

PREDICTION OF NET RETURNS FROM APPLE (*MALUS DOMESTICA BORKH.*) IN KASHMIR FROM SOME AGRO-ECONOMIC AND SOCIO-PERSONAL CORRELATES

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Introduction

The horticultural sector has established its credibility for augmenting the productivity of land, generating employment and, above all, providing nutritional security especially for those who need it the most production and management of apple in Kashmir has gone imbued. A mix of traditionally and modernity breeds on vacillating and hesitating approach in ensuring application of modern but risk prone, diverse but complex package of practice.

That is why the management of resource and technology in apple production merits a sincere and meticulous enquiry in the unique situation of Kashmir.

Sikka and Swarup (1978) found investment on apple to be profitable and financially variable preposition. Wani *et al* (1998) found that pesticide and human labour were being irrationally used by apple growers in Kashmir. Mishra (1996) reported a low level of extension effectiveness in Kashmir. **The general objective of the study was to predict the net return from apple from some agro-economic and socio-personal correlates.** In the process while the consequent variable was the net returns per unit area per unit time, the antecedent variables were age of the respondent, family size, family education, social interaction, media exposure, knowledge level, land holding size, area under field crops, irrigation use index, cropping intensity,

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yield from the major field crop, returns from other enterprises, animal resource, value of the forestry, area under apple, distance from home, age of the orchard, the cost of production, implement possession and value of the orchard shed.

Methodology

Pattan block of District Baramulla was selected as the location of the study. A list of 45 villages of the block was prepared from which 12 were selected following random sampling method. From these villages an exhaustive list of 232 apple growers was prepared. In selecting the respondents two criteria were applied:

1. That the growers owned and managed their own apple orchards, and
2. That the age of the orchards was more than 20 years.

Following a random number sampling method 100 respondents were ultimately selected for the study.

The analytical framework of the study included statistical tools like linear correlation, multiple regression analysis, path analysis and principal component analysis (factor analysis).

Results and Discussion

Table-1 presents the coefficients of correlation between productivity of apple and the twenty antecedent variables.

It was found that the variables average family education, media exposure and cost of production were positively and significantly correlated with the variable, net returns from apple.

Family education was positively and significantly correlated with the net returns. The very nature of the family process generally goes interactive, collective and sharing. Education in a family becomes actional in collective terms since mutual learning is the very integral part of any family life process. Family education, thus, had got a role in increasing the managerial efficiency of the entrepreneurial family.

Table 1. Coefficients of correlation between the consequent variable, net returns and the twenty antecedent variables

Variables		Correlation coefficient
Age of respondent	(X ₁)	- 0.2461*
Family size	(X ₂)	- 0.2699**
Average family education	(X ₃)	0.4312**
Social interaction	(X ₄)	0.0519
Media exposure	(X ₅)	0.2870**
Knowledge level	(X ₆)	0.1513
Land holding size	(X ₇)	0.0684
Area under field crops	(X ₈)	- 0.3161**
Irrigation use index	(X ₉)	- 0.2113*
Cropping intensity	(X ₁₀)	- 0.2291*
Yield of major field crop	(X ₁₁)	- 0.2755**
Returns from other fruit enterprises	(X ₁₂)	0.1601
Worth of animal resource	(X ₁₃)	- 0.1326
Value of forest trees	(X ₁₄)	- 0.0505
Area under apple	(X ₁₅)	0.1576
Distance from home	(X ₁₆)	- 0.1562
Age of orchard	(X ₁₇)	0.1873
Cost of production	(X ₁₈)	0.2229*
Implements possession	(X ₁₉)	- 0.0627
Value of orchard shed	(X ₂₀)	- 0.1170

* Significant at 5 percent

** Significant at 1 percent

Media are the provider of information about the 'greater world', about how to make a livelihood: improved, diverse and effective. In an era of information booming media are the important vehicle to get the technologies right into the need of the grass-root people. Rightly here, the variable, media exposure had shown a significant correlation with the productivity.

respondents were selected randomly from the Chattarpur village of Rudrapur Block, Distt, Udham Singh nagar. The data on farmers' preferences on wall newspapers were collected through focus group discussion. A modified version of pretest ion method developed by modi(1991) was used to collect farmers' reactions.

Findings:

Maximum number of the respondents were of middle age (42.80%), low cast (45.71%), neo - literates(28.57%), small farmers (28.52%) and low income group (40.00%) had only farming as occupation and possessed television (88.57%) and know two languages (51.43%). Only 37.14. Percent of the respondents were subscribing to newspapers/ magazines/books. As regards preference of mass media, a majority of the respondents preferred TV(97.14%)followed by film (88.57%) and vewspapers/magazines/ books(57.14%).

Problems Faced:

The main problems faced by the villagers were categorized into personal, social and agricultural. Regarding personal problems, half of the respondents reported credit followed by price rise (40%) and unemployment (24.28%).

Among social problems, an overwhelming majority (97.14%)reported drainage in the village followed by lack of facilities in the veterinary hospital (42.86%) and village school (15.17%). Regarding agricultural problems, majority reported increase in input and labor cost (85.71%)followed by exploitations by commission agents (41.43%), as well as pests/diseases/ weeds (18.57%).

The farmer' preferences on content, format, treatment and related aspects of wall newspaper based on focus group discussion were ascertained.

Farmers' Preferences:

Majority of the participants expressed the need for village newspaper. Old participants preferred a simple and easy to handle wall newspaper.

The young and middle aged participants wanted information on agricultural problems, new agricultural implements, market prices of food grains, storage and processing of paddy and ways to reduce labor cost. They also preferred 24 point size for head line, 18 points for the texts / colored photographs, line drawing, illustrations of 20 cmx20cm size paper of 82.5x90cm and 'Hamara Gaon' as title of the paper. The participants preferred news items, news stories/ article (success stories) on progressive farmers, poems, jokes and cartoons. The consensus of the participants was that the newspaper should be displayed at various places viz: pinhead Office, Post Office, Cooperatives, School Honey-bee Training Center, Agricultural Store, Temple and Shop.

Farmers' reactions:

Almost all the respondents expressed that the wall newspaper was good looking. A vast majority (80.00%) found that the pictorial symbols are easy to decode. The content was easy to understand as reported by half of the respondents. Majority of the respondents perceived the method of presentation as good, information was complete and suggested the inclusion of news items on agriculture and animal husbandry and use of simple languages.

Conclusion:

On the basis of the results obtained from this study, it may be concluded that participatory approach towards message design can be used for designing wall newspaper. The responses of the groups of farms provided important clues to the feasibility of implementing the approach. Despite of a good communication infrastructure, the mass media did not cater the information needs of the farmers. Adequate local talents are available in the village to write and illustrate the wall newspaper.