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Constraints faced by small farmers in Western Maharashtra

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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 important constraint faced by small farmers were non-remunerative prices of agro produce, Fragmentation of land holdings, income obtained is less, not sufficient for family expenditure, condition of road and poor transportation, less market awareness and market information. The major suggestions for refinement were Government need to provide good and assured market for agriculture commodity, Awareness among farmers related to market information and prices of produce, Provide training to the small farmers to create awareness about improved farm practices, new technology and processing and value addition of farm produce.

Keywords: small farmers, constraint faced by small farmers

Introduction

In the current context, India's population is growing by the day, as evidenced by the fact that the total number of operating holdings in the country climbed by 5.86 percent from 138.35 million in 2010-11 to 146.45 million in 2015-16. The overall operating area in the country has fallen by 1.11 percent from 159.59 million hectares in 2010-11 to 157.82 million ha in 2015-16. In 2015-16, the average size of operational holdings was 1.08 ha, down from 1.15 ha in 2010-11. (The Agriculture Census 15-16 report published January 2020). All of the data shows that the area under agriculture is shrinking, and the number of farmers with tiny land holdings is increasing in India. Farmers suffer various issues as a result of the tiny amount of their property, and the revenue they earn from farming is insufficient to support their family's needs. It is critical to expand agricultural production in order to meet the needs of the world's population.

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.

Constraints Faced by Small Farmers

Constraint refers as situation or circumstances which impede or restrict the activity of an individual. In this study, it was operationalized as the items of difficulties faced by small farmers to carry out their day to day operations on their farm. Constraints play a vital role in adoption. To obtain better result of any type of services, it is very essential to minimize the constraints. The constraints experienced by small farmers are collected. The frequency, per cent of each constraint was worked out to identify the major constraints encountered by the respondents given below in Table 1.

Table 1: Constraints Faced by small farmers

Sr. No.	Constraints	Frequency (N= 360)	Percentage	Rank
1.	Non-remunerative prices for agro produce	348	96.60	I
2.	Fragmentation of land holdings	338	93.88	II
3.	Income obtained is less, not sufficient for family expenditure	282	78.33	III
4.	Condition of road and poor transportation	255	70.83	IV
5.	Less market awareness or market information	250	69.94	V
6.	Inadequate and irregular supply of seed and plant material	241	66.94	VI
7.	Lack of proper knowledge about improved technology	224	62.22	VII
8.	No enough resources to cultivate the land	215	59.72	VIII
9.	Shortage of water in summer season	208	57.77	IX

The data in Table indicated that the major constraints encountered by respondents. The major constraints were non remunerative prices for agro produce (96.60%) and fragmentation of land holdings (93.88%). Further, 78.33 per cent respondents reported that income obtained was less not sufficient for family expenditure. Constraint on condition of road and poor transportation was faced by 70.83 per cent respondents. Less market awareness or market information (69.94%), inadequate and irregular supply of seed and planting material (66.94%), lack of proper knowledge about improved technology (62.22%), no enough resources to cultivate land (59.72%) and shortage of water in summer

season (57.77%) were other constraints faced by the respondents.

The findings are in line with results of Mungase (2019) ^[5] and Medhi *et al.* (2020) ^[6].

Suggestions of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to give suggestions to overcome these constraints. Accordingly, the responses were obtained. The suggestions given by the respondents are in accordance with the constraints expressed by them. The suggestions are presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Suggestions of respondents to overcome constraints

Sr. No.	Suggestions	Frequency (N=360)	Percentage
1.	Govt. need to provide good and assured market for agricultural commodity	342	95.00
2.	Awareness among farmers related to market information and prices of produce	327	90.83
3.	Provide training to the small farmers to create awareness about improved farm practices, new technology and processing and value addition of farm produce	305	84.72
4.	Provide group transport facility to farmers	293	81.39
5.	Timely provision inputs like seed, fertilizers etc.	284	78.89
6.	Credit should be available easily	261	72.50
7.	Need to aware farmers to farm pond scheme to construct farm pond on subsidy of government and use water in summer	213	59.17

The data in Table 2 highlighted the suggestions expressed by respondents. In context of constraints faced the major suggestions expressed were providing good assured market for agricultural commodity (95.00%), awareness among farmers related to market information and prices of produce is needed (90.83%), provide training to respondents to create awareness about improved farm practices, new technology and value addition of farm produce (84.72%), provide group transport facility to farmers (81.39%), timely provision inputs like seed, fertilizers (78.89%), credit should be available easily (72.50%) and need to aware farmers to farm pond scheme to construct farm pond on subsidy of government and used water in summer (59.17%).

The findings are in line with results of Mungase (2019) ^[5] and Medhi *et al.* (2020) ^[6].

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