                             | 99<br>(82.50)  | 21<br>(17.50)  | III  |
| 8.      | Lack of timely repair and maintenance services.                                                             | 118<br>(98.33) | 02<br>(01.67)  | I    |
| 9.      | Poor coordination between implementing agencies and farmers.                                                | 76<br>(63.33)  | 44<br>(36.67)  | IV   |

The data presented in table 3 revealed that, the major challenges faced by the farmers was the lack of timely repair and maintenance services (98.33%), followed by delay in installation of solar pumps after sanction (87.50%) and inadequate training on the operation and maintenance of solar pumps (82.50%). More than three-fifths of the respondents reported poor coordination between implementing agencies and farmers (63.33%) and lack of awareness regarding MSKPY eligibility, subsidy pattern, and scheme benefits (62.50%). More than half of the respondents experienced lack of technical guidance during installation (55.83%), while 44.17 per cent faced difficulties in documentation, verification procedures, and completing the online application process. About one-third of the respondents (35.00%) reported delay in approval of applications, whereas only 15.00 per cent experienced difficulty in arranging the beneficiary contribution amount.

### Conclusion

The study concluded that the majority of the farmers had a favourable attitude towards the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana (MSKPY), while a smaller proportion had a highly favourable attitude and only a few farmers exhibited

an unfavourable attitude. Overall, the findings indicated that the beneficiary farmers had a positive attitude towards the scheme.

The study concluded that farmers encountered several challenges in accessing the benefits of the Mukhyamantri Saur Krushi Pump Yojana, particularly regarding repair and maintenance services, installation of solar pumps, technical guidance, training.

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