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Socio-economic and psychological characteristics of the organic farmers in Manipur

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Abstract

This study was carried out in the Imphal West and Churachandpur districts of Manipur to identify the socio-economic and psychological characteristics of the organic farmers. A total of 160 organic farmers were selected for the investigation through random sampling from the list of organic farmers. The data were collected with the help of a structured and pre-tested interview schedule through personal interview method. The analysis and interpretation of the data was done by using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation. The outcomes of the data analysis indicated that majority of the organic farmers belonged to middle age group (52.50%) with primary level of education (33.12%) and were living in a joint family system (55.00%). The majority of the respondents had medium size family (37.50%), engaged in agriculture and allied activities (32.50%), were marginal farmer (52.50%) and had area upto 1 ha under organic farming (75.62%). Majority of the organic farmers were having medium material possession (45.00%) as well as livestock possession (52.50%). Most of the organic farmers (50.68%) had membership in one organization. Additionally, majority of the organic farmers had medium level of mass media exposure (50.00%), belonged to medium category of training received in organic farming (43.75%) and were having medium level of experience in organic farming (60.00%). They belonged to the medium annual income category (60.63%) and had high level of achievement motivation (43.75%). However, most of the farmers had medium level of extension orientation (49.38%), innovativeness (47.50%), economic motivation (50.00%), risk orientation (51.87%) and management orientation (41.88%).

Keywords: Organic farming, green revolution, socio-economic and psychological characteristics

Introduction

The success of 'Green Revolution' has no doubt given a large boost in agricultural production and productivity which directed the agriculture to move from organic to inorganic farming. Even though there was an economic boom, increased in global food security and reduction in hunger, the major effect of practicing conventional farming was evident with the destruction of the health of soil, microbes, insects, human and environment and appearance of pesticide residues in agricultural produce. The conventional farming that has been in practiced since last 20-30 years is becoming stunted or unsustainable. So there is a need to look for an alternative food production system which is not only sustainable but also helps in mitigating the problems of climate change. The growing public awareness of the risks to human health and the environment associated with the use of agrochemicals in agriculture has also sparked interest in alternative forms of sustainable agriculture. Organic farming is one of these alternative kinds of agriculture that aims for long-term agricultural productivity while also conserving natural resources. It is defined as – "A *production system* that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic farming combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved" (IFOAM, 2008) [6]. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a commonly accepted framework for how the world needs to change. Organic farming, based on the principles of health, ecology, fairness and care, has high potential to contribute to many of these goals, directly or indirectly and can measure success toward achieving these goals (FAO, 2018) [4].

The socio-economic status of the people in country like India mostly depends upon agricultural production. Small scale organic farmers, especially those in areas with low agricultural input can benefit from organic farming by achieving more consistent incomes and

reducing their reliance on expensive inputs. In order to better assist and support the organic farmers, it is necessary to gain an understanding of the factors that influence their knowledge and adoption level regarding organic farming. Therefore an attempt was made to study the socio-economic and psychological characteristics of the organic farmers in Imphal West and Churachandpur districts of Manipur.

Methodology

The study was carried out in Imphal West and Churachandpur districts of Manipur. A total of 4 blocks comprising of 2 blocks viz. Sawongbung C.D. block and Keirao C.D. block from Imphal East district and 2 blocks viz. Singngat block and Sangaikot block from Churachandpur district were purposively selected. And from each block, four FIGs (Farmers Interest Groups) were selected making up to a total of sixteen FIGs. Further from each FIG, ten organic farmers were selected randomly. Therefore, a total of 160 organic farmers were selected as the sample for the study. The data were collected with the help of a structured and pre-tested interview schedule through personal interview method. The analysis and interpretation of the data were done by using statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Result and Discussion

The important initial step in social science research is to analyze the characteristics of the farmers. It helps in ensuring that research findings are useful, relevant and practical, ultimately contributing to the improvement of the agricultural

practices, policies, and outcomes. In this study twenty variables such as age, education, family size, family type, occupation, total land holding, area under organic farming, livestock possession, material possession, social participation, mass media exposure, training received in organic farming, experience in organic farming, annual income, extension orientation, innovativeness, achievement orientation, economic motivation, risk orientation and management orientation were considered to study the socio-economic and psychological variables.

Age

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 1 indicates that maximum numbers of respondents belonged to middle age group (52.50%) followed by 25.00 percent in old age group and the remaining 22.50 percent in young age group. The results are in line with the findings of Priyadharshini (2012)^[13] and Pamar (2018)^[12].

Education

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 2 indicates that 33.12 percent of the respondents were having education upto primary level (i.e. upto 8 standard), 23.13 percent had secondary level of education, 15.62 percent were under graduate or possessing a diploma, 13.75 percent were functionally literate whereas 7.50 percent were found to be illiterate and the remaining 6.88 percent were having post graduate and above level of education. Similar findings are reported by Priyadharshini (2012)^[13].

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their age group

(N = 160)

S. No.	Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age	Young age group (Up to 35 years)	36	22.50
		Middle age group (35 – 50 years)	84	52.50
		Old age group (Above 50 years)	40	25.00
2.	Education	Illiterate	12	7.50
		Functionally Literate	22	13.75
		Primary education (upto 8 th)	53	33.12
		Secondary education (8 th -12 th)	37	23.13
		Under Graduate / Diploma	25	15.62
3.	Family Type	Nuclear	72	45.00
		Joint	88	55.00
4.	Family Size	Small (Upto 4 members)	56	35.00
		Medium (5 - 8 members)	60	37.50
		Large (> 8 members)	44	27.50
5.	Occupation	Agriculture alone	47	29.37
		Agriculture & Allied Activities	52	32.50
		Agriculture & Business	48	30.00
		Agriculture & Service	13	8.13
6.	Total Land Holding	Marginal farmers (Upto 1 ha)	84	52.50
		Small farmers (1 - 2 ha)	40	25.00
		Medium farmers (2 – 4 ha)	29	18.12
		Large farmers (Above 4 ha)	7	4.38
7.	Area under organic farming	Upto 1 ha	121	75.62
		1-2 ha	29	18.13
		Above 2 ha	10	6.25
8.	Material Possession Mean = 11.825 S.D. = 3.97	Low (<8)	56	35.00
		Medium (8-16)	72	45.00
		High (>16)	32	20.00
9.	Livestock Possession	Low (<50,000)	40	25.00
		Medium (50,000 – 1,00,000)	84	52.50
		High (>1,00,000)	36	22.50
10.	Social Participation	No membership in any organization	0	0

		Member of one organization	81	50.62
		Member of more than one organization	61	38.12
		Office holder in such an organization	18	11.26
11.	Mass Media Exposure	Low (<11)	34	21.25
		Medium (11-16)	80	50.00
		High (>16)	46	28.75
12.	Training received in Organic Farming	Low (Upto 2 trainings)	32	20.00
		Medium (3-4 trainings)	70	43.75
		High (> 4 trainings)	58	36.25
13.	Experience in Organic Farming Mean = 5.04 S.D. = 2.94	Low (<2 years)	24	15.00
		Medium (2-8 years)	96	60.00
		High (>8 years)	40	25.00
14.	Annual Income	Lower income (upto 60,000/annum)	27	16.87
		Medium income (Rs. 60,000 to 1,20,000/annum)	97	60.63
		Higher income (>Rs. 1,20,000/annum)	36	22.50
15.	Extension Orientation Mean = 20.97 S.D. = 5.30	Low (<15)	35	21.87
		Medium (15-26)	79	49.38
		High (>26)	46	28.75
16.	Innovativeness Mean = 19.59 S.D. = 5.06	Low (<14)	32	20.00
		Medium (14-24)	76	47.50
		High (>24)	52	32.50
17.	Achievement Motivation Mean = 17.77 S.D. = 6.07	Low (<12)	35	21.87
		Medium (12-24)	55	34.38
		High (>24)	70	43.75
18.	Economic Motivation Mean = 18.26 S.D. = 2.73	Low (<16)	30	18.75
		Medium (16-21)	80	50.00
		High (>21)	50	31.25
19.	Risk orientation Mean = 20.70 S.D. = 3.27	Low (<17)	32	20.00
		Medium (17-24)	83	51.87
		High (>24)	45	28.13
20.	Management Orientation Mean = 44.60 S.D. = 8.55	Low (<36)	43	26.87
		Medium (36-53)	67	41.88
		High (>53)	50	31.25

Family Type

The data presented in table 3 & S. No. 3 reveals that majority (55.00%) of the respondents were living in joint family system whereas remaining 45.00 percent were living in nuclear family system. The results are in line with the findings of Bhoge (2018)^[2] and Baskaur *et al.* (2021)^[11].

Family Size

The distribution of farmers into three categories on the basis of their family size is presented in table 1 & S. No. 4. The findings reveals that a larger number of the organic farmers were having medium size family (37.50%), while 35.00 percent and 27.50 percent of them were having small and large size family, respectively. The findings are in agreement with findings of Dadasaheb (2010)^[3] and Hanglem (2017)^[5].

Occupation

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 5 indicates that majority (32.50%) of the organic farmers were involved in agriculture and allied as their main occupation, 30.00 percent were engaged in agriculture and business, 29.37 percent were practicing agriculture alone and the remaining 8.13 percent were engaged in agriculture along with service. The results are in agreement with the findings of Muralikrishnan (2015)^[10] and Bhoge (2018)^[2].

Total Land Holding

The respondents were classified into different categories i.e. marginal, small, medium and large farmers. From table 1 & S. No. 6, it is obvious that the largest percentage of the respondents were marginal farmer (52.50%) having upto 1 ha of land followed by small farmers (25.00%) with 1-2 ha of

land, medium farmers (18.12%) with 2-4 ha of land and large farmers (4.38%) with above 4 ha of land, respectively. The results are in contrast with the finding of Sivanarayana *et al.* (2008)^[14].

Area under organic farming

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 7 indicates that majority (75.62%) of the respondents had area upto 1 ha under organic farming. Whereas, 18.13 percent of the organic farmers were having 1 to 2 ha of area under organic farming and the remaining 6.25 percent were having above 2 ha of area under organic farming. The results are in contrast with that of the study of Pamar (2018)^[12].

Material Possession

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 8 reveals that about 45.00 percent of organic farmers were belonging to medium category of material possession followed by 35.00 percent and 20.00 percent who belonged to low and high category of material possession respectively. Similar findings were observed by Hanglem (2017)^[5].

Livestock Possession

The data pertaining to livestock possession are shown in table 1 & S. No. 9. The data indicates that more than half (52.50%) of the organic farmer belonged to medium livestock possession category while 25.00 percent and 22.50 percent of the organic farmers belonged to low and high livestock possession category, respectively. The findings are in conformity with the results of Monikha (2016)^[9].

Social Participation

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 10 shows that that majority (50.68%) of the organic farmers had membership in one organization followed by 38.12 percent of the organic farmers who had membership in more than one organization and the remaining 11.26 percent of them were office holders in an organization. Evidently, no farmers were found who did not have a membership in any organization.

Mass Media Exposure

The data regarding the mass media exposure presented in table 1 & S. No. 11 reveals that half of the organic farmers (50.00%) were having medium level of mass media exposure followed by 28.75 percent and 21.25 percent of the organic farmers who belonged to high and low mass media exposure category, respectively. Similar findings were observed by Monikha (2016)^[9] and Verma (2019)^[17].

Training received in Organic Farming

From table 1 & S. No. 12, it is obvious that 43.75 percent of the organic farmer were belonging to medium category of training received in organic farming followed by 36.25 percent and 20.00 percent who belonged to high and low category of training received in organic farming respectively. The results are in conformity with the findings of Midame and Pyasi (2020)^[8].

Experience in Organic Farming

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 13 reveals that more than half (60.00%) of the organic farmers were having medium level of experience in organic farming, whereas 25.00 percent and 15.00 percent of the respondents had high and low experience in organic farming, respectively. The results are in agreement with the results of Sivanarayana *et al.* (2008)^[14] and Monikha (2016)^[9].

Annual Income

The data for annual income is presented in table 1 & S. No. 14. The data indicates that majority (60.63%) of the organic farmer were belonging to the medium income category, while 22.50 percent were belonging to higher income category and the remaining 16.87 percent of the organic farmer were belonging to low income category. The findings are in line with the results of Dadasaheb (2010)^[3].

Extension Orientation

The result pertaining to extension orientation of the farmer is highlighted in table 1 & S. No. 15. The data shows that 49.38 percent of the organic farmers were having medium level of extension orientation while 28.75 percent and 21.87 percent of them had high and low level of extension orientation, respectively. The results are in conformity with the findings of Sivanarayana *et al.* (2008)^[14].

Innovativeness

The data presented in the table 1 & S. No. 16 shows that 47.50 percent of the organic farmers were having medium level of innovativeness followed by 32.50 percent and 20.00 percent of the organic farmers who had high and low level of innovativeness respectively. Similar results were found in the studies of Hanglem (2017)^[5], Pamar (2018)^[12] and Verma (2019)^[17].

Achievement Motivation

The data pertaining to achievement motivation is presented in

table 1 & S. No. 17. The data indicates that 43.75 percent of the organic farmers were having high level of achievement motivation, 34.38 percent were having medium level of achievement motivation and the remaining 21.87 percent were having low level of achievement motivation. The findings are in accordance with the findings of Tanweer (2019)^[16].

Economic Motivation

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 18 reveals that 50.00 percent of the organic farmers were having medium level of economic motivation while 31.25 percent and 18.75 percent were having high and low level of economic motivation, respectively. The findings are in line with the results of Dadasaheb (2010)^[3] and Muralikrishnan (2015)^[10].

Risk orientation

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 19 indicates that majority (51.87%) of organic farmers were having medium level of risk orientation while 28.13 percent were having high level of risk orientation and the remaining 20.00 percent of the organic farmers fell under low level of risk orientation category. The findings are in agreement with the results of Dadasaheb (2010)^[3], Priyadarshini (2012)^[13] and Sivaraj (2017)^[15].

Management Orientation

The data presented in table 1 & S. No. 20 indicates that almost half (41.88%) of the organic farmers were having medium level of management orientation while 31.25 percent were having high level of management orientation and the remaining 26.87 percent of the organic farmers were having low level of management orientation. Same trend of findings were reported by Hanglem (2017)^[5] and Midame and Pyasi (2020)^[8].

Conclusion

It can be concluded that majority of the organic farmers belonged to middle age group with primary level of education and were living in a joint family. They had medium size family and were engaged in agriculture and allied activities. They were mainly marginal farmer and had marginal area under organic. Majority of the organic farmers were having medium material as well as livestock possession. Most of the farmers had membership in one organization. Additionally, majority of the organic farmers had medium level of mass media exposure. They have received medium level of training in organic farming and were having medium level of experience in organic farming. Most of the farmer belonged to the medium annual income category. And a large number of them had high level of achievement motivation. However, most of the farmers had medium level of extension orientation, innovativeness, economic motivation, risk orientation and management orientation.

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