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Attitude of small farmers towards improved farm practices

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Abstract

An experiment entitled “Socio-economic Status of Small Farmers in Western Maharashtra” was conducted at Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication, Post Graduate Institute, MPKV, Rahuri, during 2020-21. The study was conducted with a sample size of 360 from three District Ahmednagar, Pune and Nashik to assess attitude of small farmers towards improved farm practices. Findings revealed that 57.50 per cent of small farmers had favourable attitude, 25.83 percent of small farmers having less favourable and 16.67 percent of small farmers had most favourable attitude towards improved farm practices.

Keywords: small farmers, Attitude towards improved farm practices

Introduction

In present scenario population of India is increasing day by day showing the total number of operational holdings in the country has increased from 138.35 million in 2010-11 to 146.45 million in 2015-16 showing an increase of 5.86%. and the total operated area in the country has decreased from 159.59 million ha. in 2010-11 to 157.82 million ha. in 2015-16 showing a decrease of 1.11%. The average size of operational holdings has declined to 1.08 ha. in 2015-16 as compared to 1.15 in 2010-11. (Agriculture Census 2015-16 report published Jan 2020) From above all data area under agriculture is constricted and in India increases the number of farmers possessing small size of land holding. Due to small size of land farmers faces many problems and income obtain from farming is not enough to meet the needs of family expenditure. It is very much important to increase the agriculture production to meet the needs of increasing population. This indicates there is urgent need to investigate the attitude of farmers towards improved farm practices that will help small farmers to raise their income. Government developed different schemes like Farmers FIRST, IFS models was developed for dryland and irrigated 1 ha area. It will help small farmers to reduce risk of crop failure and helps to increase income and improve standard of living of farmers.

Material and Methods

The research was conducted in Ahmednagar, Pune and Nashik districts of Western Maharashtra during year 2020-21. Sample size of 360 small farmers distributed from 6 tahsils and 36 villages from three districts of western Maharashtra. “Ex –post facto” research design was employed in the present research study as the events have already occurred.

The data were collected by interviewing the small farmers with the help of a pre-tested structured interview schedule developed for the purpose. The data collected from the respondents was scored, tabulated and analysed by using suitable statistical tools such as Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard deviation, Correlation and Multiple linear regression respectively. the scoring technique and results of study was presented in tables below.

Scoring and categorization

Table 1: Scoring of attitude of small farmers towards improved farm practices

Sr. No.	Attitude towards improved farm practices	Score
1.	Less favourable	Up to 63
2.	Favourable	64 to 69
3.	Most favourable	70 & above
	Mean	66.45
	SD	3.34

Results and Discussion

Table 2: Attitude of farmer towards improved farm practices statement wise distribution

Sr. No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1.	I prefer local practices to the improved practices because they are not culturally suitable (-)	25 (6.95)	40 (11.11)	70 (19.44)	87 (24.17)	138 (38.33)
2.	Improved farm practices gives better yield than local practices (+)	180 (50.00)	139 (38.61)	21 (5.83)	18 (5.00)	02 (0.56)
3.	Improved farm practices are only for the educators (-)	27 (7.50)	31 (8.61)	48 (13.33)	171 (47.50)	83 (23.06)
4.	Improved farm practices are usually saves time of farmers (+)	82 (22.78)	251 (69.72)	14 (3.89)	8 (2.22)	5 (1.39)
5.	Improved farm practices are too complex for my linking therefore there are large limitations for use (-)	31 (8.61)	24 (6.67)	83 (23.05)	121 (33.61)	101 (28.06)
6.	Improved farm practices requires regular contact with extension worker (-)	08 (2.22)	22 (6.11)	49 (13.61)	156 (43.34)	125 (34.72)
7.	Improved farm practices more expensive than the local practices therefore that practices accessible only for rich farmers (-)	07 (1.94)	85 (23.61)	38 (10.56)	84 (23.33)	146 (40.56)
8.	Adoption of improved farm practices has helped in improving socio-economic status of the farmers (+)	163 (45.28)	144 (40.00)	32 (8.89)	17 (4.72)	4 (1.11)
9.	Improved farm practices not costly as compare their benefits (+)	60 (16.67)	220 (61.11)	48 (13.33)	26 (7.22)	6 (1.67)
10.	Adoption of improved farm practices decreases daily working load of farm women(+)	21 (5.83)	280 (77.78)	30 (8.33)	24 (6.67)	5 (1.39)
11.	All farmers cannot perform improved farm practices as it requires skill. (-)	37 (10.28)	262 (72.78)	38 (10.56)	15 (4.16)	8 (2.22)
12.	Handling of chemical fertilizers and pesticides results in health hazards for farmers. (-)	11 (3.06)	24 (6.67)	149 (41.38)	166 (46.11)	10 (2.78)
13.	Improved crop varieties gives better yield and good quality than local varieties. (+)	155 (43.06)	180 (50.00)	16 (4.44)	06 (1.67)	03 (0.83)
14.	There is no change in wage rate of laboures due to the introduction of improved farm practices. (+)	149 (41.39)	176 (48.89)	28 (7.78)	04 (1.11)	03 (0.83)
15.	Working in the farm with improved practices is the best and I would not change my job for another. (+)	180 (50.00)	121 (33.61)	33 (9.17)	17 (4.72)	09 (2.5)
16.	Improved farm practices provide lots of employment avenues of educated unemployed youth also. (+)	138 (38.33)	180 (50.00)	27 (7.50)	11 (3.06)	04 (1.11)

SA- Strongly Agree, A-Agree, UD-Undecided, DA-Disagree, SDA- Strongly Disagree

Statement wise distribution of results of attitude of small farmers towards improved farm practices

38.33 per cent of small farmers strongly disagree to the statement I prefer local practices to the improved practices because they are not culturally suitable, half of the small farmers strongly agree to improved farm practices gives better yield than local practices, 47.50 per cent small farmers disagree to the statement improved farm practices are only for educators, one third of the small farmers i.e 69.72 per cent agree to the statement improved farm practices usually saves time of farmers,33.61 per cent small farmers disagree to the statement improved farm practices are too complex for my liking therefore there are large limitations for use, nearly half of the small farmers are disagree to the statement improved farm practices require regular contact with extension worker,40.56 per cent of the small farmers strongly disagree to the statement improved farm practices more expensive than the local practices therefore that practices accessible only for

rich farmers, Neraly half 45.28 per cent of small farmers strongly agree to the statement adoption of improved farm practices has helped in improving socio-economic status of the farmers, one third of the small farmers i.e. 61.11 per cent agree to the statement improved farm practices not costly as compared to their benefits, 77.78 per cent of the small farmers agree to the statement adoption of improved farm practices decreases daily working load of farmers, More the one third i.e. 72.78 per cent of small farmers agree to the statement all farmers cannot perform improved farm practices as it requires skill, naearly half i.e 46.11 per cent of the small farmers disagree to the statement handling of chemical fertilizers and pesticides results in health hazards for farmrs, Half of the small farmers agree to the statement improved crop varities gives better yield and good quality than local varieties, Nearly halfi. e. 48.89 per cent small farmers agree to the statement there is no change in wage rate of labourers due to introduction of improved farm practices, half of the small

farmers strongly agree to the statement working in the farm with improved farm practices is the best and I would not change my job for another, half of the small farmers agree to the statement improved farm practices provide lots of employment avenues of educated unemployed youth also.

Overall attitude of small farmers towards improved farm practices

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their overall entrepreneurial behaviour

Sr. No.	Categories	Respondents (N=360)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Less favourable	93	25.83
2	Favourable	207	57.50
3	Most favourable	60	16.67
Total		360	100.00
Mean 66.19		SD 3.41	

The data presented (Table 3) indicated that majority 57.50 per cent of small farmers had favourable attitude, 25.83 percent of small farmers having less favourable and 16.67 percent of small farmers had most favourable attitude towards improved farm practices. Similar results with conformity with this result were found by Kadam (2016) ^[2], Natraju *et al.* (2019) ^[3] Bhoir *et al.* (2020) ^[4].

Conclusion

The study has clearly shown that majority of the small farmers had favourable attitude towards improved practices and it would be helpful for farmers to reduce risk of crop failure and use different improved practices and IFS model of 1 ha for dry and irrigated area, government farmers FIRST scheme and use of other improved farm practices i.e. developed for small farmers to raise income level and improve their socio-economic status of farmers. It can be concluded that there is need of conducting trainings/ workshop for farmers to create more awareness of these improved farm practices by line departments and State Agriculture Universities and KVK'S to change attitude of farmers to towards most favourable use of improved farm practices.

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