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Profile of the cashewnut growers

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Abstract
The present study was undertaken with the main objective to study the profile of the cashewnut growers. The study was conducted in two major cashewnut growing district of Konkan region of Maharashtra namely Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg district. In all 240 respondents were selected by using multi stage sampling techniques. The "Ex-Post-Facto" research design was used for conducting the study. The data were collected through the personal interview. The data collected were processed and statistically analyzed by using statistical technique like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The analysis of data revealed that majority of the respondents (60.00 percent) was belonged to 'middle' age group while 54.58 percent of the cashewnut growers had obtained 'secondary' level of education. In case of family size, 67.50 percent of the respondents were belonged to 'medium' family size while 30.42 percent of the cashewnut growers were having 'semi-medium' area under cashewnut cultivation. The average annual income of the cashewnut growers was found to be Rs. 12.40 lakh and average number of cashewnut bearing trees was 560 trees. The average age of orchard was 18 years while average experience in cashewnut cultivation was 21 years. There was fair accessibility to cashewnut orchard. The majority of the cashewnut growers were having 'medium' level of market orientation, scientific orientation and information seeking behavior.

Keywords: Profile, cashewnut growers, adoption

Introduction

The cashewnut (*Anacardium occidentale*) is an important cash and dollar earning crop grown in Brazil, India, Kenya and other tropical countries. It was introduced in western coast of India by Portuguese in 16th century, mainly to check soil erosion. India is the largest producer, processer, consumer and exporter of cashewnut in the world (Elakkiya *et al.,* 2017) [10]. India being the leader in the world in raw cashewnut production and is also the largest supplier of cashewnut kernels to the major world markets. India is having 8.55 lakh ha area under cashewnut with an annual production of 6.20 lakh MT. The per ha productivity was 800 kg/ha (Haldankar *et al.* 2020) [12].

Now cashewnut occupies an importance as commercial crop. The cashewnut cultivation in India mainly confines to peninsular region covering the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa along the West Coast, whereas in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal along the East Coast region. It is also grown in plains like Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat, Bihar and Northeast Hill Regions like Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura and also in Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Source: Directorate of Cashew Research Puttur, 2011). In India, it has different names, in Marathi called *Kaju* same as that of Portuguese. In Kerala, *Porangi Andi* means Portuguese nut. In Tamil, it is known as *Mundiri*, it indicates position and shape of nut. In Orissa *Lanka Bija* means it coming from Lanka to Orissa (Gajbhiye *et al.*, 2018) [11].

The cashewnut production in Maharashtra is mainly concentrated in Konkan region particularly in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts. In Maharashtra, the area under cashewnut was 1.91 lakh ha. (Source: Directorate of Cashewnut and Cocoa Development, 2018). In Ratnagiri, area under cashewnut was 1.02 Lakh ha with production of 1.41 lakh MT of cashewnut (Source: District Superintendent Agriculture Office, Ratnagiri 2021). In Sindhudurg, area under cashewnut was 71516 ha with production of 91926 MT (Source: District Superintendent Agriculture Office, Sindhudurg 2021).

Keeping above fact in view, the present study was designed to analyze the profile of the cashewnut grower in order to understand their socio-economic status and mindset with following specific objective;
1. To study the profile of the cashewnut growers.

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Methodology
The present study was conducted in two major cashewnut growing district of Konkan region of Maharashtra. A multistage sampling procedure was adopted for the selection of cashewnut growers. In all 240 respondents were selected for study from the two districts of Konkan region. The "*Ex-Post-Facto*" research design was used for the proposed study. The data were collected through the personal interview. The data collected were processed and statistically analyzed by using statistical technique like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The profile study included characteristics like age, education, family size, area under cashewnut cultivation, age of orchard, number of bearing trees, annual income, experience in cashewnut cultivation, accessibility to cashewnut orchard, market orientation, scientific orientation and information seeking behavior.

Results and Discussion
The findings of the present study as well as relevant the discussion has been summarized under the following heads:

1. Profile of the cashewnut growers
1.1 Age
The data regarding age of the cashewnut growers is shown in Table 1. It is revealed from the Table 1 that majority of the respondents (60.00 percent) were belonged to 'middle' age group. Whereas, 20.83 percent of them were from 'young' age group and remaining 19.17 percent of respondents were 'old'. The average age of the cashewnut growers was 51 years.
It indicated that middle aged farmers are matured enough to try and taste newer technologies. These people are more enthusiastic, and ready to try new technology.

1.2 Education
The level of education of the farmers was studied and categorized as shown in Table 2. It is evident from the data in Table 2 that, 54.58 percent of the cashewnut growers had obtained 'secondary' level of education, followed by 'higher secondary' (20.83 percent), 'graduation and above' (13.75 percent), 'primary' level of education (7.92 percent) and 2.92 percent of them had 'pre-primary' level of education.
It can be concluded that majority of the respondents (65.41 percent) had 'secondary level to higher secondary level' of education. This may be due to the availability of secondary and higher secondary schools at nearby village and tahsil level. Another reason may be realization about the significance of education for the overall development of the life.

1.3 Family size
Family size of the cashewnut growers was studied and data is presented in Table 3. It was observed from Table 3 that, up to 67.50 percent of the respondents were belonged to 'medium' family size and 24.17 percent of them were found in 'small' family size while 8.33 percent of them were belonged to 'large' size family.
The data indicated that, great majority (91.67 percent) of the cashewnut growers belonged to 'medium to small' family size. The probable reason may be that, the majority of the people were migrated to nearby cities for employment.

1.4 Area under cashewnut cultivation
The data regarding area under cashewnut cultivation of the cashewnut growers is presented in Table 4. The data presented in Table 4 revealed that, majority of the respondents (30.42 percent) had 'semi-medium' area under cashewnut cultivation, remaining one forth (25.42 percent) and one fifth (20.41 percent) of the respondents had 'small' and 'marginal' area under cashewnut cultivation, respectively. Only 13.75 percent and 10.00 percent of the respondents were having 'medium' and 'big' area under cashewnut cultivation, respectively.
It is clearly noticed that, majority of the respondents (76.25 percent) had 'semi-medium to marginal' land holding. Owing to typical geographical situation of Konkan region, the average area under cashewnut cultivation is comparatively low.

1.5 Annual income
The distribution of the cashewnut growers according to their annual income is presented in Table 5. A perusal of Table 5 revealed that, about half (44.17 percent) of the cashewnut growers were from the 'medium' annual income group, while 35.42 percent and 20.41 percent of the cashewnut growers were from 'low' and 'high' annual income group, respectively. The average annual income of the respondents was Rs. 12.40 lakhs.
It can be said that the respondents had satisfactory level of economic status due to the remunerative crop like cashewnut grown by them.

1.6 Number of cashewnut bearing trees
The information pertaining to the number of cashewnut bearing trees of the respondents is presented in Table 6. It could be seen from Table 6 that, about half (46.67 percent) of the cashewnut growers had 'medium' number of bearing trees, while 34.16 percent and 19.17 percent of the respondents had 'small' and 'large' number of bearing trees, respectively.
The possible reason for this finding might be that, majority of the cashewnut growers had enough number of bearing trees which could sustain their stability in cashewnut production.

1.7 Age of cashewnut orchard
With respect to the age of cashewnut orchard, the data is presented in Table 7. The data presented in Table 7 revealed that, 56.67 percent of the cashewnut growers had 'middle' age of the orchard, followed by 23.75 percent and 19.58 percent of the respondents had 'young' and 'old' age of the orchard, respectively. The average age of the orchard of the respondents was 18 years.
It is clearly observed from above Table 7 that, majority of the respondents (80.42 percent) were belonged to 'middle to young' age of orchard. This is because such respondents were selected purposively.

1.8 Experience in cashewnut cultivation
The distribution of the cashewnut growers according to their experience in cashewnut cultivation is presented in Table 8. It is evident from the data showed in Table 8, that majority (58.33 percent) of the cashewnut growers were belonged to 'medium' experience category, while 23.75 percent and 17.92 percent of the respondents belonged to 'low' and 'high' experience in cashewnut cultivation category, respectively.

The average experience in cashewnut cultivation of the respondents was 21 years.

The result concluded that majority (58.33 percent) of the respondents were having 'medium' experience in cashewnut cultivation. The probable reason for the finding might be that, cashewnut was considered as a traditional fruit crop and it is cultivated generation to generation with this the farming experience could be enhanced by encouraging more of middle aged and young respondents in farming activities at early age.

1.9 Accessibility to cashewnut orchard

The information pertaining to overall accessibility of the respondents to cashewnut orchard is presented in Table 9. A perusal of data displayed in Table 9 clearly indicated that, majority (81.67 percent) of the respondents were in 'fair' category of overall accessibility to orchard, while 12.50 percent and 5.83 percent were in 'poor' and 'good' category, respectively. The average accessibility to orchard of the respondents was 16.

From the above findings, it can be inferred that majority of the cashewnut growers had medium accessibility to their cashewnut orchards.

1.10 Market orientation

Data regarding level of market orientation is presented in Table 10. The data regarding market orientation indicated that less than two third (62.92 percent) of the respondents were in the 'medium' category, while 21.25 percent and 15.83 percent of the respondents were in 'high' and 'low' category, respectively

Therefore, it can be concluded that a majority (62.92 percent) of cashewnut growers had 'medium' level of market orientation. The probable reason that the availability of cashewnut processing unit in nearest tahsil places to cashewnut growers.

1.11 Scientific orientation

The information regarding scientific orientation of the cashewnut growers was collected, analyzed and presented in Table 11. The data regarding scientific orientation indicated that more than one half (56.67 percent) of the respondents were in the 'medium' category, while 24.16 percent and 19.17 percent of the respondents were in 'high' and 'low' category, respectively. On an average, the market orientation score of all cashewnut growers was 10 indicating the medium level of scientific orientation.

In other words it can be said that farmers with medium to high level of positivism towards the use of new and scientifically approved high production oriented technology were more involved in the adoption of cashewnut production technology.

1.12 Information seeking behavior

The data pertaining to the information seeking behaviour of the respondents is presented in Table 12. As regards the information seeking behaviour, it could be observed from Table 12 that, more than two third (67.08 percent) of the respondents were having 'medium' information seeking behaviour, while 20.00 percent and 12.92 percent of the respondents were having 'high' and 'low' information seeking behaviour, respectively.

The probable reason might be that most of the farmers have good exposure to mass media sources of information i.e., television, newspaper, farm magazine, internet rather than

from other resources. It means that most of the cashewnut growers had satisfactory exposure to various information sources.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age

Sl. No.	Age (years)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Young (upto 39)	50	20.83
2	Middle (40 to 63)	144	60.00
3	Old (64 and above)	46	19.17
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 51 years, S.D. = 12			

Table 2: Distribution of the cashewnut growers according to their education

Sl. No.	Education (standard)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Pre- primary (upto 4th)	7	2.92
2	Primary (5th to 7th)	19	7.92
3	Secondary (8th to 10th)	131	54.58
4	Higher secondary (11th to 12th)	50	20.83
5	Graduation and above (13th and above)	33	13.75
	Total	240	100.00

Table 3: Distribution of the cashewnut growers according to their family size

Sl. No.	Family size (members)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Small (upto 5)	58	24.17
2	Medium (6 to 9)	162	67.50
3	Large (10 and above)	20	8.33
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 7, S.D. = 2			

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to area under cashewnut cultivation

Sl. No.	Area (ha.)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Marginal (upto 1)	49	20.41
2	Small (1.01 to 2)	61	25.42
3	Semi medium (2.01 to 4)	73	30.42
4	Medium (4.01 to 10)	33	13.75
5	Big (10.01 and above)	24	10.00
	Total	240	100.00

Table 5: Distribution of the cashewnut growers according to their annual income

Sl. No.	Annual income (Rs. in lakh)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Low (upto 5.33)	85	35.42
2	Medium (5.34 to 19.47)	106	44.17
3	High (19.48 and above)	49	20.41
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 12.40 Lakh, ½S.D. = 7.07			

Table 6: Distribution of the cashewnut growers according to their number of bearing trees

Sl. No.	Number of bearing trees	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Small (upto 317)	82	34.16
2	Medium (318 to 803)	112	46.67
3	Large (804 and above)	46	19.17
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 560, S.D. = 243			

Table 7: Distribution of the cashewnut growers according to age of orchard

Sl. No.	Age (years)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Young (upto 15)	57	23.75
2	Middle (16 to 21)	136	56.67
3	Old (22 and above)	47	19.58
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 18, S.D. = 3			

Table 8: Distribution of respondents according to their experience in cashewnut cultivation

Sl. No.	Experience in cashewnut cultivation (years)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Low (upto 16)	57	23.75
2	Medium (17 to 26)	140	58.33
3	High (27 and above)	43	17.92
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 21 years, S.D. = 5			

Table 9: Distribution of respondents according to their overall accessibility to orchard

Sl. No.	Accessibility to orchards (Score)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1.	Poor (Up to 11)	30	12.50
2.	Fair (12 to 21)	196	81.67
3.	Good (22 and above)	14	5.83
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 16, S.D. = 5			

Table 10: Distribution of respondents according to their market orientation

Sl. No.	Market orientation (Score)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1.	Low (Up to 9)	38	15.83
2.	Medium (10 to 15)	151	62.92
3.	High (16 and above)	51	21.25
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 12, S.D. = 3			

Table 11: Distribution of respondents according to their scientific orientation

Sl. No.	Scientific orientation (Score)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1.	Low (Up to 7)	46	19.17
2.	Medium (8 to 13)	136	56.67
3.	High (14 and above)	58	24.16
	Total	240	100.00
Mean = 10, S.D. = 3			

Table 12: Distribution of the respondents according to their information seeking behavior

Sl. No.	Information seeking behavior (Score)	Respondents (N=240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Low (upto 49.00)	31	12.92
2	Medium (50 to 61)	161	67.08
3	High (62 and above)	48	20.00
	Total	240	100
Mean = 55, SD = 6			

Implication
The study has portrayed the profile of the cashew growers in terms of selected personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics. The profile of the cashew growers is indicative of their level of socio-economic standing and mindset. The extension agencies like agricultural universities, KVK, State Department of Agriculture, etc. may use these findings for improving the profile of cashew growers wherever possible. Further, they may consider these characteristics while planning and executing the programmes for development of cashew in the Konkan region.

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