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Socio-economic profile: A tool for improving cultural and economic status of farmers from SAS Nagar (Mohali) district Punjab

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Abstract
The present study is based on preliminary information carried under socio- economic survey to assess the important information regarding agronomic practices, economic status and livestock production of farmers from SAS Nagar district of Punjab. Study was conducted on the basis of proper questionnaire from different villages. Nearly two hundred farmers were interviewed for assessing their socio-economic status of the respondent farmers. In this, we had prepared a questionnaire in which we had to gather all the information about the socio- economic profile of the farmer such as the income status, caste system, education status, family composition, cropping system, availability of implements and machinery, availability of loans, source of information, etc. Each item was analyzed and explained clearly to draw meaningful inferences. Better health facilities, availability of better seeds and provision of low-cost fertilizers are responsible for attractive farmers' status. On interaction with all the respondent farmers, it has been found that the literacy rate is very high (90%). It was found that during kharif season, majority of them cultivated rice (80%). While in Rabi season, wheat was cultivated mostly (80%). Few of them cultivated sorghum (10%) and pearl millet (10%) for fodder use. On an interaction findings, revealed that the socio- economic status of the farmers can be improved by imparting technical knowledge to the farmers, increasing their education level and increasing their social participation. Lack of awareness in the field of disease and pest management, farming inputs were seen. Therefore, for the well-being of farming community new technologies like disease monitoring with available software technology and artificial intelligence should be applied for sustainable agriculture.

Keywords: Awareness, sustainable agriculture, biocontrol, organic farming

Introduction
Agriculture plays a great role in generating economic growth. More than half of the India's population still relies on agriculture as it is the principal source of their income and an important source of raw material for a large number of industries. (Singh *et al.* 2016) [12] There have been problems of low productivity, old and traditional methods in crop farming, inequality in land ownership, tenant owner relations, low income per capita, and poor socio-economic status of farmers (Raghav and Sen, 2014) [1]. It reflects the poor socioeconomic status of farming community.

Socio - economic status is a combined measurement of social and economic position of an individual or a group in relation to others in the society. It has a reflective role in determining one's accessibility to the common resources, livelihood pattern, household food & nutritional security (Roy *et al.,* 2013) [3]. Agriculture and its allied sectors are the principal sources of livelihood for more than 58% of the population in India. It plays a significant role in the overall socio development of India. Socio economic status of the farmers plays an important role in agriculture in India. It is observed that ultimately with time there has been a significant change in the overall life style of the farmers. Further it is found that farmers are trying to increase their income by investing more in agricultural activities and farm implements**.** Socio-economic status is synonymous with social class, social hierarchy, social stratification and economic position of an individual in society represents one's social and economic position in a society.

Babatunde *et al.* 2007 [13] also studied the drivers of socio economic status and found that the food security, farm size, household income, household size, educational level are some of the important status of farmers. It reflects living standard of an individual or a group.

It can be measured by individual enjoys access to the resources his socioeconomic status will be high. Farmers in rural areas are financially miserable and abject to poverty. Farmers are working hard but earn less or not enough to meet their needs. Low income is a major reason for their low socioeconomic status. Low per capita reduces the command on available resource which leads to deterioration of their living conditions. Socioeconomic status indicates the economic and social conditions of a country. Poor socio-economic status of farmers leads toward the slow pace of development in agriculture sector Tanwir *et al*. (2006) [8] highlighted the socioeconomic milieu of small farmers. They observed that farmers in small rural areas were poverty stricken having poor socioeconomic status in community. They estimated the negative relationship between socioeconomic status and poverty. Poverty was found the major reason of low level of socioeconomic status. Sathayanarayn *et al*. (2010) [9] explored the socioeconomic status of farmers.

The socioeconomic characteristics of farmers were investigated to estimate their status that are Family type, size of family, the gender of the decision- maker, social participation, income level, and landholding, productivity level. Oduro- Ofori Eric *et al*. (2014) [14] examined the impact of education on the agricultural productivity of farmers in municipalities.

Material and Methods

The study was conducted SAS Nagar district. A total of sixty students (from University of Agricultural Sciences, Chandigarh University), were divided into groups of five student in each group and conducted a survey for the RAWE programme at three villages Hasanpur, Kalewal and Singhpura of district Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Punjab). Total of 100 farmers were interviewed for assessing their socio-economic status of the respondent farmers. Pre-structured classes were schedule to prepare the questionnaire for the survey to collect the data covering the objectives of the study. Collected data were analyzed by using frequency and percentage. We have used an interview schedule method to conduct this RAWE programme successfully. In this, we had prepared a questionnaire in which we had to gather all the information about the socio-economic profile of the farmer, agronomic practices, soil sampling and livestock management.

Result and Discussion

Rural Agricultural Work Experience Program (RAWE) was conducted in three villages Hasanpur, Kalewal and Singhpura of district Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Punjab). During this the students were divided into ten groups containing five members in each group. Each group had collected the data of hundred farmers from the three villages allotted to them.

Socio-personal profile of the respondent

Socioeconomic status of a rural society is a measure of an individual's or family's economic and social position based on education, income, and occupation. It is such a strong predictor of health that an assessment of the health of Indian rural environment would be incomplete without consideration of the socioeconomic status of its residents. It includes measures of income (median family and median household income, and poverty levels), and measures associated with income status (educational level and employment level (Haobijam *et al.* 2019).

Socio-economic status: Socioeconomic status (SES) is an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family' s economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation. When analysing a family's SES, the household income, earners' education, and occupation are examined, as well as combined income, versus with an individual, when their own attributes are assessed.

Socioeconomic status is typically broken into three categories (high SES, middle SES, and low SES) to describe the three areas a family or an individual may fall into. When placing a family or individual into one of these categories, any or all of the three variables (income, education, and occupation) can be assessed. Additionally, low income and little education have shown to be strong predictors of arrange of physical and mental health problems, including respiratory viruses, arthritis, coronary disease etc., in the villages. These may be due to environmental conditions in their workplace, or, in the case of mental illnesses, may be the entire cause of that person's social

Predicament to begin with education in higher socioeconomic families is typically stressed as a more important in topic in the household and local community. In poorer areas, mostly in the Indian rural society, where food and safety are priority, education can take a backseat.

Direct observation, interview contacts, interaction with key informants and respondent farmers help in identifying the problem faced by the respondents in crop cultivation.

The findings about socioeconomic status of the farmers of the study area are given below

Age category: from the data out of 100 farmers collected the minimum age of the farmer was 20 and maximum age was above 50 which do farming. It is further divided into 3 age categories (Kamble, 2017). [4]

Table 1: Age category

Sl. no.	Age	Percentage
1	20-35	30%
2	36-50	50%
3	51-Above	20%

Education status: Education status of the villages is high. 94% of the villagers are well educated and 6% can be seen uneducated which finds it difficult to understand the new agricultural schemes (Masudkar *et al.* 2017). [4]

Table 2: Educational status

Sl. no.	status	Percentage of the Farmer
1	literate	94%
2	Illiterate	6%

Family composition: The village consist of 75% of the nuclear family and few people prefer to live in joint family (Singh *et al.* 2009) [15]

Table 3: Family composition

Sl. no.	Family size	Percentage of the farmer
1.	Nuclear	75%
2.	Joint	25%

Cropping system: Village farmers grows different crops and

vegetables. Some of the farmers only prefers to grow the fodder crops. It is observed that the maximum area is under rice and wheat (80-85%).

Table 4: cropping system

Sl.no.	Crop grown	Percentage of the farmer
1.	Rice	80%
2.	Wheat	85%
3.	Bajra (pearl millet)	25%
4.	Chari (Sorghum)	10%

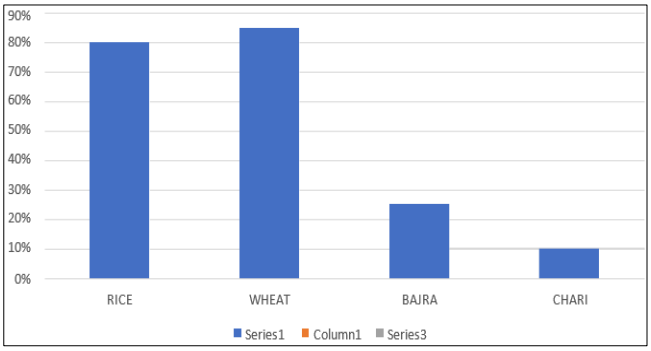

Fig 1: cropping system

Implements and machinery: most of the villagers have owned tractors and sprayers but limited farmers had combined harvester (Raju *et al* 2019). [6]

Table 5: implements and machinery

Sl. no.	machines	Percentage of the Farmer
1.	Tractor	85%
2.	Harrow	70%
3.	Cobine Harvestor	1%
4.	Thresher	45%
5.	Cultivator	30%
6.	Sprays	90%

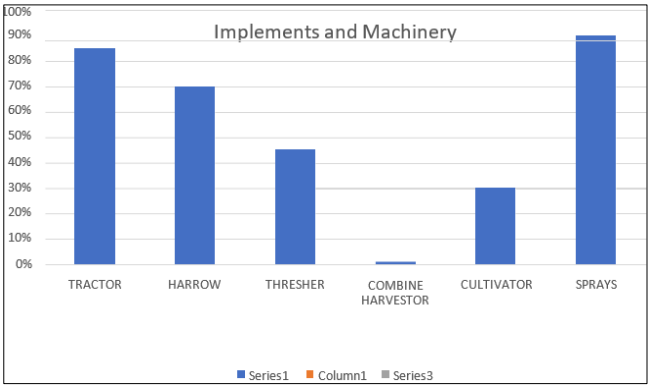

Fig 2: Implements and machinery

Availability of loan facilities: Farmers prefer different ways forgetting the loans some prefer government and cooperatives and few of them also prefer friends and family.

Table 6: Availability of loan facility

Sl. no.	Organisation	Percentage of the farmer
1.	Co-operative societies	40%
2.	Government	50%
3.	Others	10%

Source of information: farmers get information from different sources through communication, social Medias and through survey it is noticed that lots of farmers get notified about new schemes and technologies through their family and friends.

Table 7: Source of information

Sl. no.	Source	Percentage of the Farmer
1.	Television	80%
2.	Radio	5%
3.	Kisan Mela	20%
4.	Newspaper	60%
5.	Friends / Family	90%
6.	Others	10%

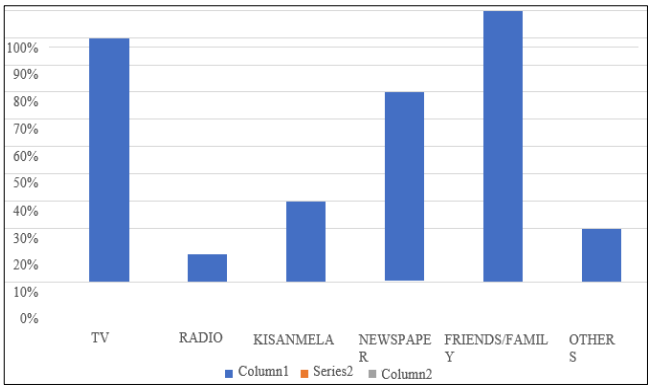

Fig 3: source of information

Cards: According to the survey conducted basically everyone have Aadhar card and Ration card but few people have soil health card, kisan credit card and many more.

Table 8: cards

S no	Types of card	Percentage
1.	Kisan credit card	60%
2.	Mnerga card	-
3.	Soil heath card	-
4.	Aadhar card	100%
5.	ration card	100%
6.	Ayushman health card	30%

Type of house: Village is well developed and few live in semi-kaccha house

Table 9: Types of houses

Sl. no.	Type of house	Percentage of the Farmer
1.	Kaccha	5%
2.	Semi pakka	5%
3.	Pacca	85%

Category of farmers: according to survey there are few large farmers in the village and few people don't do farming or they have leased their land to other farmers (Raju *et al.* 2019) [6]

Table 10: Farmer category

Sl. no.	Farmer category	Percentage of the farmer
1.	Less land	8%
2.	Marginal Farmers (<1 ha)	35%
3.	Small farmers (1-4 ha)	55%
4.	Larger farmer (>8 ha)	2%

Conclusion

Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) is an exposure programme conducted to make the agricultural student acquainted with the real field situation. To test the feasibility of knowledge gained during class room teaching and its application in the farmer's field. From orientation programme to till submission of report every moment in RAWE has been exciting, exploring, enlighten, enriching, adventurous and unforgettable. The village survey was conducted successfully in the 3 villages Hasanpur, Kalewal and Singhpura of district Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar (Punjab). It was found that during kharif season, majority of them cultivated rice (80%). While in Rabi season, wheat was cultivated mostly (80%). Few of them cultivated sorghum (10%) and pearl millet (10%) for fodder use. On interaction and on basis of the findings, it is suggested that the socio-economic status of the farmers can be improved by imparting technical knowledge to the farmers, increasing their education level and increasing their social participation. Lack of awareness in the field of disease and pest management, farming inputs was seen. Government, NGOs and Agricultural experts should look into this matter.

We were very much acquainted with the village condition, their tradition, our culture, so hopefully we will not face any kind of problem in future experiences. Last but not the least, the villagers are loving towards us and also very supportive and cooperative. Special thanks to all my involved teachers and group mates for achieving this kind of experiences. There are more opportunities for farmers through farm diversification and domesticating prioritized medicinal and aromatic herbs for sustainable development; herbal industry and economic development (Singh *et al*., 2022; Singh *et al*., 2018) [16, 17]. Government and Non-Government organizations should focus more on agroforestry models with proper design and diagnosis so that our Granary of India would have sustained.

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