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A Study on Awareness Level of The Farmers on Organic Farming

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Abstract

In the present scenario, organic farming has become an alternative and attractive activity among the farmers. It is due to profitability, environmental protection, health consciousness etc. Accordingly, it is found that products like paddy, banana, turmeric, sugarcane, groundnut, vegetables, fruits, etc., are important organic products in the study area. These products are cultivated by the organic farmers with aim of increase their standard of living. But, in practice still organic farmers are in struggling stage. It is hope that living standard of the organic farmers and numbers of farmers are growing organic products may be increased by the way of increasing the awareness level of the organic farmers regarding organic cultivation in all aspects. By keeping this, the present study deals with the awareness level of the farmers on organic farming in Erode District of Tamil Nadu. The findings also indicated that the most of the sample organic farmers having low level of awareness on organic farming.

Keywords: Awareness, Farmers, Organic farming

INTRODUCTION

In agriculture, Organic farming is recent trend. But, in India organic farming method is not new and very long back our ancients were practiced this organic method of agriculture. Organic method of agriculture is a expeditious growing economic sector and makes an important contribution to the health of human, economic health soil health and planet health. Organic farming is somewhat differ from chemical based farming. Simply, organic agriculture is the method of cultivation of crops and rearing of livestock in natural ways. Organic farming is things required for cultivation are raised and generated within the land not from outside. In organic farming process, land formation procedure, soil suitability, organic manure preparation, organic pesticide preparation, ingredients used for organic manure and pesticide, crop rotation, intercrop, harvesting process, etc., are included.

Farmers are facing difficulties not only in production aspects but also in marketing aspects too. In marketing organic products, certification for marketing products, available marketing channels, market potentials etc., are the main marketing problems. The farmers those who are having good awareness level in the above stated aspects, they are successful in their farming activities. So, it is assumed that there would be an relationship between the awareness level of farmers on organic farming and effective organic farming.

All organic farmers might have awareness about the organic farming but, there may be variation about the awareness due to various factors like their Age, Educational status, Marital status, Occupational status, Nature of the family, Family members involved in agriculture, Organic farming experience, Land used for organic farming, Crop cultivated and Annual family income. Against this

background, this paper is a modest attempt to identify the awareness level of the farmers on organic farming.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chifumi Takagi and MurarisuvediF[1] (2011) made a study on awareness of organic vegetable production practices with primary data and data were collected from 627 household vegetable farmers and 210 farmers by using systematic random sampling method. Chi-square test, co-efficient and ratio analysis were used for analysis. It is found that that an educational level and distance between the respondent's houses and farm were associated with increasing farmers' awareness of bio-pesticide and there was no relationship between farmers' education level and awareness on compost.

Jaganathan et al.[2] (2012) conducted a study to identify the knowledge level of on organic farming of organic and inorganic farmers with primary data and data were gathered from 120 organic farmers and 120 inorganic farmers. Percentage, mean and standard deviation were used for data analysis. It is found that organic farmers had better knowledge than inorganic farmers.

Lalita Siriwattananon et al.[3] (2014) made a study to identify the awareness on organic farming practices with first hand data and data were gathered from 43 farmers. It is concluded that farmers wanted to decrease chemicals application in the farming land. To increase the organic agriculture practice and its economics, it is impartment to increase the required knowledge of farmers and farming technologies.

Iyagba and Amesi [4] (2016) made a study on agricultural science undergraduate students' awareness level on organic farming. Primary data were used and data were collected from 150 undergraduate students of agricultural science through structural questionnaires. It is concluded that there are several benefits of organic farming. Although there is high awareness of organic farming which is practiced seldomly but an inadequate knowledge of it especially on certified organic farming among undergraduate students studying agriculture in this part of the country will cause a slow rate its adoption.

Farouque and Sarker[5] (2018) made a study to measure the farmers' knowledge and practice of organic cultivation with first hand data. The data were gathered from 400 sample farmers by the way of structured interview schedule. Percentage, mean and standard deviation were used for analysis. It is

[1] Chifumi Takagi and Murari Suvedi, (2011), "Awareness of Organic Vegetable Production Practices in West Java and Bali, Indonesia*", International Journal of Environmental and Rural Development*, Vol.2-1, pp.100-107.

[2] Jaganathan, D., Ram Bahal, Roy Burman, R. and Lenin, V., (2012), "Knowledge Level of Farmers on Organic Farming in Tamil Nadu", *Indian Research Journal of Extension Education*,Vol.12 (3), pp.70-73.

[3] Lalita Siriwattananon, Kumiko Kawabe and Machito Mihara, (2014), "Assessment on Local Awareness of Organic Farming Practices in Kampong Cham of Cambodia", *International Journal of Environmental and Rural Development* ,Vol. 5-1, pp.38-44.

[4] Iyagba, A. G. and Amesi, K., (2016), "Awareness and Practice of Organic Farming among Agricultural Science Undergraduate Students in Rivers State, Nigeria", *International Journal of Agriculture Innovations and Research,* Vol. 5, Issue 3, pp.403-409.

[5] Farouque, M. G. and Sarker, M. A., (2018), "Farmers' knowledge and practice of organic vegetable cultivation: A field level study of two villages from Bangladesh", *Journal of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development*, Vol.10(5), pp. 99-107.

concluded that the conversion to organic farming of Bangladeshi farmers seems to be slow because of farmers' poor knowledge about the organic farming.

Fatemeh AskariBozayeh et al.[1] (2021) made a study to examine the awareness of farmers who cultivated organic paddy. Primary data were used in this study and data were gathered from 211 farmers. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and multiple regression were used for analysis. It is found that 84.8 percentage of the sample respondents were moderate and good level of knowledge on organic farming, which indicates the positive tendency of the statistical community to obtain the needed information.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To measure the farmers' awareness level about the organic farming
2. To offer suggestions to improve awareness level of the farmers about the organic farming

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

H_o : There is no significant relationship between the personal factors (Age, Educational status, Marital status, Occupational status, Nature of the family, Number of family members involved in agriculture, Organic farming experience, Land under organic farming, Crop cultivated, Annual family income) of the sample farmers and their awareness level about organic farming.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is an empirical study based on survey method. As the areas of operation are wide, a pilot study was conducted as a prelude to understand the magnitude of the awareness level of the farmers. A detailed Questionnaire was prepared to collect the primary data. Convenience sampling technique has been adopted for collection of primary data. Required date have been collected from the selected 276 sample farmers. Such collected data have been analysed with the help of various statistical tools like Percentage Analysis, chi-square test and Multiple Regression Analysis.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Level of Awareness

To measure the level of awareness, 28 statements have been given in Questionnaire. Farmers' level of awareness has been measured with Rensis Likert's Five Point Scale. On the basis of quantification procedure, it is found that (57.6%) sample farmers are having low level awareness about the organic farming. Details of the findings are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 DISTRIBUTION OF THE FARMERS BY AWARENESS SCORE

Awareness Level	No. of Farmers (%)	Total Score	Mean Score	S. D.
Low	159 (57.6)	11875	74.69	5.40

[1] Fatemeh AskariBozayeh, Mohammad Sadegh Allahyari, Fatollah Keshavarz and Maryam Armand, (2021), "Paddy rice farmers awareness towards organic farming in Langrud Country", *Agricultural Extension and Education Research*, Vol 14, issue 1, number 53, pp.35-48

High	117 (42.4)	11570	98.89	14.09
Total	276 (100)	23445	84.95	15.62

AWARENESS LEVEL OF THE FARMERS ABOUT THE ORGANIC FARMING: CHI SQUARE TEST

Farmers' awareness level has been examined by framing a null hypothesis and the same has been tested with chi square at 5% level of significance. Details of the findings are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2 PERSONAL FACTORS OF THE ORGANIC FARMERS AND THEIR AWARENESS LEVEL : " χ^2 TEST"

S.No.	Personal Factors	Df	TV	CV	"C"
1	Age	2	5.991	2.254*	--
2	Educational Status	4	9.488	11.434	0.199
3	Marital Status	1	3.841	7.352	0.161
4	Occupational Status	2	5.991	29.228	0.309
5	Nature of the Family	1	3.841	5.298	0.137
6	Number of Family Members involved in Agriculture	2	5.991	0.999*	--
7	Organic Farming Experience	2	5.991	13.365	0.215
8	Land under Organic Farming	2	5.991	15.448	0.230
9	Crop Cultivated	3	7.815	17.245	0.243
10	Annual Family Income	2	5.991	13.094	0.213

"Note: * = Insignificant @5% Level TV-Table Value CV-Calculated Value
C-Contingency co-efficient"

Table 2 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the awareness level of the farmers about the organic farming and personal factors like Age and Number of family member involved in agriculture. Whereas, there is a significant relationship between Educational status, Marital status, Occupational status, Nature of family, organic farming experience, Land under organic farming, Crop cultivated under organic farming, Annual family income and awareness level.

The value of "C" shows that there is less degree of relationship between the personal factors and awareness level.

AWARENESS LEVEL OF THE FARMERS ABOUT THE ORGANIC FARMING: MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Multiple Regression analysis has been applied with ten independent variables to ascertain the influence of the different set of independent variables on awareness. The regressions are estimated using cross-section data of 276 sample farmers. Awareness score has been taken as dependent variable and socio-economic characteristics as independent variables. Details of the findings are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3 AWARENESS SCORE AND PERSONAL FACTORS: "MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS"

Personal factors	Co-efficient "Unstandardized"		Co-efficient "Standardized"	"t"	"Sig."
	"B"	"Std. Error"	"Beta"		
(Constant)	72.707	9.651		7.533*	0.000
Age	0.264	0.101	0.190	2.623*	0.009
Educational Status	2.127	1.411	0.124	1.507	0.133
Marital Status	-3.933	3.782	-0.067	-1.040	0.299
Occupational Status	0.487	1.586	0.025	0.307	0.759
Nature of Family	-3.057	1.896	-0.098	-1.612	0.108
Number of family members involved in agriculture	0.090	1.890	0.003	0.048	0.962
Organic farming experience	-3.008	1.638	-0.135	-1.836	0.067
Land under organic farming	0.304	0.916	0.021	0.331	0.741
Crop cultivated	0.435	2.467	0.015	0.176	0.860
Annual family income	5.095	2.251	0.184	2.263*	0.024
R	0.652				
R^2	0.527				
F	3.183				

" Dependent Variable: Total Awareness Score

Note: * = Significant at 1% Level; ** = Significant at 5% Level

Theoretical value of 't' at 1% 2.583, 5% 1.964 and Theoretical value of 'F' at 1% 2.2119".

Table 3 highlights that the regression co-efficient of 10 personal factors are 2.623, 1.507,-1.040, 0.307, -1.612, 0.048, -1.836, 0.331, 0.176 and 2.263 respectively. Further, it is identified that variables like Age and Annual family income are positive significant. The R^2 illustrates that 52.7% of the variations are identified. The value of 'F' shows that the regression model fitted is statistically significant at 1% level.

RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTION

On the basis of the findings of the present study, the following viable suggestion is offered for the betterment of awareness in organic farming.

In the present study, it is found that 57.6% of the sample farmers are having low level awareness about the organic farming. Hence, it is suggested that Government of India, Government of Tamil Nadu, Agricultural department and Agriculture Research department should take all possible steps to propagate the all the aspects of organic farming to the farmers along with its importance through television, newspaper, agriculture related websites and social medias like twitter, whatsapp, facebook etc. It will improve the organic farmers' awareness about the organic farming.

CONCLUSION

By realizing the significance organic farming, an attempt has been made to identify the level of awareness of the farmers about the organic farming. On the basis of the findings, a viable suggestion

has been offered for the purpose of increase the level of awareness of the farmers about the organic farming.

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