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Socio-economic profile of ITK farmers

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Abstract
The present study was undertaken with the main objective to study the socio-economic profile of the ITK farmers. The study was conducted in Ratnagiri district of Konkan region of Maharashtra. In all 120 respondents were selected by using simple random sampling technique. The "Exploratory" 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 (68.34 percent) was belonged to 'older' age group while (47.50 percent) of the respondents had obtained 'secondary school'. Majority of the respondents (36.67 percent) were having 'Marginal' land holding. Majority (53.33 percent) of the respondents had 'medium' family size. Majority (80.84 percent) of the respondents having 'fair' cropping pattern. In case of farming experience (61.67 percent) of the respondents had 'medium' farming experience while (39.17 percent) of the respondents farm in close proximity of forest area within 0 to 0.5 km of the forest. Majority (39.17 percent) of the respondents had 'River' near to their farm.

Keywords: Socio-economic profile, ITK

Introduction
Knowledge gained over time is time tested and eco-friendly. Such knowledge is called the 'Indigenous technical knowledge'. 'Indigenous' means generated by local people. 'Technical' knowledge is acquired through experience in a particular subject area. Thus, people's knowledge is more detailed than that of others, who have not had same experience or do not have the same skills in observation or analysis. The indigenous technical knowledge embraces people's knowledge of tools and techniques for the assessment, acquisition, transformation and utilization of resources which are specific to particular location. Indigenous knowledge is essential for local knowledge. Indigenous people are responsible for the development of technology. Local knowledge is unique to a culture or society. Indigenous knowledge, traditional knowledge, community knowledge and rural people's knowledge are all rooted in grass root people. India is home to numerous indigenous communities, each with its own distinct traditional knowledge and technology base. The indigenous technical knowledge (ITK) has great potential to help farmers to solve their problems. This traditional knowledge is based on the people's experience, it is most important idea is to be proactive in dealing with situations and problems. Agriculture encompasses various aspects such as crop production, plant protection, fisheries, animal husbandry, & wildlife management, etc. Rural agriculture operations are conducted by individuals with limited exposure to the outside world and lack of formal education and training. Farmers continue to innovate and experiment in local situations without receiving proper encouragement and recognition. As a result, farmers have developed various indigenous farm management practices.

Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) related to crop damage by wild animals often includes a range of strategies and practices that indigenous communities have developed over time to protect their crops and minimize losses caused by wildlife. The techniques are typically tailored to the local environment, species of animals involves, and the specific crops being grown.

To curb the menace of wild animals include techniques for gathering and storing information about to control the crop damage. Indian villagers know many indigenous techniques and formulations which can control crop damage by wild animals without causing adverse effects. Indigenous knowledge practices are prevalent in rural India, and their extinction is a significant concern. Preserving indigenous knowledge is crucial for managing technical knowledge, respecting people's knowledge, preventing wild animal damage to crops, and

incorporating it into crop development. The study, titled "Indigenous technical knowledge to curb the menace of wild animals," is based on this perspective. The study was conducted with the general objectives of "Indigenous Technical Knowledge to curb the menace of wild animals". The specific objective of the study are as under.

1. To know the socio-economic profile of ITK farmers

Methodology

The present study was conducted in Ratnagiri district of Konkan region of Maharashtra. A simple random sampling was adopted for the selection of respondents. In all 120 respondents were selected for study from Ratnagiri district of Konkan region of Maharashtra. The "Exploratory" 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 socio-economic profile study included characteristics like age, education, land holding, family size, cropping pattern, farming experience, proximity to forest and water body.

Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study as well as relevant the discussion has been summarized under the following heads.

Socio-economic profile of the respondents

Age

The data regarding age of the respondents is shown in Table 1. It is revealed from the Table 1 that majority of the respondents indicated that majority (68.34 percent) of the farmers were in the 'older' age group, while 17.50 percent of the farmers were in the 'oldest' age group and 14.16 percent of them were in 'old' age group. The average age of the farmers was 62 years.

Education

The data regarding education of the respondents is shown in Table 2. The data presented in Table 2 indicated that, maximum number of respondents i.e. 47.50 percent of the respondents were studied 'secondary school', while 15 percent respondents were studied 'higher secondary school', 13.33 percent respondents had studied 'primary school', 10.84 percent respondents studied Graduation and above, 8.33 percent respondents studied 'Pre-primary' and 5 percent respondents were 'Illiterate'. Average education score of the respondents was 9.60.

Land holding

The data regarding land holding of the respondents is shown in Table 3. The data presented in Table 3 indicated that, majority (36.67 percent) of the respondents had 'marginal' land holding, while (28.34 percent) of the respondents had 'small' land holding, (25 percent) of the respondents had 'semi-medium' land holding, (8.33 percent) of the respondents had 'medium' land holding and (1.66 percent) of the respondents had 'Large' land holding. Average land holding of the respondents was 2.1.

Family size

The data regarding land holding of the respondents is shown in Table 4. The data presented in Table 4 indicated that, majority (53.33 percent) of the respondents was 'medium', while (35.00 percent) of the respondents had 'Low' and (11.67 percent) of the respondents had 'High' size of family. Average family size of the respondents was 4.50.

Cropping pattern

The data regarding cropping pattern of the respondents is shown in Table 5. A perusal of data displayed in Table 5 indicated that, more than half (80.84 percent) of the respondents had 'Fair' cropping pattern and (12.5 percent) of the respondents had 'Poor' cropping pattern while (6.66 percent) of the respondents had 'Good' cropping pattern. Average cropping pattern of the respondent was 5.65.

Farming experience

The data regarding farming experience of the respondents is shown in Table 6. It was observed from Table 6 that, majority of the respondents had 'medium' farming experience (61.67 percent) followed by 'high' (21.67 percent) and 'low' (16.66 percent) farming experience. Average farming experience of the respondents was 35.57.

Proximity to forest

The data regarding proximity to forest of the respondents is shown in Table 7. It was observed from Table 7 that (39.17 percent) of the respondents farm in close proximity of forest area within 0 to 0.5 km of the forest, followed by (29.17 percent) farm in 0.5 to 1 km, (20.00 percent) in 1 to 2 km and (11.66 percent) in 2 to 3 km, whereas (10.00 percent) respondents farm in proximity to 3 to 5 km. Average proximity to forest of the respondent was 2.34.

Water body

The data regarding water body of the respondents is shown in Table 8. It was observed from Table 8 that that (39.17 percent) of the respondents have 'River' near to their farm, followed by (20.83 percent) have 'no any source', (15.83 percent) have 'Stream', (15.00 percent) have 'Farm pond', (7.5 percent) have 'Canal', whereas (1.67 percent) respondents have 'Lake' near to their farm. Average source of water body was 2.55.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age

Sl. No.	Age (years)	Number of respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Old (Up to 51)	17	14.16
2.	Older (52 to 72)	82	68.34
3.	Oldest (73 and above)	21	17.50
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 62, SD= 10.94			

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according their education

Sl. No.	Education (std.)	Respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Illiterate	6	5.00
2.	Pre-primary (1st to 4th std)	10	8.33
3.	Primary school (5th to 7th std)	16	13.33
4.	Secondary school (8th to 10th std)	57	47.50
5.	Higher Secondary school (11th to 12th std)	18	15.00
6.	Graduation and above	13	10.84
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 9.60, SD= 3.00			

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their land holding

Sl. No.	Category (ha)	Respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Marginal (upto 1.00 ha)	44	36.67
2.	Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	34	28.34
3.	Semi-medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	30	25.00
4.	Medium (4.01 to 10.00 ha)	10	8.33
5.	Large (10.01 and above)	02	1.66
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 2.1, SD= 1.04			

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their family size

Sl. No.	Category (No.)	Respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (upto 3)	42	35.00
2.	Medium (4 to 6)	64	53.33
3.	High (7 & above)	14	11.67
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 4.50, SD= 2.09			

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents according to their cropping pattern

Sl. No.	Category (Score)	Respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Poor (upto 4)	15	12.5
2.	Fair (5 to 7)	97	80.84
3.	Good (7 & above)	08	6.66
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 5.65, SD= 1.67			

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents according to their farming experience

Sl. No.	Category (yr)	Respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (Up to 22)	20	16.66
2.	Medium (23 to 48)	74	61.67
3.	High (49 & above)	26	21.67
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 35.57			SD= 13.18

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents according to their proximity to forest

Sl. No.	Distance	Respondent (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	0 to 0.5 km	47	39.17
2.	0.5 to 1 km	23	19.17
3.	1 to 2 km	24	20.00
4.	2 to 3 km	14	11.66
5.	3 to 5 km	12	10.00
Total		120	100.00
Mean= 2.34, SD= 1.36			

Table 8: Distribution of the respondents according to their water body

Sl. No.	Source	Respondents (N = 120)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	No any source	25	20.83
2.	Lake	02	1.67
3.	Stream	19	15.83
4.	River	47	39.17
5.	Canal	09	7.5
6.	Farm pond	18	15.00
Total		120	100.00
Mean=2.55, S.D.=1.61			

Conclusion

Older farmers are likely to have a deep understanding of the cultural context surrounding wildlife and traditional practices. Integrating their perspectives into the design of interventions can enhance the cultural relevance and acceptance of strategies to curb the menace of wild animals.

Ultimately, this study aspires to contribute valuable insights to the fields of wildlife conservation, sustainable agriculture, and community-based natural resource management. By recognizing and documenting the inherent wisdom embedded in indigenous practices, we aim to foster a greater appreciation for the role of traditional knowledge in addressing contemporary challenges related to wild animals.

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