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ANALYSIS OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF DAIRY FARMERS IN VILUPPURAM DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

Dairying as an occupation supports and sustains the livelihood of a large number of rural people in India, especially small farmers, marginal farmers and landless labourers. To study the socio-economic profile of the dairy farmers, Viluppuram district of Tamil Nadu state was purposively selected on the basis of high cattle population. Out of the nine taluks in Viluppuram district, two taluks, namely Viluppuram and Tindivanam taluks were randomly selected from which five villages each were selected. From each of the selected villages, 10 respondents were selected randomly leading to a total of 100 respondents. The findings of the study revealed that half of the respondents were old aged, had secondary to graduate level of education and had agriculture + livestock and wages + livestock + agriculture as their occupation. Majority of the respondents also had large herd size of more than four animals with 11-20 years of dairy farming experience and no participation in training programme. Majority of the respondents had medium level of annual income, economic motivation, mass media exposure, contact with extension agency, risk orientation, proximity to marketing channels, knowledge about improved dairy husbandry practices and decision making behaviour.

Keywords: Dairy farmers, Socio-economic profile, Viluppuram

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INTRODUCTION

Dairying is considered as one of the subsidiary occupations of the rural people which play a crucial role in the national economy by generating income and employment. The estimated total milk production in India during 2018-19 was 187.75 million metric tonnes (Basic Animal Husbandry Statistics-2019, Department of

Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Government of India) The unique characteristic of Indian dairy industry is that the bulk of milk production is handled by small milk producers who are illiterate and unaware of economic aspects of milk production.

Most of the rural farmers who keep dairy animals have pretty rich traditional and indigenous knowledge, but these cannot meet the increasing competition (Tholkappian and Satheeshkumar, 2014). An analysis of the profile characteristics of the dairy farmers is of paramount importance in formulating any dairy development strategies to augment milk production and productivity. Hence, an attempt was made to study the socio-economic profile of dairy farmers in Viluppuram district of Tamil Nadu.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Viluppuram district of Tamil Nadu state which was purposively selected on the basis of high cattle population, better production profile and familiarity of the researcher with the local dialect and socio-cultural aspects of the area. The Viluppuram district consisted of nine taluks and out of nine taluks in Viluppuram district, two taluks namely, Viluppuram and Tindivanam were randomly selected for the study. From each of the taluks selected, five villages were selected randomly, thus a total of 10 villages were selected for the study. From each of the ten villages selected, 10 dairy owning households were selected randomly leading to a total sample size of 100 dairy owning households. Any one adult member in the family of dairy owning households who was actively involved in the dairy farming activities was considered as the respondent for the study.

The independent variables in accordance with the objectives set forth were selected based on review of literature, expert opinion and judges relevancy rating scores. The selected variables were operationalized with the aid of existing literature and measured through appropriate schedules, scales and indices. A well-structured interview schedule with all the items pertaining to the socio-economic profile of the dairy farmers was developed and pretested in a non-sampling area and necessary alterations were made as appropriate. Primary data were collected from 100 respondents personally with the pre-tested interview schedule. The collected data were compiled, tabulated and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools and the results interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of the respondents according to their profile

The distribution of respondents according to their profile characteristics is presented in Table.

Age

Fifty two per cent of the respondents belonged to old age category (above 45 years), followed by 33.00 per cent in middle (36 to 45 years) and 15.00 per cent in young age (below 36 years) (Table). This is in agreement with scientific works of Roy (2004) and Gupta (2011).

Education

Twenty five per cent of the respondents were educated up to higher secondary level followed by 18.00 and 16.00 per cent with secondary, graduate and above level of education respectively. An equal per cent (14.00 per cent) of the respondents were illiterates and educated up to middle school level. Only 8.00 per cent of respondents had education up to primary level, while 03.00 per cent were in "can read only" and 02.00 per cent were in "can read and write" categories. These findings are in consonance with results of Manjusha (2013) who reported that one third (33.33 per cent) of the respondents were educated up to senior secondary level of education. The results are in agreement with the findings of Chinchmalatpure *et al.* (2017).

Occupation

Twenty nine per cent of the respondents had a component of agriculture + livestock in their farming as their main occupation, followed by "wages + livestock farming + agriculture" (23.00 per cent), "livestock farming + agriculture" (16.00 per cent) and "livestock farming + others" (12.00 per cent) as shown in Table. A very minimal per cent of the respondents (05.00 per cent) were having livestock farming alone as their main occupation. It is explicit to note that livestock farming formed an integral part of the occupation for majority of the respondents in spite of whatever main occupation they were pursuing. Gupta (2011), Akila and Senthilvel (2012) and Minhaj *et al.* (2017) also stated that major respondents had agriculture and dairy farming as their main occupation.

Annual income

It could be observed from the Table that maximum proportion (68.00 per cent) of total respondents had medium level of annual income *i.e.,* above Rs.125548 to Rs.309352 while 17.00 per cent belonged to high total income category*, i.e.,* more than Rs.309352. About 15.00 per cent of the respondents had their income less than Rs.125548 and were found in low category. This is in agreement with the findings of Amin *et al.* (2015) and Meena *et al.* (2017) who reported that most of the respondents belonged to medium income category.

Experience in dairy farming

As shown in the Table, nearly one-half (48.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level (11 – 20 years) of experience in dairy farming. About 27.00 per cent of the respondents had low (up to 10 years) and 25.00 per cent of them had high (above 20 years). This is in agreement with Bhise (2015) who reported that most of the respondents had medium level of experience in livestock farming.

Level of knowledge about improved dairy husbandry practices

Majority (69.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of knowledge about improved dairy husbandry practices while 18.00 per cent had low level of knowledge and 13.00 per cent had high level of knowledge about improved dairy husbandry practices (Table). Sabapara *et al.* (2016) revealed that 68.34 per cent of the dairy animal owners had medium level of

knowledge and the result of the current study is also in accordance with the same.

Extent of participation in training programmes

Majority (79.00 per cent) of respondents did not attend training on dairy farming practices, while 16.00 and 05.00 per cent attended two trainings and one training respectively (Table). The results are in consonance with Gupta (2011) who reported that the majority (80.00 per cent) of smallholder dairy farmers had not undergone any training in dairying while 16.65 per cent of respondents received one training and rest of them had two trainings.

Herd size

Majority (79.00 per cent) of the respondents had large (more than four animals) herd size while the remaining 21.00 per cent had small herd size (up to four animals) (Table). These findings are in consonance with the results of Biradar *et al.* (2013) who reported that most of the respondents had more than four animals.

Contact with extension agency

Three-fourth (75.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of contact with extension agency, followed by low (16.00 per cent) and high (9.00 per cent) levels (Table). The present findings are in agreement with Meena *et al.* (2017) and Minhaj *et al.* (2017) who reported that most of the respondents had medium level of extension agency contact.

Mass media exposure

Majority (68.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of mass media exposure followed by high (19.00 per cent) and low (13.00 per cent) levels of mass media exposure (Table). This is in agreement with the findings of Upadhyay and Desai (2011) and Sabapara *et al.* (2016) who reported that most of the respondents had medium level of mass media exposure.

Proximity to marketing channels

Majority (73.00 per cent) of respondents had medium level of marketing facility while 16.00 per cent had low level and 11.00 per cent had high level of marketing facilities (Table). Majority of respondents were found to sell marketable surplus milk directly to the consumers, dairy cooperatives and private dairies which were situated within the village or within two kilometers of distance. This is in agreement with the findings of Mishra and Goyal (2015).

Decision making behaviour

It could be observed from Table that majority (63.00 per cent) of the respondents belonged to medium category of decision making behaviour while 35.00 per cent fell in the high and the meager 02.00 per cent in low category of decision making behaviour. The results of the present study are in agreement with Triveni (2017) who reported that majority (64.00 per cent) of the dairy farmers possessed medium decision making ability.

Economic motivation

Majority (72.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of economic motivation while equal per cent (14.00 per

Table. Socio-economic profile of dairy farmers in Viluppuram district (n = 100)

S. No.	Variables	Categories	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
1.	Age	Young (<35)	15	15
		Middle (36 - 45)	33	33
		Old (> 45)	52	52
2.	Education	Illiterate	14	14
		Can read only	03	03
		Can read and write	02	02
		Primary	08	08
		Middle	14	14
		Secondary	18	18
		Higher Secondary	25	25
		Graduate and above	16	16
3.	Occupation	Wages + Livestock farming	15	15
		Wages + Livestock farming + Agriculture	23	23
		Agriculture + Livestock farming	29	29
		Livestock farming + Agriculture	16	16
		Livestock farming + Others	12	12
		Livestock farming alone	05	05
4.	Annual income	Low (< 125548)	15	15
		Medium (125548-309352)	68	68
		High (> 309352)	17	17
5.	Experience in dairy farming	Low (Up to 10 years)	27	27
		Medium (11-20 years)	48	48
		High (Above 20 years)	25	25
6.	Level of knowledge about improved dairy husbandry practices	Low (< 3.69)	18	18
		Medium (3.69- 8.65)	69	69
		High (> 8.65)	13	13
7.	Extent of participation in training programmes	No training	79	79
		One training	16	16
		Two training	05	05
8.	Herd size	Small (< 4)	21	21
		large (>4)	79	79
9.	Extension agency contact	Low (<4.45)	16	16
		Medium (4.45- 8.31)	75	75
		High (>8.31)	09	09
10.	Mass media exposure	Low (< 2.7)	13	13
		Medium (2.7-10.28)	68	68
		High (>10.28)	19	19
11.	Proximity to marketing channels	low (<2.05)	14	14
		medium (2.05-4.60)	71	71
		High(>4.60)	15	15
12.	Decision making behaviour	Low (<4.9)	02	02
		Medium (4.9-11.3)	63	63
		High (>11.3)	35	35
13.	Economic motivation	Low (< 11.8)	14	14
		Medium (11.8 -14.72)	72	72
		High (>14.72)	14	14
14.	Risk orientation	Low (<12.3)	16	16
		Medium (12.3 – 15.28)	73	73
		High (>15.28)	11	11

cent) belonged to both high level and low level of economic motivation categories (Table). These findings are in consonance with the results of Bhise (2015) and Divekar (2016) who reported that most of the respondents belonged to medium level of economic motivation.

Risk orientation

Nearly three-fourth (73.00 per cent) of the respondents had medium level of risk orientation, followed by low (16.00 per cent) and high (11.00 per cent) levels of risk orientation (Table). This is in agreement with the findings of Divekar (2016) and Minhaj *et al*. (2017).

CONCLUSION

From the results of the study, it could be concluded that majority of dairy farmers were belonged to old age group, educated with 11-20 years of dairy farming experience, possessed large herd size earned between Rs. 1.25 and Rs. 3.09 lakhs per annum. Poor participation in extension training programme with medium knowledge in dairy farming practices were identified among the farmers in the present study. Further, medium level of economic motivation, mass media exposure, contact with extension agency, risk orientation, proximity to marketing channels and decision making behaviour were noticed. Over all, the socio-economic parameter of Viluppuram district dairy farmers reveals that there is scope for further improvement. Hence, enhancing the level of knowledge on improved dairy husbandry practices and improving contact with extension agency would capacitate the dairy farmers to better overcome the impediments in the adoption of improved dairy production practices and other animal husbandry technologies by themselves. This also should be taken into account by the planners, policy makers and other stakeholders while formulating suitable strategies for improving the socio-economic profile of the dairy farmers.

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