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Socio- economic profile of the farmers in Rupnagar, Punjab, India

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Abstract

The present study examines the socio-economic profile of farmers in Rupnagar, Punjab, India, in the year 2023, focusing on villages in Chamkaur Sahib Tehsil. The research reveals that the majority of farmers are from the general category (85%), living in joint families (56%). Mobile phone ownership is prevalent, with most having smartphones and internet connectivity. The age distribution shows a significant portion of farmers aged 51 and above (56%). Education levels vary, with a notable proportion having completed secondary education. This signals the potential for enhanced information assimilation and adoption of modern farming practices among this group. Farmers primarily acquire information through input dealers (85%) and Kisan melas (69%). The study also highlights landholding and livestock production patterns. A particularly noteworthy aspect of this study is the minimal involvement of farmers in various organizations and their apparent reluctance to take advantage of government schemes. This finding raises questions about the efficacy and accessibility of such programs and warrants further investigation. This research underscores the importance of recognizing the diverse socio-economic backgrounds and preferences of farmers in the Rupnagar region, Punjab, to design and implement effective agricultural policies and extension services. It provides valuable insights for policymakers, agricultural experts, and organizations working towards the betterment of the farming community in this area.

Keywords: Agriculture, education, extension contacts, farmer, livestock, socio- economic

Introduction

Agriculture is a vital sector on the world stage, supporting the livelihoods of billions of people. It encompasses a wide range of activities, from crop cultivation to livestock rearing, and is influenced by factors such as climate change, technological advancements, and global trade dynamics. The socio-economic well-being of farmers globally is intricately connected to agricultural policies, market conditions, and environmental sustainability.

In India, agriculture is the primary source of livelihood for a significant portion of the population. The socio-economic profile of Indian farmers is diverse, with variations in landholding sizes, access to resources, and income levels. The sector is characterized by traditional farming practices, as well as modern, technology-driven approaches, reflecting the coexistence of different farming paradigms. Agriculture insurance is a significant risk management policy, but this is not easily reachable to the majority of farmers in India. The government of India introduces a novel agriculture scheme every decade, but every crop insurance scheme was inconsistent and ineffective owing to operational defects. Agriculture insurance in India is still developing in terms of coverage, scope, and exposure, but farmers' dissatisfaction about agriculture insurance turned out to be a negative word of mouth. Insurance illiteracy and farmers' preference for agriculture relief payments are the main reasons for limited access to agriculture insurance. The current crop insurance schemes are improperly operated because of implementation issues at the state level. (Singh and Agarwal, 2020) [7].

Punjab is rightly called the "Granary of India". It produces about 2.4b percent of the world's paddy and about 1 percent of the world's cultivation cotton. Almost 82 percent of the area in the state was under cultivation out of which almost 85 percent of the cropped area was under wheat and 73 percent under paddy. (Gohain, 2018) [4].

The Punjab state has total geographical area of 5.03 million hectares out of which 4.20 million hectare is under cultivation (about 83%). The cropping intensity of Punjab is 189%. Agriculture is a way of life. More than 65% of its population depends directly on agriculture (Anonymous). Its agricultural landscape has been transformed over the decades through the Green Revolution, resulting in high-yield crop production. However, this success has brought

forth socio-economic challenges, including issues related to land fragmentation, overuse of resources, and concerns about the well-being of farming communities.

The Rural Agricultural Work Experience Program (RAWEP) was introduced in the UG curriculum as per the recommendation of the Randhawa Committee during the year 1995-96. It is a crucial component of agricultural education, particularly in agricultural universities and institutions. It offers students hands-on experience in rural settings, helping them understand the socio-economic realities of farmers, the challenges they face, and the importance of sustainable agricultural practices. The agricultural scenario is undergoing a rapid change from the status of being subsistence farming to an occupation to business and industry. Employment is a challenging one today, where the needs of the candidates are increasing but vacancies are diminishing. This trend of many persons chasing few posts shows inflation in the job market. It is now widely recognized that agriculture affords unlimited opportunities. Hence it is clear that through well trained men and women there is a way of lifting agriculture to a highly technical business involving scientific knowledge and management ability. The success depends on the ability to attract talented youth to agriculture and the resourcefulness with which they are trained. Experiential learning through RAWEP in agriculture has strong potential for imparting better training of the agriculture technocrats with a modern outlook and management capacity. Value added to the students by experiential learning must go beyond the acquisition of technical skills (Shifa Dhas *et al.*, 2006) [6].

Materials and Methodology

The present study was designed to know the socio- economic status of the farmers in Chhoti mandauli, Rattangarh, Ramgarh Manda, Badwali, Bhateri and Badi mandauli villages of Chamkaur Sahib Tehsil of Rupnagar district in Punjab. The questionnaire- based on the primary source of data. The interviews of 125 farmers were recorded. Pre-structured classes were scheduled to prepare the questionnaire for the survey to collect the data covering the objectives of the study. A systematic questionnaire and in- person door-to-door interviews were used to gather the data. Personal interviews with senior and nearby villages are also done to collect qualitative data.

Results and Discussion

Caste

From the data out 125 farmers, revealed that large percentage of farmers belonged to general category while. Overall percentage of General was 85% and SC/ST respondents was only 13% (Table 1). Other categories than General category were existing in these villages but most of them are not landlords or farmers. They were engaged in some other occupations such as labours, drivers, shopkeepers.

Table 1: Caste

Sl. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	General	85%
2	SC	9%
3	ST	4%
4	Others	2%

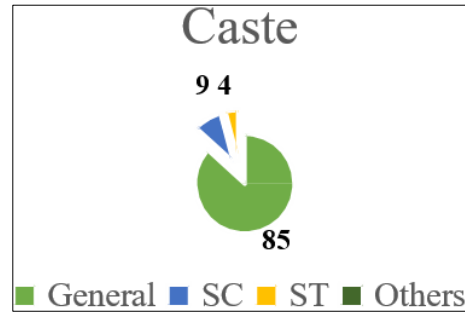


Fig 1: Caste

Family composition

From the Table. 2. Shown below, revealed that most of them live in Joint families 56% and 44% of farmers live in nuclear families.

Table 2: Family Composition

Sl. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	Joint family	56%
2	Nuclear family	44%

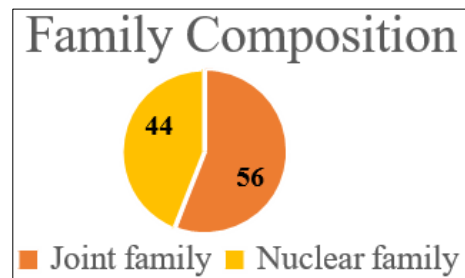


Fig 2: Family Composition

Type of mobile phone and internet connectivity

According to the survey conducted out of 125 farmers, more than 94% of farmers had mobile phones and 5% of them farmers did not have any mobile phone as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Type of Mobile and Mobile Connectivity

Sl. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	Smartphone	89.6%
2	Keypad	10.4%
3	Internet facilities	84.8%
4	Without internet facilities	15.2%

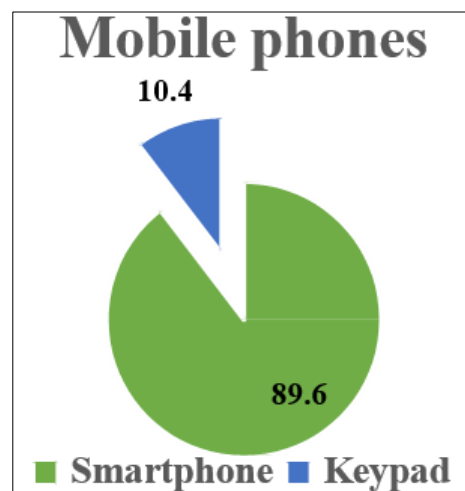


Fig 3: Type of Mobile

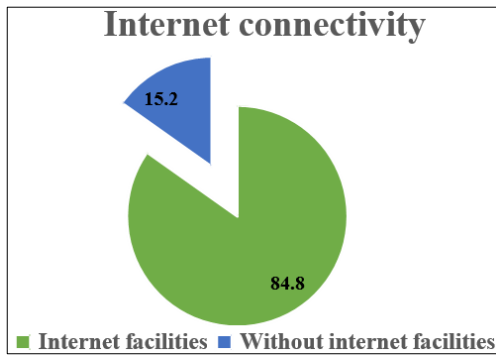


Fig 4: Type of Mobile Connectivity

Age Category

From the data out of 125 farmers collected the minimum age of the farmer was 22 and maximum age was above 63 which do farming. It is further divided into 3 age categories as shown in the table below.

Table 4: Age Category

SI. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	0-35	8%
2	35-50	36%
3	51-above	56%

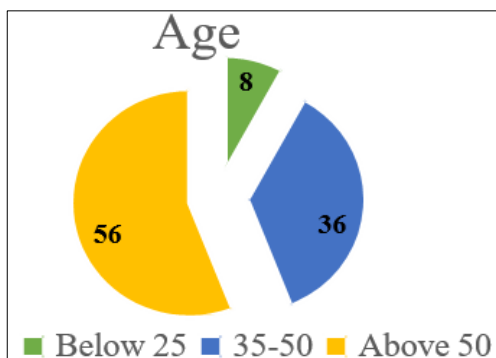


Fig 5: Age Category

Education Status

From the Table 5, it is observed that education of the 125 farmers from all six villages showed that few had attended primary school, 46% had finished metric, 45% had finished high school and 8% had graduated. There were few illiterate farmers among the farmers. Literacy rate of all six villages are more than 80%.

Table 5: Educational Status

SI. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	Primary education	46%
2	Secondary education	45%
3	Graduation	8%

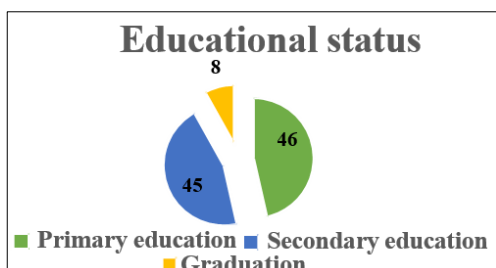


Fig 6: Educational Status

Source of Inform action

Farmers get information from different sources through newspaper, Input dealers, Kisan mela, Radio/Television, Trainings, social media and others through survey. It is observed that lots of farmers get notified about new schemes and technologies through Input dealers (85%) and Kisan mela (69%) as shown in table 6

Table 6: Source of Information

SI. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	News paper	70%
2	Input dealer	85%
3	Kisan mela	69%
4	Radio/TV.	62%
5	Seminar	16%
6	Trainings	0%
7	Others	18%

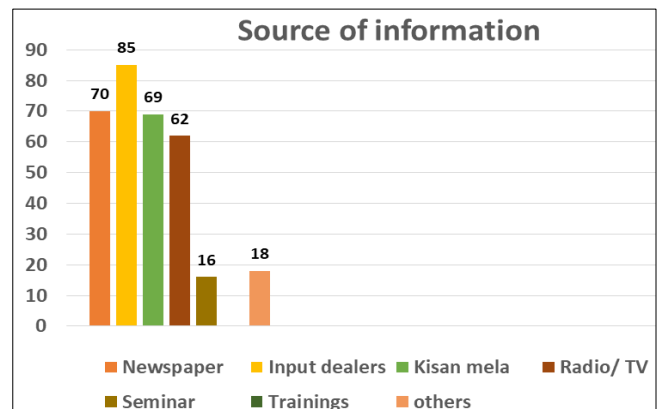


Fig 7: Source of Information

Type of Houses

Village is well developed and most of them live in pakka house.

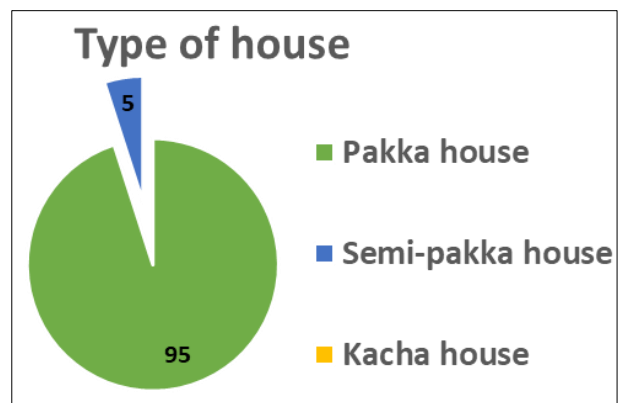


Fig 8: Type of Houses

Implements and Machinery

Most of the farmers have owned tractors and Harrows but limited farmers have Rotavator and Combine Harvester. Most of the farmers have their own machinery and also rent additional equipment from fellow farmers as shown in table 7.

Table 7: Implements and Machinery

SI. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	Owned	18%
2	Rented	7%
3	Owned + Rented	75%

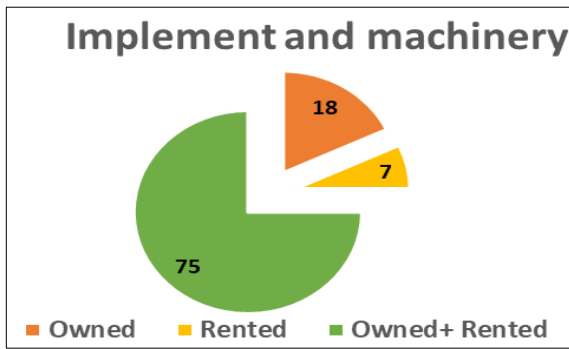


Fig 9: Implements and Machinery

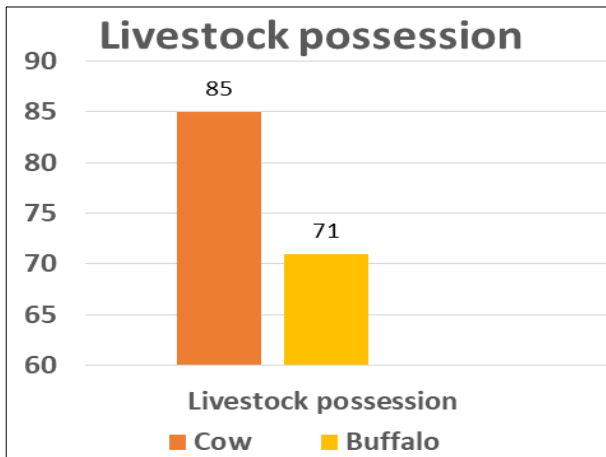


Fig 10: Livestock possession

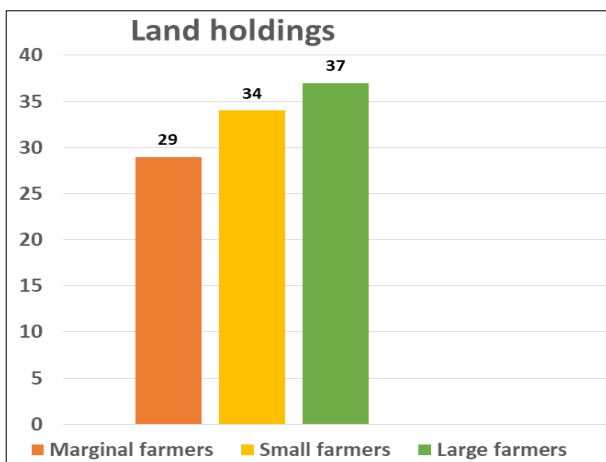


Fig 11: Land holdings

Livestock Production

Data collected from the survey revealed that 90% of the farmers have livestock and 85% of them have buffalo and 71% of them have cow as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Livestock possession

Sl. No.	Parameters	Percentage
1	Buffalo	85%
2	Cow	71%

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the socio-economic profile of farmers in the Rupnagar district of Punjab, India. The findings highlight the diverse nature of the farming community, with variations in caste, family composition, age,

education, and access to technology. Notably, the majority of farmers are from the general category, live in joint families, and fall within the age category of 51 and above. The presence of smartphones and internet connectivity among a significant portion of the farmers underscores the potential for technology-driven agricultural practices.

Education levels vary, with a substantial proportion having completed at least secondary education. The study also reveals that farmers primarily rely on input dealers and Kisan melas for information on new agricultural schemes and technologies.

Additionally, the data points out variations in landholding sizes, with a notable presence of marginal and small farmers. Livestock production, particularly buffalo and cow rearing, is prevalent among the farming community.

This research sheds light on the diverse socio-economic landscape of farmers in this region, which is crucial for policymakers, agricultural extension services, and educational institutions to tailor their programs and initiatives effectively. Understanding the nuances of the farming community in Rupnagar, Punjab, is essential for addressing their unique needs and promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

This research not only contributes to the academic understanding of the socio-economic dynamics of farmers but also paves the way for informed policies and interventions to enhance the well-being of farming communities in this region.

It underscores the need for continued research and development efforts to address the challenges and opportunities in Punjab's agriculture sector.

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