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Study of relationship between training needs and demographic attributes of Niang Megha farmers in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya

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Abstract

The study was undertaken in two blocks of East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya to focus on the training needs correlation with the socio-economic and psychological profile of Niang Megha rearing farmers. A total of 100 respondents were selected and the data obtained were subjected to statistical analysis. The relationship between training needs and independent variables were computed using spearman's correlation coefficient. The results revealed that the independent variables such as age, family size, and family type were negatively and non-significantly correlated with training needs in scientific pig farming. However, the other variables like social participation, occupation and annual income from pig farming had positive and non-significant correlation with the perceived training needs. Pig herd size had negative and significant correlation ($p < 0.05$) with training needs whereas, education, information source utilization and knowledge had positive and highly significant correlation ($p < 0.01$) with training needs of Niang Megha rearing farmers.

Keywords: correlation, training needs, Niang Megha, pig farming

Introduction

Pig farming is an important and popular enterprise in India especially in the North Eastern region which accounts for about 46 percent share in the pig population of the country. As per 20th livestock census, the pig population in the country is 9.06 million, out of which 4.24 million are located in the NER. Pig rearing is a popular and lucrative activity in tribal communities and among the poorer sections of the population in the north east region in particular. This is owing to the presence of a large number of tribal people in the North East region, and pig rearing has long been an integral element of their way of life (Payeng *et al.*, 2013) [5]. The pig population in the country are mostly of indigenous breeds. The indigenous pig breeds includes Ghongroo, Niang Megha, Agonda Goan, Tenyi Vo, Nicobari, Doom, Zovawk and Ghurrah (NBAGR, Karnal) [3]. Pigs can provide the need for a healthy animal protein source for the weaker members of society. Pigs are a key source of financial income in rural regions and supply manure for agriculture, in addition to providing protein for human use (Chauhan *et al.*, 2016) [2]. The Niang Megha is registered local pig breed of the state of Meghalaya with an Accession No. INDIA_PIG_1300_NIANG MEGHA_09002 under National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources (NBAGR, Karnal) [3]. The Niang Megha pig has a wild appearance in nature. The ears are small and upright. The ears extend in vertical direction and have erected bristles on dorsal midline. The line on the ventral portion of the belly almost touches the ground (Sahoo *et al.*, 2012) [7]. Traditionally, the rural people in Meghalaya keep only one or two pigs in backyard production system which is in need of scientific engagement to enhance the management practices. For this purpose, the study was taken up with the objective to identify the training needs in scientific pig management in relation to socio-economic profile so as to improve the livelihood of farmers rearing Niang Megha.

Materials and Method

The study area was conducted purposively in East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya due to its sizeable population of Niang Megha rearing farmers. Two blocks (Mawsynram and Pynursla block) were selected at random from this district. From the selected blocks, two villages each were selected randomly for data collection. The number of respondents selected from each village was 25. So, a total of 100 respondents were taken for the study.

The data collected were subjected to appropriate statistical analysis to draw results. For determining relationship of training needs with independent variables, spearman's correlation coefficient 'r_s' was computed.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Relationship between training needs and independent variable of Niang Megha rearing farmers (n=100)

Sl. No.	Independent variable	Spearman's correlation (r _s)
1	Age	-.069 ^{NS}
2	Family size	-.168 ^{NS}
3	Family type	-.192 ^{NS}
4	Education	.462 ^{**}
5	Social participation	.072 ^{NS}
6	Occupation	.048 ^{NS}
7	Pig herd size	-.207 [*]
8	Annual income from pig farming	.023 ^{NS}
9	Sources of Information	.274 ^{**}
10	Knowledge about pig farming	.265 ^{**}

*Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 NS- Non significant

**Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01

Age, family size, and family type were observed to be negative and non-significantly correlated with training needs on scientific pig farming. However, social participation, occupation and annual income from pig farming were found to be positively and non-significantly correlated with training needs.

Table-1 reveals that pig herd size was found to be negatively and significantly correlated with the training needs of the farmers at $p < 0.05$ percent level of significant. Education, information source utilization and knowledge were revealed to be positively and significantly correlated with training needs at $p < 0.01$ percent level of significant.

Pig herd size and training needs

Pig herd size was negatively and significantly correlated with the training needs of Niang Megha rearing farmers. The probable reason may be because farmers with small herd size due to their low piggery farming knowledge and less utilization of information sources would try to improve their knowledge, skills and capacities through the process of training. Rokonzaman (2013) ^[6] found comparable results in his study on tribal people's perceived training needs for income-generating enterprises.

Education and training needs

It was observed that education had positive and significant relationship with training needs. This might be due to the fact that education imparts greater knowledge, skills, awareness and desire to learn and acquire new information. These findings are supported by Patil *et al.* (2009) ^[5] who revealed in their study that the education level of the farmers had positive and significant relationship with the training requirement of dairy farmers.

Source of information and training needs

It was observed that sources of information had positive and significant relationship with training needs of the farmers regarding scientific pig farming. This might be due to the fact that source of communication act as a vector for dissemination of information. Similar findings were also reported by Patil *et al.* (2009) ^[5] and Sing (2011) ^[8] in their

study on training needs of dairy farmers.

Knowledge and training needs

A perusal of Table-1 shows that overall knowledge level of the farmers was positively and significantly correlated with training needs of the respondents. This indicates that higher knowledge level of the farmers would lead to greater curiosity, awareness and change in attitude which would make them seek training to sharpen their skills and practices through training programmes.

Conclusion

Thus, we can conclude that out of ten independent variables included in the study, only four variables had a significant correlation with the perceived training needs of farmers rearing Niang Megha. The training needs of the farmers had a positive and highly significant relationship ($p < 0.01$) with educational level, Information sources and the knowledge level of the farmers. Pig herd size was found to have negative and significant relationship ($p < 0.05$) with training needs.

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