



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### ANALYSIS OF SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF DAIRY FARMERS – PRACTICING ORGANIC AND NON-ORGANIC FARMING

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#### ABSTRACT

Sustainability is the end goal of organic farming and sustainability includes social, economical and ecological components and these characteristics play an important role in influencing the farmers to practice organic dairy farming. As their education level and awareness about the advantages of the organic farming will influence them for conversion in to organic dairy farming. Indians being small and medium farmers the labour intensive nature of the various dairying aspects makes impossible for the small to medium farmers to get remunerative prices. Though livestock forms an integral part in practicing organic agriculture they limit their production only upto organic agriculture and do not go for organic dairying due to highly perishable nature of milk and milk products. High capital requirement for starting the organic dairy farming and extremely low returns in the process of conversion from non organic to organic farming discourages farmers to take up organic dairy farming as majority of the farmers are middle class and cannot afford to start organic dairy farming.

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## INTRODUCTION

Sustainability is the end goal of organic farming and sustainability includes social, economical and ecological components, so social justice and social rights are integral part of organic farming. Indian dairy industry has been recognized as an important instrument to bring about socio-economic transformation and to strengthen India's rural economy as almost 75% of the Indian dairying is dealt by the rural people. In this study we have dealt in detail with the socio economic characteristics of rural people of which many are practicing organic farming and about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> have revert back to conventional farming due to the losses. None were practicing organic dairy farming but they have the sensitization about the organic farming.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present research study was conducted in Telangana State, Medak district was purposively selected for the study as it is having Deccan Development Society (DDS) an internationally known NGO, which is promoting organic farming. Three mandals were randomly selected for the study, from which four villages were selected randomly and from each village 10 farmers were again selected randomly, constituting total of 120 farmers. The data was collected through interviewing the respondents by using pre-structured interview schedule. Suitable statistical methods were used to analyse the data and interpret the results.

## RESULTS

**Age:** Majority of the dairy farmers in the study area were of middle age 36-50 years followed by young and old age groups. These results are in line with the findings of Kour *et al.*, (2014), Boz and Budak (2013), Malliga *et al.* (2012), Rathod *et al.* (2012), Singh and George (2012) and Rayanagoudar (2009).

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Table 1. Distribution of respondents

		n=120	
S.No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>			
1	Young age(<35)	30	25.00
2	Middle age (36-50)	72	60.00
3	Old age (>50)	18	15.00
<b>Education</b>			
1.	Illiterate	69	57.50
2.	Up to primary education	14	11.67
3.	Up to middle school	13	10.83
4.	Up to high school	16	13.33
5.	Intermediate	5	4.17
6.	Graduate	2	1.67
<b>Dairy Farming Experience</b>			
1.	1-20 years	82	68.34
2.	21-30 years	28	23.33
3.	>30 years	10	8.33
<b>Land Holding</b>			
1.	Marginal (<2.5acres)	41	34.10
2.	Small(2.5acres-5acres)	53	44.20
3.	Medium (5 acres-10 acres)	15	12.50
4.	Semi-medium (10 acres-25acres)	11	9.20
5.	Large (>25 acres)	0	0
<b>Herd Size</b>			
1.	Small	13	10.83
2.	Medium	89	74.17
3.	Large	18	15.00
<b>Dairy Animals</b>			
1.	Small (1-3 animals)	32	26.67
2.	Medium (4-6 animals)	53	44.16
3.	Large (>6 animals)	35	29.17
<b>Farming system:</b>			
1.	Dairy	2	1.67
2.	Crop+Dairy	67	55.83
3.	Crop+Dairy+Sheep/Goat	24	20.00
4.	Crop+Dairy+Sheep/Goat+Poultry	13	10.83
5.	Crop+Dairy+Poultry	12	10.00
6.	Crop+Dairy+Sheep/Goat+Horticulture+Poultry	2	1.67
<b>Family Income</b>			
1.	Low (<22736)	9	7.50
2.	Medium (22736-87546)	92	76.67
3.	High (>87546)	19	15.83
<b>Income Generation from Dairy enterprise</b>			
1.	Low (<8903)	8	6.67
2.	Medium (8903-37078)	93	77.50
3.	High (>37078)	19	15.83

**Education:** A perusal of Table 1 indicated that majority, 57.50 per cent of the dairy farmers were illiterates so the tasks of educating the farmers were undertaken by different non government organizations such as Deccan Development Society (awareness campaign), helping farmers get awareness and actively seek information on par with literate farmers for adoption of organic farming practices. Similar findings were observed by Rayanagoudar (2009), Verma *et al.* (2012), Sangkumchalianga and Huang (2012) from their study revealed that the respondents had lower level of education. On the contrary Kour *et al.* (2014) and Rathod *et al.* (2012) reported that majority were literates among farmers.

**Dairy farming experience:** The findings of Table 1 depicted that majority (68.34 per cent) of the respondents had experience of 1-20 years of dairy farming. The results drew the support from the findings of Khan *et al.* (2014), Jamaluddin (2013), Rajavi (2012) and Vidya *et al.* (2009) for dairy farming.

**Land holding:** From the results, it could be inferred that majority of respondents (78.30%) had possessed medium level land holding which is common in rural India, livestock farming is mostly dominated by marginal and small farmers who found

it as important source of livelihood. These observations are in line with findings of Kour *et al.* (2014), Jamaluddin (2013), Singh and George (2012).

**Herd size:** The results revealed that, majority (74.17%) had possessed medium sized herd, while 44.16 per cent possessed 4-6 number of dairy animals. This is because of its labor intensive in nature, inadequate feed resources, cost of veterinary aid and low income levels to maintain large herd size. Rathod *et al.* (2012), Rajavi (2012), Savitha (2009) found similar findings in their study. In contrary to these findings, Kour *et al.* (2014), Malliga *et al.* (2012), Vidya *et al.* (2009) reported that majority of the respondents had small herd size.

**Farming system:** The findings of Table 1 depicted that majority (98.33 %) of the respondents had integrated farming system i.e. crop enterprise mixed with dairy. These results were in line with the findings of Odhong *et al.* (2014), Subrahmanyeswari and Chander (2013), Ngxetwane (2011) and Savitha (2009).

**Family Income:** From the results, it could be inferred that, majority (76.67%) of the respondents had medium level family income (Rs. 22736 to Rs. 87546), while (77.50%) derived

**Table 2. Distribution of the dairy farmers in accordance with the exposure to sources of information**

		n=120			
S.No		Frequently F (%)	Occasionally F (%)	Rarely F (%)	Never F (%)
<b>I. INFORMAL SOURCES</b>					
1	Family members	44 (36.66)	48 (40.00)	14 (11.67)	14 (11.67)
2	Friends/Relatives/ Neighbors	40 (33.33)	57 (47.50)	22 (18.34)	1 (0.83)
3	Progressive farmers	19 (15.83)	66 (55.00)	22 (18.34)	13 (10.83)
4	Input dealers	1 (0.83)	17 (14.17)	23 (19.17)	79 (65.83)
<b>II. FORMAL SOURCES</b>					
5	Veterinary officials	20 (16.67)	33 (27.50)	52 (43.33)	15 (12.50)
6	Consultants (NGOs)	17 (14.17)	47 (39.16)	17 (14.17)	39 (32.50)
7	Scientists	1 (0.83)	6 (5.00)	10 (8.34)	103 (85.53)
8	Field visits/Tours	3 (2.50)	12 (10.00)	24 (20.00)	81 (67.50)
<b>III. MEDIA</b>					
9	News paper	13 (10.83)	16 (13.34)	18 (15.00)	73 (60.83)
10	Radio	4 (3.34)	48 (40.00)	39 (32.50)	29 (24.16)
11	TV	24 (20.00)	48 (40.00)	18 (15.00)	30 (25.00)
12	Farm literature	4 (3.34)	7 (5.83)	18 (15.00)	91 (75.83)
13	Internet	11 (9.17)	0	0	109 (90.83)

**Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to Innovativeness and Risk Orientation**

		n=120	
S.No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	24	20.00
2.	Medium	66	55.00
3.	High	30	25.00
<b>Risk Orientation</b>			
1.	Low	32	26.67
2.	Medium	56	46.66
3.	High	32	26.67

medium level income of Rs.8903 to Rs. 37078 from dairy enterprises. The results of the present investigation correspond with that of Khan *et al.* (2014), Boz and Budak (2013), Khuman *et al.* (2013), Rathod *et al.* (2012). This may be due to their integrated farming system and dairy enterprise being potential and sustainable contributor towards family income. Informal sources were contacted more due to readiness and easiness in contacting them for any information. The progressive farmers are considered as flag bearers of scientific information and role models for emulating. The findings are similar to studies of Kumar (2013), Verma *et al.* (2012). Among the formal source NGO's were occasionally contacted and obtained their support to carry out all the farming practices from input support to market availability to their products. Comparatively veterinary officials were less contacted as veterinary dispensaries or hospitals were not available at their villages. These finding are in consonance with the finding of Dubey *et al.* (2012). From among the different mass media sources television was being major source of entertainment and source of farm information similarly the radio was provided by the Deccan Development Society (DDS) and broadcasted farm related information which was also used as information source to some extent. These present finding was in concurrence with the studies of Verma *et al.* (2012), Kumar (2013), Dudi (2012).

**Innovativeness:** The results from the Table 3 revealed that majority (55.00%) of the dairy farmers had medium level of innovativeness followed by high (25.00%) and low levels (20.00%). The dairy farmers were with medium level of innovativeness as organic farming is age old practice which is an innovative practice for young farmers. Similar findings were observed by Lawrence and Ganguli (2012), Rathod *et al.* (2012), Vidya *et al.* (2009), Satyanarayana (2008), Subrahmanyeswari (2007).

**Risk orientation:** Results of Table 3, inferred that 46.66 per cent of the respondents were categorized under medium level of risk orientation as compared to 26.67 per cent in low and high levels of risk orientation. This indicated that the respondents in the study area were cautious in their approach for taking risks in the adoption of any new practices due to their low economic capability to invest in new practices. The results drew the support from the findings of Lawrence and Ganguli (2012), Satyanarayana (2008), Savitha (2009).

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of this investigation, the personal, socio-economic and psychological characteristics of dairy farmers

can be concluded that majority of the respondents of the study area belonged to middle age (60.00%), illiterates (57.50%), (68.34%) had dairy farming experience of 1-20 years, (78.30%) possessed small to marginal land holding, (74.17%) had medium herd size; (70.83%) possessed 1-6 dairy animals. Majority (98.33%) integrated their farming system, (77.50%) had possessed medium income of Rs. 22736-87546, Amongst sources of information, informal sources (40.00%), (47.50%) and (55.00%) like family, friends/relatives/neighbours and progressive farmers were mostly contacted, among formal sources NGO's (45.00%) were contacted followed by veterinary officials (27.50%), among media television (40.00%) was mostly seen by the respondents, (55.00%) had medium level of innovativeness, (46.66%) had medium level of risk orientation.

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