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An analysis of socio-economic profile characteristics of vegetable growers in Odisha

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Abstract

The present study was carried out in Cuttack and Koraput district of Odisha State to study the profile characteristics of vegetable growers. An ex-post facto design of social research was used. A sample of 200 vegetable growers as respondents were drawn and information obtained from them was considered for tabulation and analysis of data. Findings revealed that majority (69.5%) vegetable growers were middle aged; (40.5%) had primary level of education; (38.5%) were ST category, 72% had nuclear family and 54.5% had up to 5 members. Thirty-two per cent respondents had 10 to 20 years of experience in vegetable cultivation; 45.5% were cultivating vegetables in 1-2 ha. of area. Further, the respondents had medium level of annual income (78.5%), social participation (63.5%), extension contact (70.5%), extension participation (81.5%), mass media exposure (72.5%) and (54%) of them received no training.

Keywords: Socio-economic profile, vegetable growers, social participation, mass media exposure, extension participation

Introduction

Agriculture is the predominant occupation in our country. Horticulture crops cover large varieties of fruits, vegetables, flowers, plantation and spice crops. Among these, vegetable cultivation is the major attraction to farmers as it is comparatively more remunerative than field crops. India ranks second in fruits and vegetables production in the world, after China. In fiscal year 2021, the total production of vegetables was estimated to be at approximately 196 million metric tons (Statista Research Department, 2022). West Bengal ranks 1st in vegetable production and Odisha ranks 7th in both area and Production. In Odisha the total area under vegetable cultivation is 613.62 (000'HA) and total production is 8466.17 (000'MT). (National Horticultural Board, 2018-19)

As a leading producer of low-cost fruits and vegetables, the country had an enormous export market. However, productivity of vegetables in our country is comparatively lower than the world's average productivity. In order to meet the demands of growing population as well as export requirements, the production has to be still increased. Entrepreneurship has now been recognized as a concept, not only for starting industries but also in the development of agriculture and horticultural production. Vegetable farming solving the problems of unemployment, it requires smaller capital investment and has added advancing ensuring quick returns. Rapid growth of vegetable enterprise needs an efficient flow of information to farmers coupled with nation's ability to generate a steady stream business opportunity in this sector can only come about when its people take to entrepreneurial activities.

Entrepreneurship in vegetable farming is that capacity for innovation and calibre introduce innovative techniques in business operation. The future look bright for innovative entrepreneur who possess the skill and experience needed for the challenges of enterprise ownership. It is only the innovative entrepreneur who has the power to dreams, to transform new situation into thoughts and resolve them into action. Hence, an entrepreneur is an integral part of economic developments and entrepreneurship is the pursuit of an opportunity irrespective of existing resources.

Today's knowledge based economy is fertile ground for entrepreneurs. It is rightly believed that India has an extraordinary talent pool with limitless potential to become entrepreneurs. Therefore, it is important to get committed to creating the right environment to develop successful entrepreneurs (Shivacharan *et al.*, 2017) [14]. A widely accepted view is that the personal characteristics as well as social aspects clearly play some role, entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs can also be developed through conscious action. Development of entrepreneurs and of entrepreneurship can be stimulated through a set of supporting institutions and through

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deliberate innovative action which stimulates changes and fully supports capable individuals and groups. It is argued that education and training contribute significantly to the development of entrepreneurship. The standard of living of the people is shaped by the social frame work. Social structure of people is intimately connected with the economic institutions. Thus, economic and social conditions are inter-related. A part from social and economic factors, the personal factors like age, size of the family and family type also affect the entrepreneurial behaviour of vegetable growers. The growth of entrepreneurship ensures the best possible use of facilities and resources as well as the enhancement of the value of goods and services. As well enables the development of resilience to the effects of globalisation. There are numerous elements that affect the humans' entrepreneurial behaviour (Kumar and Poonam, 2019) [9]. Considering this the socio-economic profile characteristics of the sample vegetable growers are given in this paper.

Materials and Methods

The state of Odisha consisted of ten agro-climatic zones based on soil, weather and other relevant characteristics. From these 10 agro climatic zones we have selected two diverse zones for our study for better comparability and representation of the vegetable farmers and their characteristics. Based on the data from Odisha Agricultural statistics (2013-14) East and South Eastern coastal plain (Ranked No.1 in both GCA and Production) and Eastern Ghat high land (Ranked No. 7 in both GCA and production) were selected purposively as they both comes under two completely different cultivation conditions. From these two agro-climatic zones, Cuttack (East and South Eastern coastal plain) and Koraput (Eastern Ghat high land) districts were purposively selected based on highest GCA and production under vegetable cultivation in their respective zones. Out of these selected districts, two blocks from each district were randomly selected constituting total four blocks Banki, Damapara, Pottangi and Laxmipur. From each of the 4 blocks, two gram panchayats and from each gram panchayats one village was randomly selected, thus making it total 8 gram panchayats and 8 villages. Thus, finally eight gram panchayats (GPSs) namely Berhampura, Kiapalla (Banki block), Similipur, Bilipada (Damapara block), Nuagaons, Maliput (Pottangi block), Panchda, Champi (Laxmipur block) and eight villages namely Berhampura (Berhampura GP), Kumusar (Kiapalla GP), Makundpur (Similipur GP), Bilipada (Bilipada GP), Galigabdar (Nuagaon GP), Champakendu (Maliput GP), Niraniguda (Panchda GP) and Titijhila (Champi GP) were selected. From each selected village, for our study 25 farmers who were involved in vegetable farming were selected randomly constituting a total 200 respondents in consultation with horticulture assistant and extension personnel of area. Data was collected by personal interview method at the farmers door steps or at their farms with the help of pretested structured interview schedule and focused group discussions. The collected data were analyzed using various statistical tools like Average, Frequency, Percentage, Mean and S.D.

Results and Discussion

The results of all selected profile characteristics of women agripreneurs are presented in Table 1 and described as under:

Age

It is clear from Table 1 that majority (69.5%) of the vegetable

growers were middle aged, followed by old (16%) and young age (14.5%) groups. It could be inferred from the results that majority (69.5%) of the vegetable growers were from middle age group. The probable reason might be middle age group farmers are more enthusiastic and willing to work hard than the category of old age group and more experienced than young age group. Also they can take independent decisions regarding different activities involved in vegetable production. The results are in line with Himaja (2001) [8], Sowjanya (2007) [18], Nair (2011) [12] and Sreeram (2013) [19].

Education

It is evident from the Table1 that majority (40.5%) of the respondents were educated up to primary school level, followed by high school (30%), functionally literate (20%), intermediate (5.5%), college level (2.5%) and only (1.5%) of them were illiterate, respectively. The possible reason for majority of the vegetable growers were educated up to primary level was most of them were middle aged and older aged people, lack of awareness among elders in the village about education and lack of encouragement from their family members for further continuance of their education. Hence, mobilization programmes which make them realise the importance of education for improving their lives should be taken up. The findings are in line with Anandashankar and Upendranath (2014) [14].

Caste

It is observed form the Table 1 that (38.50%) of the respondents belonged to ST, followed by OBC (33.00%), general (18.50%) and scheduled caste (10.00%), respectively. The majority of the respondents belonged to backward caste the probable reason might be due to lack of property, poverty, indebtedness which made them go for vegetable cultivation. The finding is in conformity with the results of Mubeena *et al.* (2017) [11].

Family type

It is evident from Table 1 that majority (72%) of the vegetable growers were found to be in living nuclear families, followed by inhabitation in joint family was (28%). It has been reported that family support provides impetus to enterprise. Joint family could be helpful in sharing of resources as well as risk. The breakdown of joint family into nuclear families was evident in the study areas. The findings are in line with Reshma *et al.* (2014) [13].

Family size

It is observed from Table 1 that more than half (54.50%) of the vegetable growers had small family size followed by medium (36.00%) and large (9.50%) family size. Migration to another district or state for earning and fragmentation of land holding might be the probable reason for this. The results are in line with the findings of Esakkimuthu *et al.* (2017) [6].

Experience in vegetable cultivation

It is evident from Table 1 that majority (32.00%) of the vegetable growers had 10 to 20 years of experience in vegetable cultivation, followed by up to 10 years (29.50%), 20 to 30 years (23.50%) and >30 years (15.00%), respectively. The probable reason for this trend might be that vegetable cultivation gives constant income throughout the season.

Table 1: Socio-economic profile of the vegetable growers

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Young age (Up to 35 years)	29	14.50
	Middle age (36-58 years)	139	69.50
	Old age (More than 58 years)	32	16.00
Education	Illiterate	3	1.50
	Functionally literate	40	20.00
	Primary school	81	40.50
	High school	60	30.00
	Intermediate	11	5.50
	College level	5	2.50
Caste	General	37	18.50
	OBC	66	33.00
	SC	20	10.00
	ST	77	38.50
Family type	Nuclear family	144	72.00
	Joint family	56	28.00
Family size	Small(<5 Member)	109	54.50
	Medium(6 to 9 Member)	72	36.00
	Large(>9 Member)	19	9.50
Farming experience	Up to 10 years	59	29.50
	10 to 20 years	64	32.00
	20 to 30 years	47	23.50
	>30 years	30	15.00
Area under vegetable cultivation	Marginal (0.1 to 1.0 ha.)	89	44.50
	Small (1.1 to 2.0 ha.)	91	45.50
	Semi-Medium (2.1 to 4.0 ha.)	18	9.00
	Medium (4.1 to 10.0 ha.)	2	1.00
	Large (> 10.0 ha.)	0	0
Annual Income	Low	16	8.00
	Medium	157	78.50
	High	27	13.50
		Mean=183203.5	S.D.=134662
Social participation	Low	45	22.50
	Medium	127	63.50
	High	28	14.00
		Mean= 23.60	S.D.= 2.72
Extension Contact	Low	37	18.50
	Medium	141	70.50
	High	22	11.00
		Mean= 15.70	S.D.=5.75
Extension Participation	Low	20	10.00
	Medium	163	81.50
	High	17	8.50
		Mean= 23.70	S.D.= 1.82
Mass media Exposure	Low	39	19.50
	Medium	145	72.50
	High	16	8.00
		Mean= 15.07	S.D.=2.53
Training Received	No training	108	54.00
	<5 no.	69	34.50
	6-10 no.	17	8.50
	>10 no.	6	3.00

Area under vegetable cultivation

It is evident from Table 1 that less than half (45.50%) of the vegetable growers were small farmers having 1 to 2 ha. land under vegetable cultivation, followed by 44.50 per cent were marginal farmers, 9.00 per cent were in semi-medium category and only 1.00 per cent of them were in medium category of land under vegetable cultivation. None of them were belonged to large category of land holding under vegetable cultivation. Similar findings are obtained by Reshma *et al.* (2014) [13].

Annual Income

It can be seen from Table 1 that majority (78.50%) of the

respondents had medium level income, followed by high (13.50%) and low (8.00%) level of income. It is inferred from the above result that majority of the respondents had medium level of income. The probable reason might be that medium and high income groups will be more enthusiastic to improve upon their standard of living and vegetable cultivation can be a source of income round the year. The result is in line with the findings of Mubeena *et al.* (2017) [11], Shreekant and Jahagirdar (2017) [15], Dound *et al.* (2018) [5] and Lakshmi Devi *et al.* (2019) [10].

Social Participation

It is apparent from Table 1 that majority (63.50%) of the

respondents had high level of social participation, followed by 22.50 per cent of them had low level of social participation and 14.00 per cent of them had medium social participation. Social organisations like village panchayat at the local level work for the development of the people and give solutions for the people's problems. Co-operatives functioning in the locality has the responsibility for providing credit and input support to the farmers. Self Help Group work towards the betterment of financial condition of the people. These might be the reasons for which the respondents had medium to high level participation. The result is in line with the findings of Chithra (2011) ^[4], Siddeshwari (2015) and Lakshmi Devi *et al.* (2019) ^[10].

Extension Contact

Extension contact is very much essential to acquire knowledge and skills on latest technological developments on farm activities. Good extension contact helps in acquiring technological information regularly for use in their farm activities. It is apparent from Table 1 that majority (70.50%) of the respondents had medium level of extension contact, followed by 18.50 per cent of them had low level of extension contact and 11.00 per cent of them had high level extension contact. Contacting the extension officials pertaining to their field of occupation is important for the vegetable growers. They might be regularly approaching the concerned officers to update the information regarding new improved practices related to vegetable cultivation. The Assistant Horticulture officers, Assistant Agriculture officers and VAWs are visiting to the operational area at regular interval to discuss with the farmers about their activities. This might be the possible reason for the above trend. The finding was confirmed with similar studies made by Boruah *et al.* (2015) ^[3], Shivacharan *et al.* (2017) ^[14], Sofeghar (2017) ^[17] and Yewatkar *et al.* (2019) ^[20].

Extension Participation

Extension participation is important for the knowledge gain and adoption of vegetable farm practices. It is evident from Table 1 that majority (81.50%) of the vegetable growers had medium level of extension participation, followed by 10.00 per cent and 8.50 per cent of them had low and high level of extension participation, respectively. The results implied that the participation in various extension activities was overall in medium level, the probable reason might be medium social participation. The result is in line with the findings of Esakkimuthu and Kameswari (2017) ^[6].

Mass media Exposure

It is depicted in Table 1 that, majority (72.50%) of the vegetable growers had medium level of mass media exposure, followed by 19.50 per cent and 8.00 per cent of them had low level mass and high level mass media exposure, respectively. The probable reason for this trend might be that, in the present day scenario mass media is the main source of information on changing trends and exploring opportunities for the farmers. But the respondents were not using all the mass media sources due to lack of awareness and low level of education. The officials should analyse the lacuna and take necessary steps enabling the respondents to receive information from all the sources and use it in their farm activities. The result is in line with the findings of Sofeghar (2017) ^[17].

Training Received

Table 1 projected that, more than half (54.00%) of the

vegetable growers had no training, followed by 34.50 per cent of them had received <5 no. of training, 8.50 per cent and 3.00 per cent received 6-10 no. and >10 no. trainings, respectively. The probable reason might be that government officials were not conducting frequent trainings in those areas. Thus, more no. of training programmes should be conducted in the study areas. The result is in line with the findings of Bandi and Reddy (2018) ^[2].

Conclusion

The present study indicated that majority of the vegetable growers were in middle aged group, had primary level education, belonged to ST category, living in nuclear families having small family size, had 10 to 20 years of experience in vegetable cultivation, were small farmers, had medium level of income, medium level social participation, extension contact, extension participation, mass media exposure and did not receive any training.

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