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Constraints faced by the members of the farmer producer organizations in Udaipur district of Rajasthan

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Abstract

The FPO is a farmers' organization, made and run by farmers with the support of promoting NGO called as POPI (Producer Organization Promoting Institutions). In the initial few years of formation of FPO, POPI provides hand holding support to the farmers and when it is seeing that farmers must take it forward on their own and acquire technical and managerial capability to run the business successfully, POPI withdraws its support. Most of the FPOs are passing with multiple constraints like personal, technical, financial, infrastructural and competitive market. As a result of all this, the farmers suffer distress sale and ultimately, they do not get remunerative prices for their produce. The present study aims to explore the constraints faced by the members of Farmers Producer Organization. The data were collected through interview schedule from 320 members of four selected FPOs of Udaipur district. It was found that operational (67.60 MPS) and economic constraints (65.50) were the major obstacles faced by the FPO members which were creating problems in carrying out FPO's activity efficiently. There is need to manage these constraints so that they do not affect the organizations significantly.

Keywords: constraints, farmer producer organization

Introduction

The small farmers of India are facing multifold problems like lack of transportation facilities and storage facilities in rural areas. Access to latest information and technology, recent market trends and prices are also not available to the farmers. As a result of all this, the farmers suffer distress sale and ultimately, they do not get remunerative price for their produce. Another emerging challenge before the small scale farmers is the present trend of globalization and liberalization. Thus, fragmented and dispersed in remote areas, small producers face number of challenges which cannot be tackled individually. During the last few decades, a number of authors have studied about the constraints at various places in relation to small and marginal farmers (Meshram *et al.*, 2020; Singh and Kaur 2020, Ponnusamy 2010) ^[5, 8, 7]. The above situation calls for major structural reforms and transformational initiatives towards the revitalization of Indian agriculture both, by way of stepping up investments for productivity enhancement and also reforms in agricultural marketing and post-harvest agri logistics for boosting agricultural growth. The FPO is a farmers' organization, made and run by farmers with the support of promoting NGO called as POPI (Producer Organization Promoting Institutions). In the initial few years of formation of FPO, POPI provides hand holding support to the farmers and when it is seeing that farmers must take it forward on their own and acquire technical and managerial capability to run the business successfully, POPI withdraws its support. Professionals guide farmers for selecting the crops to be grown, area under particular crop and the price they will get on harvest. PC Professionals will be accountable to the board of directors of the PC, which will include some farmers. FPO comprises Board of directors, General Manager and FPO staff for planning, implementation and monitoring of FPO.

FPOs face common challenges in terms of organizing producers, increasing the capacity of staff and board members, providing effective agriculture extension services to farmers, hiring and retaining staff, raising capital etc. Despite the concerned efforts made by policy planners for the sustainability of the FPO, the present status of the FPO appear to be inadequate, to address the challenges faced by the farmers in the context of changing agriculture production technology and its marketing scenario. Most of the FPOs are passing with multiple constraints like personal, technical, financial, infrastructural and competitive market. It needs to take the form of a one-stop-shop that offers both hardware and software solutions to raise the income of farmers, especially small and marginal farmers (Economic survey, 2015-16).

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The present paper attempts to explore the constraints faced by the members of Farmers Producer Organization in Udaipur district.

Methodology

The present study was undertaken in Udaipur district. In order to study the constraints faced by the members of FPOs four FPOs viz. Bhomat Agro Food Producer Company Ltd. Oгна, Jhadol, Wakal Agro Food Producer Company Ltd. Oгна, Jhadol, Jhadol Producer Company Ltd. Jhadol and Mewar Green Agro Producer Company Ltd. Kolyari, Jhadol were selected purposively on the basis of Farmer Producer Organizations having both male and female members and Farmer Producer Organizations working since three years. The list of members of the selected FPOs was obtained from the Producer Organization Promoting Institutions (POPI) of the particular FPO. Separate list of male and female members was prepared from each FPO. From this list, a sample of 40 male and 40 female members were selected randomly, thereby making a total sample of 320 respondents from the four selected FPOs. Interview schedule was used for gathering data regarding constraints faced by the members of the selected FPOs. The collected data have been analyzed through ranks and Mean Percent Scores.

Results and Discussion

An effort was made to analyze the constraints faced by the respondents in performing the FPO activities and gaining the benefits. The constraints were categorized into personal, infrastructural, operational, economic and marketing constraints. The response was recorded on a four point continuum that is quite severe, severe, less severe and not at all assigning 3,2,1,0 scores respectively. The results have been presented in this section:

Personal Constraints faced by the members of the FPOs

Data in the Table1 highlights that lack of time was the main constraint, ranked I by the respondents with MPS of 41.04 for male and 63.96 MPS for females. Increased workload was observed as another constraint on II rank with 48.33 MPS for female members which was comparatively more than male (MPS 28.96). This may be due to the reason that the respondents were involved in production and processing of

agriculture produce and also they had to give time in other activities like meeting, trainings, collection of money, business planning etc. Dual responsibility of female in performing household chores as well as farm operations also account for these constraints.

Table 1: Personal constraints faced by the respondents

| S. No. | Personal Constraints | Male | | Female | |
|--------|------------------------|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | MPS | Rank | MPS | Rank |
| i | Increased workload | 28.96 | II | 48.33 | II |
| ii | Non-cooperation | 14.17 | V | 31.25 | V |
| iii | Lack of Family Support | 23.96 | IV | 40.42 | IV |
| iv | Lack of Initiative | 26.67 | III | 42.92 | III |
| v | Lack of Time | 41.04 | I | 63.96 | I |

The constraints like lack of initiative and lack of family support were ranked III and IV respectively by the respondents. Non-cooperation was the least faced constraints ranked V by the male (14.17 MPS) and female respondents (31.25 MPS) because they were very cooperative among their groups and joint efforts were also observed during the study.

Infrastructural Constraints faced by the members of the FPOs

Data in Table 2 show that lack of well-developed processing plants was the major constraints, ranked I by the male and female members with 84.58 and 81.46 MPS, lack of well-developed storage facilities was ranked II by the male and female with 67.71 and 71.46 MPS respectively and lack of irrigation facilities was ranked III by the male and female members with 58.54 and 58.96 MPS respectively. They stated that lack of proper storage facilities at the organization level leads to attack by pests and other organisms which resulted in a reduction in the market value of the crop. Findings of Gurjar *et al.* (2018) [3] also reported storage as the main constraint faced by the farmers. On the other hand, lack of proper training hall was another constraint faced by male and female members with 47.50 MPS and 52.92 MPS respectively and ranked IV. In this case sometimes Producer Organization Promoting Institution provided the space for conducting the trainings, meetings etc. Finding of Bhati (2018) [1] also reported infrastructural constraints to a higher extent with (MPS 60.67) faced by the women SHG members.

Table 2: Infrastructural constraints faced by the respondents

| S. No. | Infrastructural Constraints | Male | | Female | |
|--------|--|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | MPS | Rank | MPS | Rank |
| i | Lack of irrigation facilities | 58.54 | III | 58.96 | III |
| ii | Lack of proper training hall | 47.50 | IV | 52.92 | IV |
| iii | Lack of well-developed storage facilities | 67.71 | II | 71.46 | II |
| iv | Lack of well-developed processing Facilities | 84.58 | I | 81.46 | I |

Operational Constraints faced by the members of the FPOs

Table 3 reveals operational constraints encountered by the respondents. Data in the table indicate that lack of technical knowledge was the major constraint ranked I by the respondents with MPS 80 and 92.50 for male and female members. Discussion with the members revealed that members were facing problems in adoption of improved farming practice, licensing and certification of organic products because of lack of technical knowledge among them. ICT tools can help farmers become more productive and get better access to market information, finance and other

facilities and services. It can be observed from the table that lack of knowledge of ICT tools was the constraint, ranked II by the male with MPS 76.67 and by female with MPS 87.08, due to which they were unable to derive the benefits of the ICT tools. Lack of education and digital illiteracy was found as the reasons behind the lack of knowledge of ICT tools.

Lack of awareness about grading and packaging was another operational constraint ranked III by the both the male and female members with 73.54 and 82.92 MPS because of lack of trainings on improved package of practices, processing of products and storage practices. Less access to recommended practices and lack of technical guidance were the other

constraints perceived by the female to a higher extent (MPS 72.50 to 76.67) at rank IV and V rank. They stated that crop production by traditional method is cheap while for use of HYVs, insecticide, pesticides, fertilizers in recommended package of practices, they have to spend more money which

was very difficult for them to afford due to poor economic condition. Unavailability of labour was relatively less severe constraint faced by the male and female was ranked VII with 34.14 and 49.58 MPS respectively.

Table 3: Operational constraints faced by the respondents

| S. No. | Operational Constraints | Male | | Female | |
|--------|--|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | MPS | Rank | MPS | Rank |
| i | Less access to recommended practices | 56.46 | IV | 76.67 | IV |
| ii | High incidence of diseases and pests, crop failure | 53.33 | V | 62.71 | VI |
| iii | Lack of knowledge in ICT tools | 76.67 | II | 87.08 | II |
| iv | Lack of awareness about grading and packaging | 73.54 | III | 82.92 | III |
| v | Lack of technical guidance | 48.33 | VI | 72.50 | V |
| vi | Unavailability of labour | 34.17 | VII | 49.58 | VII |
| vii | Lack of technical knowledge | 80 | I | 92.50 | I |

Economic Constraints faced by the members of the FPOs

Table 4 presents information about the economic constraints faced by the male and female members of the FPO. Data illustrate that majority of the male and female respondents faced lack of sufficient finance at I rank with MPS 82.29 and 89.79 which created problems in adopting improved package of practices. Lack of credit facilities and lack of bank officials support were the other constraints ranked II and III by the male and female members of the FPO respectively. Due to this, they preferred non-institutional sources of credit over institutional sources. Respondents stated that getting a loan is a very cumbersome process as they have to go through lengthy document process such as filling form, photocopying, document verifications, arranging necessary documents like photographs, Id proofs and meeting minutes etc. High cost of labor was also mentioned by the male and female members with 35.42 and 42.71 MPS and ranked V respectively. In case of peak season, sometimes the respondents had to hire the labour for carrying out the production and processing activities. Further, they have to visit bank many times which

consumed lot of time and loss of wage-earning days for them. Similar findings were also reported by Subramanian and Shivnanjappa (2017)^[9].

Table 4: Economic constraints faced by the respondents

| S. No. | Economic Constraints | Male | | Female | |
|--------|---------------------------------|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | MPS | Rank | MPS | Rank |
| i | High cost of labour | 35.42 | V | 42.71 | V |
| ii | Lack of sufficient finance | 82.29 | I | 89.79 | I |
| iii | Lack of credit facilities | 79.38 | II | 77.08 | II |
| iv | Lack of bank officials support | 57.92 | III | 76.04 | III |
| v | High cost of recommended inputs | 47.50 | IV | 64.38 | IV |

Marketing Constraints faced by the members of the FPOs

Marketing constraints refer to factors that hinder the organization's ability to achieve its marketing goals. Distant market, lack of latest market information, lower price for produce, high cost of transportation and delayed payment were the some marketing constraints experienced by the members of the FPOs.

Table 5: Marketing constraints faced by the respondents

| S. No. | Marketing Constraints | Male | | Female | |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-------|------|--------|------|
| | | MPS | Rank | MPS | Rank |
| i | Distant market | 57.29 | IV | 84.58 | II |
| ii | Lack of latest market information | 63.54 | II | 82.71 | III |
| iii | Lower price for produce | 83.54 | I | 87.50 | I |
| iv | High cost of transportation | 59.17 | III | 63.96 | IV |
| v | Exploitation by middle men | 21.25 | VI | 14.58 | VII |
| vi | Perishable nature of products | 25.21 | V | 22.50 | V |
| vii | Delayed payment | 18.75 | VII | 16.88 | VI |

With regard to these marketing constraints, data presented in the Table 5 show that low price for produce was ranked I by the male and female members with 83.54 and 87.50 MPS respectively. Female respondents mentioned distant market (84.58 MPS) and lack of latest market information (82.71 MPS) as the major constraints and ranked at II and III place respectively. For getting remunerative prices they have to sell the produce in Mandis which was far from their villages. Female members reported that the lack of latest market information (82.71 MPS) and high cost of transportation (63.96 MPS) were the important constraints for them (ranked III and IV) respectively. Respondents also mentioned that delayed payments and perishable nature of products were the other marketing constraints.

Overall Constraints faced by the respondents

An effort was made to find out the overall constraints faced by the respondents by pooling the mean per cent scores of the individual constraints in the respective constraints categories. It can be seen from the Table 6 and Fig i. that the overall constraints faced by both male and female were to extent of 50.43 and 61.93 MPS respectively. Detailed look of the study indicate that operational constraints were the main problem and ranked I with MPS 60.36 and 74.85 by the male and female respectively. Under operational constraints it was seen that female faced these to a greater extent than male members because of lack of technical knowledge, lack of knowledge of ICT tools, lack of awareness about grading, packaging and recommended practices etc.

The economic constraints like lack of sufficient finance, lack of credit facilities and lack of support from bank officials etc. were also the major constraints with overall MPS of 65.50

and ranked II by the respondents. These findings are in accordance with Kaur (2016) ^[4] who reported economic constraint as a major problem faced by farm families.

Table 6: Overall Constraints faced by the respondents

| S. No. | Constraints | Mean Percent Scores | | | Rank |
|--------|-----------------------------|---------------------|--------|---------|------|
| | | Male | Female | Overall | |
| 1 | Personal Constraints | 26.96 | 45.38 | 36.17 | V |
| 2 | Infrastructural Constraints | 64.58 | 66.20 | 65.39 | III |
| 3 | Operational constraints | 60.36 | 74.85 | 67.60 | I |
| 4 | Economic constraints | 61.00 | 70.00 | 65.50 | II |
| 5 | Marketing constraints | 46.96 | 53.24 | 50.10 | IV |
| | Over all | 50.43 | 61.93 | 56.18 | |

With respect to infrastructural constraints, both the male and female members faced it to a higher extent with 64.58 and 66.20 MPS and rank III because of unavailability of storage facilities, processing plants and irrigation facilities which affected the production and processing of products. Marketing

constraints were ranked IV by the respondents. It can also be inferred that the female respondents (61.93 MPS) faced the constraints to a higher extent as compared to the male respondents (50.43 MPS) due to less exposure and lack of latest market information.

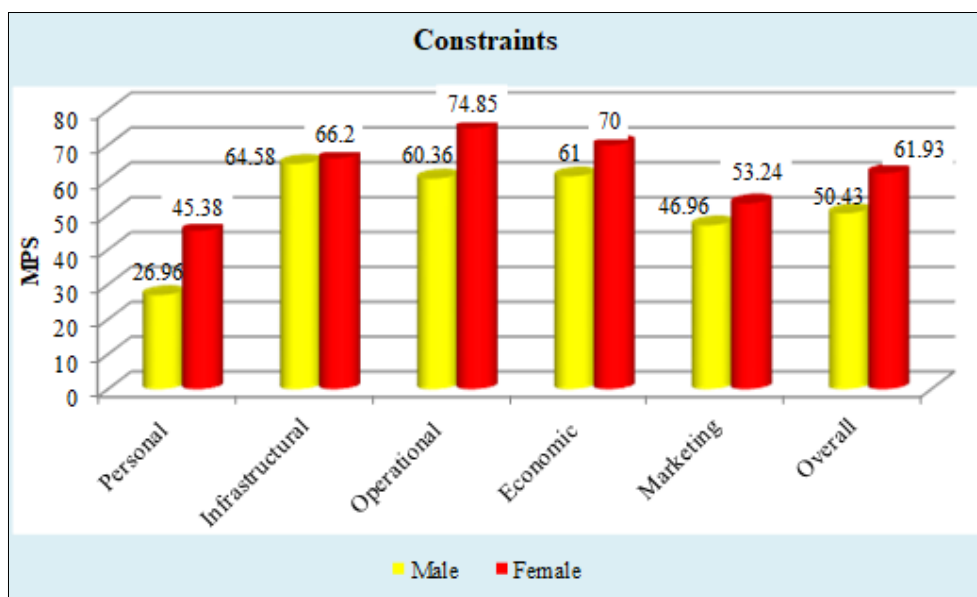


Fig 1: Overall constraints faced by the male and female members

Conclusion

This study was conducted for the analysis of the constraints faced by the members of the Farmer Producer Organizations in Udaipur District of Rajasthan. The five constraints experienced by the members of the FPO were personal, infrastructural, operational, economic and marketing. The overall MPS and rank were found as 36.17 (V), 65.39 (III), 67.60 (I), 65.50 (II) and 50.10 (IV) respectively according to the constraints. It is indicated that operational and economic constraints were the major obstacles faced by the FPO members. So there is need to manage these constraints so that they do not affect the organizations significantly and FPO can achieve sustainable growth and realize its true potential. For up scaling and better functioning of the FPO it is necessary to consider these constraints at priority level by the Government officials and policy planners.

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