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Socio-economic, communicational and psychological characteristics of pomegranate growers from western Maharashtra

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Abstract

The present study was conducted in Nashik, Solapur and Ahmednagar districts of Western Maharashtra which have highest area and production of pomegranate. The study was conducted to identify socio-economic, communicational and psychological characteristics of pomegranate growers that effects on marketing activities. Two tahsils with maximum area and production were selected for the study. From each tahsil six villages and 10 growers was selected which have a maximum area and number of pomegranate growers. In this way totally thirty six villages and 360 respondents was selected for study. Ex- post facto research design was used for study. Data was collected with the help of pre-tested interview schedule by personal interview technique. Majority of growers were middle aged (36 to 55 years), mostly completed primary to secondary level of education with sufficient farming experience (16 to 33 years) and having small to semi-medium size of land holding up to 4 ha., medium level of productivity (17 to 51) and production (35 to 104) from orchard, medium to high range of annual income (72.50 Rs.), fair level of irrigation status, low level of use of local personnel (35.00%) and group contact (37.50%) as source of information while medium use of extension personnel (60.00%) and mass contacts (48.06%), medium level of economic motivation (63.33%), scientific orientation (60.00%) and risk orientation (56.67%). The results of present study might be useful for Agricultural department, Horticulture department, Extension personnel, Policy makers, Research institutes, Training institutes, financing institutes, Emerging entrepreneurs to formulate and implement policies and developmental programs.

Keywords: socio-economic, communicational and psychological characteristics, pomegranate growers

Introduction

Pomegranate (*Punica granatum* L.) commonly known as Anar, Dalimb, Matulum. It is an important fruit of tropical and subtropical regions of World. The centre of origin of pomegranate is Iran where it was first cultivated in 2000 B.C. It is extensively cultivated in various countries which includes Spain, Morocco, Egypt, Iran, Afghanistan, China, Japan, USA, Russia, Pakistan, India and other Mediterranean countries. Pomegranate occupies 18th place based on production among the worlds' main fruit crops.

India is world's largest producer of pomegranates and it produces finest quality pomegranates throughout the year. The total area under pomegranate crop in India 2017-18 is approximately 233.93 thousand per hectare and production is 2844.52 thousand metric tons. During the year 2017-18, 47.33 MT fruits exported from India and it worth Rs.537.73 Corer, which shows that there is tremendous potential in fruit export. (Horticulture Statistic Division, Department of Agriculture Co-operation and Farmers Welfare, 2018) UAE, Nepal, Saudi Arab, Oman, Qatar, Netherland, Kuwait, Baharin, Srilanka, Egypt, Vietnam, Singapore are the major destinations were pomegranates exported from India.

Maharashtra contributes 64.43 % in total production of pomegranates from India and it ranks first in total production followed by Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh etc. It is an important fruit crop of Maharashtra and it is cultivated in 43,151 ha. area with total production of 4,31,510 tones. In Maharashtra, production is mainly concentrated in the Western Maharashtra region and the Marathawada region. Commercial cultivation of pomegranate takes place in Solapur, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Pune, Dhule, Aurangabad, Satara, Osmanabad and Latur districts of Maharashtra. The varieties like Bhagwa, Super Bhagwa, Arakta, Ganesh, Mrudula, Dholka popularly grown in Maharashtra.

Material and Methods

Present study was conducted in three districts of Maharashtra state namely Nashik, Solapur and Ahmednagar. Two tahsils with maximum area under pomegranate cultivation were selected from each district. Satana and Malegaon from Nashik, Sangola and Pandharpur from Solapur, Sangamner and Rahata from Ahmednagar were selected for the study. Total six tahsils were purposively selected for study. From each tahsil six villages and 10 growers was selected which have a maximum area and number of pomegranate growers in consultation with Taluka Agriculture Officer, Agril. Supervisor and Agril. Assistant. In this way totally thirty six villages and 360 respondents was selected for study. Ex- post facto research design was used for study. Data was collected

with the help of pre-tested interview schedule by personal interview technique from growers mostly contacting with them on farm. The collected qualitative data is converted into quantitative data by assigning score to them and by using certain statistical tools like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation etc. The obtained final scores were categorized into three groups namely, 'Low', 'Medium' and 'High', considering the mean and standard deviation.

Results and Discussion

The personal, socio-economic, situational, communicational and psychological characteristics of the pomegranate growers are mentioned in Table 1.

Table 1: The personal, socio-economic, situational, communicational and psychological characteristics of the pomegranate growers.

Sr. No	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age	Young (up to 35)	54	15.00
		Middle Age (36 to 55)	209	58.06
		Old (56 & Above)	97	26.94
2	Education	Illiterate (No education)	15	4.17
		Pre- primary (up to 4 th)	29	8.05
		Primary (5 th to 7 th)	148	41.11
		Secondary (8 th to 10 th)	69	19.17
		Higher Secondary (11 th to 12 th)	61	16.94
		Graduation (Degree)	38	10.56
3	Farming Experience	Low (up to 15)	71	19.72
		Medium (16 to 33)	211	58.61
		High (34 & above)	78	21.67
4	Area under pomegranate cultivation	Marginal (up to 1.00)	45	12.50
		Small (1.01 to 2.00)	118	32.78
		Semi- medium (2.01 to 4.00)	117	32.50
		Medium (4.01 to 10.00)	48	13.33
		Big (10.01 & above)	32	8.89
5	Productivity (ton/ha)	Low (up to 16)	85	23.61
		Medium (17 to 51)	206	57.22
		High (52 & above)	69	19.17
6	Production from orchard (ton/ha)	Low (up to 34)	75	20.83
		Medium (35 to 104)	212	58.89
		High (105 & above)	73	20.28
7	Annual Income	Low (up to 2,21,649)	48	13.33
		Medium (2,21,650 to 11,68,198)	261	72.50
		High (11,68,199 & above)	51	14.17
8	Irrigation Status	Poor (up to 13)	73	20.28
		Fair (14 to 19)	197	54.72
		Good (20 & above)	90	25.00
9	Source of Information			
a.	Extension Personnel	Low (up to 9)	76	21.11
		Medium (10 to 12)	216	60.00
		High (13 & above)	68	18.89
b.	Local Personnel	Low (up to 5)	137	38.06
		Medium (6)	126	35.00
		High (7 & above)	97	26.94
c.	Group Contact	Low (up to 6)	135	37.50
		Medium (7)	117	32.50
		High (8 & above)	108	30.00
d.	Mass Contact	Low (up to 10)	35	9.72
		Medium (11)	173	48.06
		High (12 & above)	152	42.22
e.	Overall distribution of Sources of Information	Low (up to 32)	82	22.78
		Medium (33 to 37)	222	61.66
		High (38 & above)	56	15.56
10.	Economic Motivation	Low (up to 19)	65	18.06
		Medium (20 to 24)	228	63.33
		High (25 & above)	67	18.61
11.	Scientific Orientation	Low (up to 22)	64	17.78

		Medium (23 to 27)	216	60.00
		High (28 & above)	80	22.22
12.	Risk Orientation	Low (up to 22)	88	24.44
		Medium (23 to 27)	204	56.67
		High (28 & above)	68	18.89

1. Age

Age is an important factor which influences the behavior of growers. Table 1. Indicated that majority of growers i.e. 58.06 per cent belonged to middle age group followed by 26.64 per cent belonged old age group and 15.00 per cent belonged to young age group. This indicated that there is more involvement of middle aged growers and age ranges from 36 to 55 years.

2. Education

Formal education improves the ability of an individual to seek knowledge, understand and utilized resources efficiently. Majority 41.11 per cent growers had completed primary education followed by 19.17 per cent completed secondary education, 16.94 per cent completed higher secondary education, 10.56 per cent completed education up to graduation, 8.05 per cent completed education up to pre-primary level and only 4.17 per cent growers was illiterate. From the findings it can be stated that majority of growers completed their primary, secondary level of education and few per cent of them were illiterate.

3. Farming Experience

In farming experience it is observed that near about three fifth per cent growers i.e. 58.61 per cent had medium level of farming experience followed by 21.67 and 19.72 per cent growers had high and low level of farming experience. From results it can be concluded that majority of growers had medium to high level of experience in pomegranate cultivation.

4. Area under pomegranate cultivation

It is observed that 32.78 and 32.50 per cent growers had small to semi- medium land holding followed by 13.33 per cent growers had medium land holding which ranges from 4.01 to 10.00 ha., 12.50 per cent growers had marginal land holding and few growers i.e. 8.89 per cent had big land holding which is above 10.00 ha. From findings it can be concluded that majority growers belongs to small to semi medium category of land holding.

5. Productivity

Crop productivity refers to crop yield per unit area of crop expressed in ton /ha. The average yield ton/ha from pomegranate crop was taken as a base for scoring. It is observed that 57.22 per cent growers had medium level of productivity which ranges 17 to 51 ton /ha followed by 23.61 percent and 19.17 per cent growers had low and high level of productivity of pomegranates. It can be concluded that majority of 76.38 per cent growers had medium to high productivity of pomegranates and it is due to adoption of latest technology as well as due to suitable climatic condition for pomegranate crop.

6. Production from Orchard

Total quantity of pomegranates produced by growers in a year from orchard and expressed in ton/ha is considered. From table 1 it is concluded that 58.89 percent growers comes under medium category of production which ranges from 36

to 104 ton/ha followed by 20.83 per cent and 20.28 per cent growers had low and high level of production. The average production is 69.92 ton/ha in a year from pomegranate orchard. Thus, it can be stated that majority of growers had medium level of production; it might be due to adoption of latest production technology.

7. Annual Income

Annual income is total income that growers earned from pomegranates in a year. From table 4.7 it is clear that 72.50 per cent growers had medium level of annual income which ranges 2, 21,650 to 11, 68, 199 Rs. followed by 14.17 per cent and 13.33 per cent growers had high and low level of annual income. It can be seen that majority of growers had medium to high level of annual income it is due to price fluctuation as well as marketing of produce in efficient way by using latest technology and use of mass media.

8. Irrigation Status

From table 1. it can be concluded that near about fifty per cent growers i.e. 54.72 growers had to fair level of irrigation status and score ranges 14 to 19 followed by 25.00 and 20.28 per cent grower had good and poor level of irrigation status.

9. Source of Information

a. Extension Personnel

Majority 60.00 per cent growers had medium level of use of extension personnel as a source of information followed by 21.11 per cent and 18.89 per cent growers had low and high level of use of extension personnel as a source of information. It is found that majority growers belonged to medium category it might be due to their eagerness in solving problems by directly contacting to extension personals.

b. Local Personnel

Majority 38.06 per cent growers had medium contact with local personnel followed by 35.00 and 26.94 per cent growers had low and high level of contact with local personnel to take information regarding pomegranate cultivation. It can be seen that majority of growers were not contacted with local personals to take information they might be used other sources of information.

c. Group Contact

It is observed that majority 37.50 per cent growers had low level of group contact followed by 32.50 per cent and 30.00 per cent growers had medium and high use of group contacts to take information. It can be concluded that participation of growers in group activities is quite low.

d. Mass Contact

Table 1. stated that 48.06 per cent growers had medium use of mass contact followed by 42.22 per cent and 9.72 per cent growers had high and low use mass communicating media to take information. It can be conclude that mass communicating media are the best and highly reached source of information which is used by near about 90.28 per cent growers.

e. Overall distribution of all sources of Information

Overall distribution of all sources of information including extension personnel, local personnel, group contact and mass contact shows that 61.66 per cent growers had medium level of use of all sources of information followed by 22.78 per cent and 15.56 per cent growers had low and high level of use of various sources of information. Near about 3/5th per cent growers uses different types of sources of information.

10. Economic Motivation

Economically motivated growers are oriented towards maximization of the profit from farming. It is clearly noted that 63.33 per cent growers had medium level of economic motivation followed by 18.61 and 18.06 per cent growers had high and low level of economic motivation. Majority of growers had medium level of economic motivation.

11. Scientific Orientation

It can be concluded from table 1. that 60.00 per cent growers had medium category of scientific orientation followed by 22.22 per cent and 17.78 per cent had high and low level of scientific orientation. The mean scientific orientation score is 25.26. The more contact with extension personnel and use of mass communicating media help to exchange technology scientifically.

12. Risk Orientation

It is observed that 56.67 per cent growers had medium category of risk orientation followed by 24.44 per cent and 18.89 per cent had low and high category of risk orientation. It was clear that from the study those growers who were having willingness to earn much they were ready to take risks and due to this reason they were found in the medium category of risk orientation.

Discussion

The above discussed results give a brief idea about personal, socio-economic, situational, communicational and psychological characteristics of the pomegranate growers from Western Maharashtra. The majority of growers were middle aged, mostly completed primary to secondary level of education with sufficient farming experience and having small size of land holding, medium level of production and productivity from orchard, medium to high range of annual income, fair level of irrigation status, low level of use of local personnel and group contact as source of information while medium use of extension personals and mass contacts, medium level of economic motivation, scientific orientation and risk orientation. The results of present study might be useful for Agricultural department, Horticulture department, Extension personnel, Policy makers, Research institutes, Training institutes, financing institutes, Emerging entrepreneurs, Scholars to formulate and implement policies and developmental programs.

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