Original Research Article

A Study on Personal, Socioeconomic, Communicational, and Psychological Characteristics of Vegetable Growers in Amaravati Division of Maharashtra

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to scrutinize the socio-economic profile of vegetable growers in the Amaravati division of Maharashtra State. The study was carried out in 10 villages located ~~at~~inthe Akola and Amravati districts of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state with a sample size of 120 respondents.An exploratory research design was used for conducting the study. ~~Majority~~ The majority of the vegetable growers belong to middle age grouphaving medium family size with annual income ~~up to~~ between Rs. 2,00,001 to 3,00,000/- and with ~~semi-medium~~semi-medium category of land holding having above 20 years of experience in vegetable cultivation with medium category of social participation, source of information and risk orientation.

~~**Key words**~~**Keywords:**Socio-economic, Psychological, Communicational Vegetables, Vegetable growers

INTRODUCTION

Vegetables play a pivotal role in Indian agriculture by providing food, nutritional and economic security to the people of India with higher returns per unit area to the producers. In addition, vegetable crops have higher productivity and shorter maturity cycle, which leads to higher returns per unit area and time. Worldwide, India holds the second position by contributing 15.70 and 14.50% to global vegetable area and production, respectively. ~~In our country~~ Throughout the country, vegetable production is threatened by fragmentationof land, climate change, decreasing natural resourcesand uneven growth ~~across the country~~.

Vegetables are one of the cheapest sources of natural protective food, contributing carbohydrates, vitamins and mineral in human diet. Vegetable consumption provides taste, increase appetite, palatability and provides necessary fibre, essential for proper functioning of digestive system.

As per Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR,2021) recommendations for a balanced diet, an adult need about 231 grams~~(g)~~ of vegetables per day. Present per capita consumption of vegetables in ~~our~~ the country is around 145gr (Thamburaj and Singh, 2005).

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According to the second advance estimate of horticulture production released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, GOI (MoAFW, 2021) the production of vegetables is estimated to be 196.27 million tonnes in 2020-21, up by 4.42 percent as compared to 188.28 million tonnes in 2019-20.

In era of shrinking land holding, and more pressure per unit area of land, cultivation of fruit and vegetable has emerged as profitable venture. Cultivation of vegetable not only provide nutritional security; it also provides a substantial employment to rural people as well as open the door for export. Thus, plays an active role in increasing the livelihood condition of poor rural folks.

~~The present study was conducted with aim~~ This study is caried out to ~~characterize~~ explore the socio-economic ~~characters~~ characteristics of vegetable's farmers ~~growers~~ in Amaravati Division of Maharashtra, to provide valuable information to the academicians, planners, policy makers and extension workers.

METHODOLOGY

An exploratory design of social research was used ~~for present study~~to assess the collected data. Maharashtra state comprises of six revenue divisions out of which Nagpur and Amravati together popularly known as Vidarbha region. Vidarbha region comprises of eleven districts out of which Amaravati division i.e. Akola and Amravati districts from Vidarbha region were selected for the present study.Two talukas namely, Patur taluka of Akola district and Achalpur taluka of Amravati district were purposively selected for the study as these talukas were having high area under vegetable cultivation than other talukas of these selected districts. In Patur and Achalpur talukas, 5 villages from each taluka were selected purposively based on high area under vegetable cultivation. Comprising total sample of 10 villages for the present study. A list of vegetable growers having minimum area of 0.20 ha under vegetable cultivation was obtained from Taluka Agriculture Office of selected talukas. Thus, from selected two talukas and selected 10 villages, 120 respondents were selected i.e. 12 respondents from each village were selected randomly and they were considered as sample respondents in the present study.The basic instrument used for study was interview schedule. The data was collected by personal interview~~,so as~~ to get valid and complete responses. Keeping the objective of the study in view an interview schedule was developed, pre-tested and was personally administered.

The collected data were carefully examined for completeness and correctness before tabulation. Both qualitative and quantitative classes were formed. In case of some variables,

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the classes were formed arbitrarily while in case of some variables accepted standard classification was adopted and for remaining others, the mean and standard deviation were considered. The data was then tabulated and the frequencies and percentages of the vegetable growers in each category were worked out.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Age

Persualof Table.1 shows that, nearly half of the respondents (48.33%) were under middle age category, followed by young age category (23.33%) and old age category (28.34%), respectively. The middle age farmers are comparatively having free hand in financial affairs and they can take up an independent decision to implement their ideas. Farmers of middle age are usually enthusiastic and have moderate experience in farming and more working efficiency than older and younger growers. They also possess more physical vigour and have more family responsibilities than younger ones. The results were in line with the finding of Andhari and Sonawane (2010) and Chate Seema (2018) who reported that majority of the respondents were middle age category.

Education

Education has a significant influence in better and quicker understanding of information, and shorter innovation-decision period. Higher education showed better comprehension of advisories as well as faster sharing of the received information to fellow farmers than less qualified farmers(Gowda and Dixit,2015).nearly maximum number of the respondents had higher secondary school education (40.00%), while (19.17%) of the respondents had secondary school education, followed by (15.83%) of the respondents were educated up to middle school. The other respondents were educated up to graduation (11.67%), followed by (07.50%) and (04.17%) were educated up to primary school and post-graduation, respectively, remaining (01.66%) were found as illiterate. Thus, it is concluded that majority, of the respondents were educated up to higher secondary school (Table 1). The results were in line with the finding of Ovhar (2012) and Bare Anitha (2017).

Family size

It was observed that, nearly half (47.50%) of the vegetable growers were having medium family size (5-6 members), followed by (29.16%) of the vegetable growers were having big/large family size (above 6 members) and only (23.24%) of the vegetable growers were having small family size (up to 4 members). Thus, it is concluded that majority of the

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vegetable growers were having medium family size (Table 1).These findings were found to be similar with Kiranmayi (2013) and Rawal Jyoti (2017)

Table.1 Distribution of the vegetable growers according to their Socio – Personal characters (N=120)

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Young (Up to 35 yrs.)	28	23.33
Middle (36 yrs. to 50yrs.)	58	48.33
Old (above 50 yrs.)	34	28.34
Education		
Illiterate 02	01.66	
Primary school	09	07.50
Middle school19	15.83	
Secondary school	23	19.17
Higher secondary school/Junior college	48	40.00
Under graduate degree	14	11.67
Post graduate degree	05	04.17
Family size (members)		
Small (up to 4)	28	23.24
Medium (5-6) 57	47.50	
Big/ Large (above 6)	35	29.16
Annual income (Rs)		
Up to 1,00,000/-	14	11.67
1,00,001 – 2,00,000/-	19	15.83
2,00,001 – 3,00,000/-	36	30.00
3,00,001 – 4,00,000/-	33	27.50
Above 4,00,000/-	18	15.00
Land holding (ha)		
Marginal (Up to 1.00)	09	07.50
Small (1.01 to 2.00)	38	31.67
Semi-medium (2.01 to 4.00)	55	45.83
Medium (4.01 to 10.00)	13	10.83
Big (above 10.00)	05	04.17

Area under vegetables (ha)		
Up to 0.80	43	35.83
0.81 to 1.60	56	46.67
Above 1.60	21	17.50
Experience in vegetable cultivation (Years)		
Up to 10 Years	05	04.17
11 to 20 Years	37	30.83
Above 20 Years	78	65.00

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Annual Income

It refers to the total income in year of all the family members of the respondents from all the sources. Annual income of the family helps to project the overall economic position and is indication of economic stability.From Table.1 It was revealed that, majority of the respondents (30.00%) had annualincome (Rs.2,00,001/- to Rs.3,00,000/-), while (27.50%) had annual income (Rs. 3,00,001/- to Rs. 4,00,000/-), followed by (15.83%) of the respondent had annual income (Rs. 1,00,001/- to Rs.2,00,000/-), (15.00%) had annual income (above4,00,00/-), and only (11.83%) had annual income (above Rs. 1,00,000/-). Thus, it is concluded that majority (30.00%) of the respondents belongs to annual income category (Rs.2,00,001 to 3,00,000). This is due to the semi medium land holding possessed by the vegetable growers and practicing of subsidiary occupations by the respondents.These findings were in line with the findings of Shashidhara (2006) and Yewatkar (2018).

Land holding

The hectare of land possessed by an individual might influence on adoption of innovation and also determine the decision-making ability and risk-taking ability. From the table 1, it was observed that, (45.83%) of the vegetable growers possessed semi-medium category of land holding (2.01 to 4.00 ha), while (31.67%) were belonged to small land holding (1.01 to 2.00 ha), followed by (10.83%) of the vegetable growers belonged to the medium category (4.01 to 10.00 ha), (07.50%) had marginal land holding (up to 1.00 ha) and only (04.17%) of the vegetable growers falls under big category with land holding (above 10.00 ha.) Thus, it was concluded that, majority of the vegetable growers were found in semi-medium and small land holding category. The reason for possession of higher per cent of semi medium land holding could be due to fragmentation of land because of separation of families. Small land holding needs subsidiary occupation for their better living, since

uncertainty and risk are there in farming. In order to sustain the losses occurred to the small and medium farmers due to vagaries of nature. These findings were in agreement with Mate (2006) and Pawar (2014).

Area under vegetables

Form the table 1, it was observed that, nearly half (46.67%) of the vegetable growers had (0.81 to 1.60 ha) area under vegetables. Followed by (35.83%) of the vegetable growers had (up to 0.80ha) area under vegetables. Whereas, (17.50%) of the vegetable growers had (above 1.60 ha) of area under vegetables. Thus, it may say that higher per cent of the vegetable growers (46.67%) had put area under vegetables (0.81 to 1.60 ha). Similar types of findings were observed by Maghade (2007) and Pawar (2014).

Experience in vegetable cultivation

Experience in vegetable cultivation was the number of years an individual vegetable grower has been practicing the vegetable cultivation. From table 9, it was observed that, nearly two-third (65.00%) of the respondents were having above 20 years of experience in vegetable cultivation, followed by (30.83%) of the respondents were having 10 to 20 years of experience and only a meagre (04.17%) part of respondents were having up to 10 years of experience in vegetable. Thus, it was concluded that majority of the vegetable growers were having more than 20 years of experience. These findings were in line with the findings of Tekale (2015) and Bare Anita (2017).

Table.2: Distribution of the respondents according to their social participation (N=120)

S. No	Social participation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	18	15.00
2	Medium	67	55.83
3	High	35	29.17
		Mean=4.36	**SD=2.57**

From table 2, it was revealed that, more than half (55.83%) of the respondents were belonged to the medium category of social participation, followed by (29.17%) of the respondents were belonged to the high category of social participation, whereas, only (15.00%) of the respondents belonged to the low category of social participation. Thus, it was concluded that, majority of the respondents belonged to the medium category of social participation. Because, the knowledge level of the respondents will increase with the ~~day to day~~day-to-day happening in the social system. The findings were in line with the studies of Anitha (2004) and Bansod (2016).

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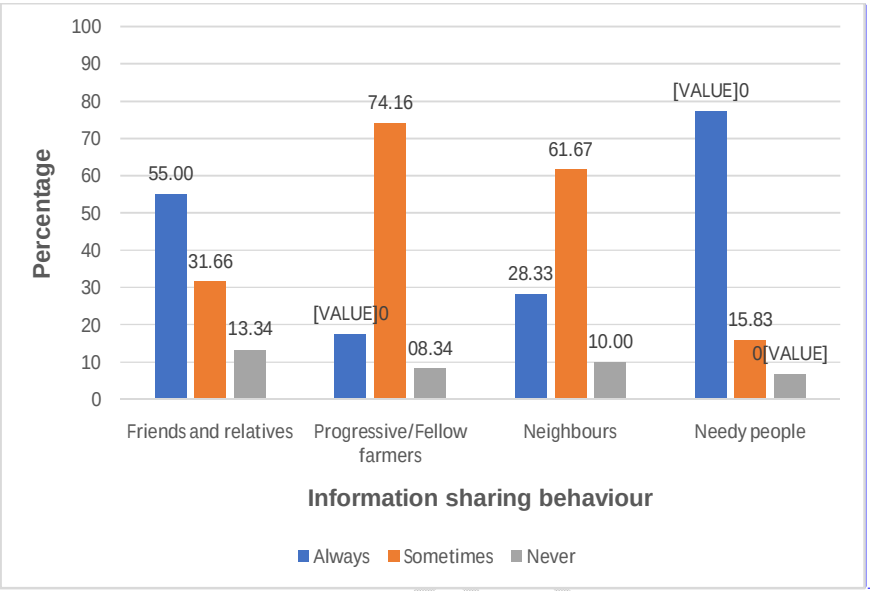
Fig.1: Distribution of the respondents according to their ~~information sharing~~information-sharingbehaviour (N=120)



It could be inferred from the figure 1 that, majority of the vegetable growers (77.50 %) ~~Always~~ always share information with a needy person, followed by friends and relatives (55.00 %), ~~neighbours~~ neighbors(28.33%), and ~~with~~ progressive/ fellow farmers (17.50%). Further (74.16%) of vegetable growers share information sometimes with progressive/ fellow farmers, whereas, (61.67%) with ~~neighbours~~neighbors, followed by (31.66%) with friends and relatives and (15.83%) with needy people.Later (13.34%) of vegetable growers never share information with friends and relatives, followed by (10.00%) and (08.34%) with ~~neighbours~~ neighborsand progressive/ fellow farmers, respectively and only (06.67%) with needy people. The pattern of information sharing behaviour of vegetable growers revealed that, they basically rely on friends and relatives for information. Information was circulated through the informal network in the villages.These findings were found to be similar ~~with~~ tothe findings of Sidhu *et al.* (2010) and Rawal Jyoti (2017).

Table.3 Distribution of the respondents according to their overall source of information (N=120)

Sl. No.	Source of information	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	28	23.33

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2	Medium	68	56.67
3	High	24	20.00
Mean=21.17		**SD=5.52**	

It was observed from ~~the~~ table 3 that, the majority of the respondents (56.67%) were using medium sources of information, followed by (23.33%) of the respondents used the low level ~~of~~ sources of information, remaining (20.00%) respondents were using a high number of sources of information. Therefore, it was concluded that most of the vegetable growers were using medium information sources for getting information about vegetable cultivation. These findings were supported by Khare (2013) and Chate Seema (2018).

Table ~~,~~4, Distribution of the vegetable growers according to their psychological characters (N=120)

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	S.D*
Innovativeness				
Low	12	10.00	14.15	1.80
Medium	77	64.17		
High	31	25.83		
Risk orientation				
Low (Up to 9.14)	15	12.50	12.26	3.12
Medium (9.15 to 15.38)	87	72.50		
High (Above 15.38)	18	15.00		

*SD = Standard Deviation

Innovativeness

It indicates the willingness of an individual to know about new things, ideas and new practices related to vegetable cultivation and ~~up~~ to what extent he is going to apply this thing in his vegetable cultivation. From table 4, it was concluded that~~,~~the majority (64.17%) of the respondents belongs to the medium innovativeness category, however, each of the (25.83%) and (10.00%) of the respondents belonged to the high and low innovativeness ~~category~~categories, respectively. The medium innovativeness of the respondents might be due to their middle age which must have restricted them to try out new things. ~~Majority~~ The majorityof the vegetable growers belonged to the semi-medium ~~land holding~~land-holding category, and their level of education was only up to higher secondary school. All these

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factors might have contributed ~~for~~ totheir medium level of innovativeness. The results were in accordance with the findings Wankhade*et al*. (2013) and Wadekar (2016).

Risk orientation

In general, farmers are always facing risk and uncertainty in adopting new ideas. Risk orientation decides an individual's innovativeness and ~~influence~~ influences~~positively~~ positiveon ~~the~~ entrepreneurial ~~behaviour~~behavior. The successful vegetable growers are one who readily accepts to face ~~the~~ risk and play with nature. It was revealed ~~from~~ in~~the~~ table 4 that, the majority (72.50%) of the respondents had a medium category of risk orientation. Whereas, (15.00%) of the respondents had a high category of risk orientation and only (12.50%) had a low category of risk orientation. The ~~risk bearing~~risk-bearing capacity of individuals depends upon ~~the~~ theirpersonal, psychological, and socio-economic characteristics.The results were in accordance with Nagesh (2006), Bennur (2011), Jha (2012), Thakare (2013), and PotsangbamRajina (2017).

CONCLUSION

The salient findings of the present study were summarized in succeeding paragraph. Nearly half of the respondents belonged to the middle age group. ~~Majority~~ The majorityof the respondents were educated up to the higher secondary school category. Nearly half of the respondents were having medium family ~~size~~sizes. More than half of the respondents had annual income up to Rs.4,00,000/-Most of the brinjal growers possessed semi medium category of land holding (2.01 to 4.00 ha). More than half of the vegetable growers had 0.81 to 1.60 ha area under vegetables. Nearly three fourth of the respondents had above 20 years of experience in vegetable cultivation. Most of the respondents belonged to the medium category of social participation. Nearly three fourth of the respondents always share information with needy people. ~~Majority~~ The majorityof the respondents were having a medium source of information. More than half of the respondents were having a medium level of Innovativeness. Nearly three fourth of the respondents had a medium category of risk orientation.

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