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Profile of organic vegetable growers in Western Vidarbha

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Abstract

Organic farming represents a deliberate attempt to make the best use of local natural resources and is an environmental friendly system of farming it relies much on ecosystem management which excludes external inputs, especially the synthetic ones. The present study was conducted in Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal, Buldhana and Washim districts of Western Vidarbha region in Maharashtra State to know the socio-economic characteristics of the organic vegetable growers. The study has used exploratory research design. The study was conducted by taking total sample of 240 respondents. The data was collected with the help of pre tested interview schedule through personal interview. Major findings of study was nearly half *i.e.* 45.42 percent of the organic vegetable growers possessed medium family size, more than two third *i.e.* (69.17%) of them belonged to nuclear families, while more than half (52.92%) of the respondents belonged to semi medium category of land holding, three fourth of the organic vegetable growers (75.42%) have medium area under organic vegetable cultivation, more than half *i.e.* (51.25%) of the respondents had medium level of organic farming experience, near about half *i.e.* (47.50%) of the organic vegetable growers had received medium duration training, more than half (55.00%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium level of annual income, while 36.67 percent of the respondents had possessed 3 to 4 animals, (56.67%) of the respondents had medium level of source of information, over three fourth of the respondents (75.42%) had medium input accessibility, more than half (55.83%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium credit orientation, more than two third (67.92%) of the respondents had medium level of risk preference, (72.08%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium level of economic motivation, majority of the respondents (76.67%) had medium level of market orientation and majority of the organic vegetable growers (55.83%) had medium level of knowledge.

Keywords: Organic farming, risk preference, livestock possession, input accessibility

1. Introduction

Organic farming is an agricultural approach that advocates healthy products free from components that may harm humans and nature. They include but are not limited to industrial pesticides, insecticides, fertilizers, clones, GMOs, Chemical medications, hormones, growth-boosters, etc. Organic agriculture in India is one of the fastest growing systems of agricultural production and the last two decades have shown sharp increase in organic products consumption and market demand with regards to expansion in area under organic cultivation, as well as, diversity of products.

The basic idea of organic agriculture is to provide food with optimum nutritional value and minimum dangerous ingredients, with only permitted substances used. The principle also requires 100% natural forage for livestock and its further processing without synthetics. Agriculture related goods are now marketed on the worldwide market as a result of liberalization, privatization and globalization. Farmers need to know how to produce products free of chemical residues that may easily satisfy international quarantine requirements for export in order to command a fair price in this competitive market. The necessity of organic farming is being brought to the farmer's attention in these conditions. Hence the present study was undertaken to study the profile of organic vegetable growers.

2. Materials and Methods

For the present study an exploratory research design of social research was used. The present study was conducted in all the five districts of Western Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state. *i.e.* Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal, Buldhana and Washim. On the basis of maximum number of organic vegetable growers from the selected districts it was decided to select two tahsils purposively from each district to carry out the study.

Hence from Akola district two tahsils namely Barshi Takli and Patur, from Amravati district Chandur Railway and Teosa tahsils, From Yavatmal district Mahagaon and Yavatma Itahsils, From Buldhana Deulgaon Raja and Chikhali and From Washim district Washim and Karanja tahsils were selected. Three villages from each selected tahsil were selected purposively. Eight organic vegetable growers from each selected village were selected randomly. Thus a total of 240 respondents were selected as sample respondents for this study. Structured interview schedule was prepared. Data was classified, tabulated and analyzed by using methods mean, frequency, percentage, standard deviation.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings regarding to personal, socio-economic, psychological, communication and situational characteristics of the respondents were studied and data is presented in Table 1.

3.1 Age

It was evident from Table 1 that majority (57.92%) of the organic vegetable growers belonged to the middle age category, followed by 32.08 percent belonged to young age category and rest 10.00 percent of the organic vegetable growers belonged to old age category. Thus it can be concluded that majority of respondents belonged to middle age category. The present findings are in accordance with the result of Singh (2020)^[10] and Tripathi (2021)^[11].

3.2 Education

It was observed from Table 1 that 33.75 percent of the organic vegetable growers possessed secondary school level education followed by higher secondary school/junior college level (28.34%), college/ university level (26.25%), middle school level (10.00%), primary school level (01.66%) and no one from illiterate level of education respectively. Due to scope to establish better economic condition, organic vegetable growers might have decided to go for formal education rather than earning money right from childhood. These finding are in concurrence with the findings of Pawar (2014)^[8] and Pimpalkar (2015)^[9].

3.3 Family size

It was revealed from Table 1 that majority *i.e.* 45.42 percent of the organic vegetable growers possessed medium family size (5 to 6 family members) followed by 32.92 percent of the organic vegetable growers possessed small family size (up to 4 members) and 21.66 percent of the organic vegetable growers possessed large family size (above 6 members). This might be because organic vegetable cultivation is such a labour-intensive activity that requires a large workforce. These findings get support from the research work done by Korde (2017)^[5], Singh (2020)^[10] and Tripathi (2021)^[11].

3.4 Family type

The data in Table 1 showed that majority (69.17%) of the organic vegetable growers belonged to nuclear families while remaining 30.83 percent belonged to joint families. It means, nuclear family system is dominant in the area of study. The finding has been supported by Singh (2020)^[10] and Tripathi (2021)^[11].

3.5 Landholding

Table 1 clearly reveals that majority (52.92%) of the organic vegetable growers belonged to semi medium category of land holding *i.e.* 2.01 to 4.00 ha followed by small land holding category (21.67%) followed by medium land holding category (21.25%) and large land holding category (04.16%). The possible reason of this finding might be unique features of selected respondents under the study *i.e.* majority of organic vegetable growers followed the group certification process. The present findings are similar to the findings of Pawar (2014)^[8] and Patil (2019)^[7].

3.6 Area under organic vegetable

It is observed that majority *i.e.* three fourth (75.42%) of the organic vegetable growers have medium (0.134 to 0.361 ha) area under organic vegetable cultivation followed by small and large area under organic vegetable cultivation were 15.00 percent and 09.58 percent, respectively. It is because of the perceiving the benefits of group certification as well as the profit received from selling of organic vegetables. The present findings are partially support to the research reported by Pawar (2014)^[8] and Patil (2019)^[7].

3.7 Experience in organic farming

More than half *i.e.* (51.25%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium (6 to 7 years) level of experience in organic farming while 33.33 percent and 15.42 percent of them had high and low level of experience in organic farming, respectively. Most of the organic vegetable growers were middle and young aged with secondary school, higher secondary and college level of education. Afterwards they were engaged in farming. Thus, it might be concluded that majority of the organic vegetable growers (51.25%) had medium level of organic farming experience. These findings have been supported with the research work done by Jat (2020)^[4].

3.8 Training received

The data in Table 1 showed that majority *i.e.* (47.50%) of the organic vegetable growers have received medium duration training (08 to 18 days) followed by 32.50 percent, 12.08 percent and 07.92 percent of them received short duration training, long duration training and no training, respectively. The probable reason might be the farmer's higher education which makes them aware of the advantages received from attending training, and the motivational nature of the NGOs and organizations working on organic farming in this area. These findings are in line with the findings reported by Patil (2019)^[7].

3.9 Annual income

From the data presented in the Table 1, it is clear that more than half (55.00%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium annual income between Rs. 2,50,001/- to Rs. 4,00,000/-, followed by 24.58 percent high (Above Rs. 4,00,001) and 20.42 percent of them had low up to Rs. 2,50,00/-, annual income, respectively. The finding might be due to enough land holding along with farming experience and confidence to get success in the organic farming. The farmers had not only engaged in agriculture but also involves in livestock rearing, along with farming they were also

engaged in other business activities which leads in better profit earnings. The findings in line with the findings of Korde (2017)^[5] and Patil (2019)^[7].

3.10 Livestock possession

It is evident from the Table 1 that 36.67 percent of the organic vegetable growers had possessed 3 to 4 animals followed by 35.00 percent, 25.41 percent and 02.92 percent of them possessed above 4, 1 to 2 animals and no animals, respectively. It is well known fact that livestock play a vital role in organic farming so organic vegetable growers had better livestock possession. These findings have been supported with the research findings by Darandale (2010)^[2].

3.11 Source of information

Table 1 indicated that majority (56.67%) of the respondents had medium level of source of information with various extension agencies for seeking information on organic farming followed by 22.50 percent who had low level of source of information and 20.83 percent had high level of source of information with various extension agencies. This may be due to existence of government and private extension agencies and Agricultural University in study area. These findings have been supported with the research reported by Adhayage (2006)^[1].

3.12 Input accessibility

It is observed from table 1 that majority of the organic vegetable growers (75.42%) had medium level of input accessibility followed by 19.17 percent had low level of input accessibility and 05.41 percent had high level of input accessibility. It is well known fact that input accessibility is one of the very important aspect of organic farming so organic vegetable growers had medium input accessibility. These findings have been supported with the research reported by Pandya (2010)^[6].

3.13 Credit orientation

From the data presented in the Table 1, it is clear that majority *i.e.* (55.83%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium level of credit orientation followed by 25.83 percent had low level of credit orientation and 18.34 percent had high level of credit orientation. The present finding goes similar to the research findings reported by Datta (2013)^[3].

3.14 Risk preference

Table 1 showed that majority *i.e.* more than two third (67.92%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium level of risk preference followed by 17.50 percent and 14.58

percent of the organic vegetable growers had high and low level of risk preference, respectively. It might be due to organic farmers had better risk preference because they had to take various risks to change their inorganic farms into organic farms and also for practice of organic farming. The present finding goes similar to the research findings reported by Singh (2020)^[10].

3.15 Economic motivation

Table 1 clearly indicated that majority *i.e.* near about three fourth (72.08%) of the organic vegetable growers had medium level of economic motivation followed by 14.58 percent and 13.34 percent of the organic vegetable growers had low and high level of economic motivation, respectively. It means that majority of the organic vegetable growers have understood medium level of importance of organic vegetable cultivation to reach higher economic end. With the reasonable level of risk bearing capacity, positive attitude and high degree of interest for the adoption of new technology of organic vegetable cultivation might have made them with medium level of economic motivated personalities. The present finding goes similar to the research findings reported by Pawar (2014)^[8] and Patil (2019)^[7].

3.16 Market Orientation

It is evident from the Table 1 that most of the organic vegetable growers (76.67%) were in medium level category of market orientation. while 12.50 percent of the organic vegetable growers were in high market orientation category and about 10.83 percent of organic vegetable growers were in low market orientation category. Marketing is one of the very important aspects of agriculture. Organic vegetable growers had contact with the local and outside markets for knowing the price trend of agricultural commodities. Some farmers used mass media for getting information related to market. The present findings have been supported to the research findings reported by Patil (2019)^[7].

3.17 Knowledge

Table 1 clearly indicated that majority of the organic vegetable growers (55.83%) had medium level of knowledge followed by high (22.50%) level of knowledge and low (21.67%) level of knowledge. The probable reason of this finding might be their higher education, medium experience in organic farming and nature of acquiring the latest information by attending the trainings, medium risk preference. These findings have been supported with the findings reported by Wankhade (2020)^[12].

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their socio-economic profile (N=240)

Sr. No.	Profile of the farmers	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	Young (Up to 35)	77	32.08
	Middle (36 to 50)	139	57.92
	Old (Above 50)	24	10.00
2	Education		
	Illiterate (Cannot read and write)	00	00.00
	Primary School (1 st to 4 th)	04	01.66
	Middle school (5 th to 7 th)	24	10.00
	Secondary school (8 th to 10 th)	81	33.75
	Higher secondary school/Junior college (10 th to 12 th)	68	28.34
	College/ University	63	26.25

3	Family size		
3	Small (Up to 4 members)	79	32.92
	Medium (5 to 6 members)	109	45.42
	Large (Above 6 members)	52	21.66
4	Family type		
	Nuclear	166	69.17
	Joint	74	30.83
5	Land holding		
	Marginal (Up to 1.00 ha)	00	00.00
	Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	52	21.67
	Semi medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	127	52.92
	Medium (4.01 to 10.00 ha)	51	21.25
	Large (Above 10.01 ha)	10	04.16
6	Area under organic vegetable		
	Small (Up to 0.133 ha.)	36	15.00
	Medium (0.134 to 0.361 ha.)	181	75.42
	Large (Above 0.361 ha.)	23	09.58
7	Experience in organic farming		
	Low (Up to 8)	31	25.83
	Medium (9 to 10)	66	55.00
	High (11 and above)	23	19.17
8	Training received		
	No training	19	07.92
	Short duration training (Up to 07 days)	78	32.50
	Medium duration training (8 days to 18 days)	114	47.50
	Long duration training (Above 18 days)	29	12.08
9	Annual Income		
	Low (up to Rs. 2,50,000/-)	49	20.42
	Medium (Rs. 2,50,001/- to Rs. 4,00,000/-)	132	55.00
	High (Above Rs. 4,00,001/-)	59	24.58
10	Livestock possession		
	No animal	07	02.92
	1 to 2 animals	61	25.41
	3 to 4 animals	88	36.67
	Above 4 animals	84	35.00
11	Source of Information		
	Low (Up to 13.51)	54	22.50
	Medium (13.52 to 23.49)	136	56.67
	High (Above 23.49)	50	20.83
12	Input accessibility		
	Low (Up to 03.49)	46	19.17
	Medium (03.50 to 05.65)	181	75.42
	High (Above 05.65)	13	05.41
13	Credit orientation		
	Low (Up to 01.31)	62	25.83
	Medium (01.32 to 04.49)	134	55.83
	High (Above 04.49)	44	18.34
14	Risk preference		
	Low (Up to 16.20)	35	14.58
	Medium (16.21 to 26.36)	163	67.92
	High (Above 26.36)	42	17.50
15	Economic motivation		
	Low (Up to 17.25)	35	14.58
	Medium (17.26 to 24.97)	173	72.08
	High (Above 24.97)	32	13.34
16	Market orientation		
	Low (Up to 17.05)	26	10.83
	Medium (17.06 to 26.07)	184	76.67
	High (Above 26.07)	30	12.50
17	Knowledge		
	Low (Up to 65.47)	52	21.67
	Medium (65.48 to 91.13)	134	55.83
	High (Above 91.13)	54	22.50

4. Conclusion

In this study majority of the respondents were middle aged with secondary to higher secondary school level education,

medium family size, medium area under organic vegetable, medium farming experience, had medium annual income, medium level of source of information, medium input

accessibility, medium level of credit orientation, medium level of risk preference, medium level of economic motivation, medium level category of market orientation and medium level of knowledge hence the extension agency and media people should bear this thing in mind while formulating and executing programme for organic farming development in the Vidarbha region.

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