

Socio-Economic Profile of Maldhari Dairy Farmers of South Saurashtra Region

S.J. VEKARIYA¹, RAJESH KUMAR*², H.H. SAVSANI³, C.R. KOTADIYA⁴,
G.M. CHAUDHARI⁵ and B.B. CHATRABHUJI⁶

¹Department of Vet. Extension, Veterinary College, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh - 362001, India.

²Department of Vet. Extension, Veterinary College, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh - 62001, India.

³Department of Vet. Extension, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh - 362001, India.

⁴Pharmacology Department, Veterinary College, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh - 362001, India.

⁵Department of Vet. Extension, Veterinary College, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh - 362001, India.

⁶Animal Nutrition, Veterinary College, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh - 362001, India.

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ABSTRACT

Dairy farming plays an important role in social and economic livelihood of the Maldhari dairy farmers. The present study was conducted in Junagadh and Gir Somnath districts of Saurashtra region. Two talukas were randomly selected from each district. Three villages were selected from each talukas and from each village 10 respondents who possess minimum five dairy animals were selected randomly. The data were collected with the help of predesigned interview schedule by personal interview. The collected data were analyzed by using simple statistical methods like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient. The results indicate that majority (70.83 %) of the Maldhari dairy farmers belonged to middle age group, 40.83 per cent of them educated up to secondary level and 78.33 per cent from them belonged to OBC category, majority (59.17 %) of Maldhari dairy farmers had medium annual income, 47.50 per cent of Maldhari dairy farmers had large size of family and 70.83 per cent of them belonged to joint family, majority (54.17 per cent) of Maldhari dairy farmers had animal husbandry plus agriculture as main occupation. The socio-economic parameters viz. extension participation among Maldhari farmers was of medium level, they had medium level of experience in animal husbandry activities, used medium level of sources of information and had small herd size of animals.

Keywords: Maldhari dairy farmers, income, occupation, sources of information, herd size

INTRODUCTION

Dairy farming plays a pivotal role in the economy of our country. It helps in augmenting food supply, generating employment and raising nutritional level. Indian dairy represents one of the largest and fastest growing sectors. Dairy enterprise is a solution

to many problems of agricultural, besides being an effective tool to improve socio-economic condition of rural income to farmer.

In Gujarat livestock rearing is predominantly done by Maldhari community. The term "Maldhari" is derived from the Gujarati word 'mal' means

livestock and 'dhari' means guardian. Maldharis are economically backward community. Maldharis derive their livelihood mainly from livestock rearing. The sale of milk and milk products has been always the mainstay of their economy. Inadequate knowledge of modern dairy practices and marketing facilities deteriorates the socio-economic conditions of the Maldharis. The recent advances in animal husbandry have demonstrated that scientific knowledge and their adoption have great potential for maximization of milk productivity. The best option to increase livestock productivity is through adoption of improved technologies and efficient use of available resources¹. Many socio-economic study revealed that socio-economic parameters viz. education, caste, land holding and subsidiary occupation are playing great role in development of animal husbandry. The systematic approach of study might help in understanding their social parameters and subsequently formulating policy and programmes for their development.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Two districts of south Saurashtra region of Gujarat state (Junagadh and Gir somnath) were purposively selected for the study. From each district two taluks were selected and from each taluk three villages were selected for the study purpose. From each village ten Maldhari dairy farmers who possess more than 5 milch animals were selected randomly. Thus, total 120 Maldhari dairy farmers were selected. Personal and socio-economic characteristics of Maldhari dairy farmers were studied using semi-structured schedule which was prepared by consultations with extension experts following personal interview technique. The collected data were compiled, tabulated and analyzed to interpret the results. The descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage and range were used for the investigation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Personal and economic characteristics of Maldhari dairy farmers

Age group of maldhari farmers revealed that majority (70.83 %) of them belonged to middle age group followed by old age and 14.17 per cent were from young age group². Educational status

revealed that 40.83, 23.33, 20.00 and 5.00 per cent of the Maldhari dairy farmers were educated up to secondary, higher secondary, primary and graduate level respectively. The probable reason for this might be that majority of cattle owners were from middle and old age group³. As evident from the data in Table-1 that 78.33 per cent of the Maldhari dairy farmers were from OBC, followed by 21.67 per cent were from ST category⁴.

Economic status revealed that three-fifth (59.17 %) of the Maldhari dairy farmers belonged to medium level of annual income group, whereas slightly more than one-fourth (25.83 %) had low level of income (<100000 Rupees) and only 15.00 per cent of family had high level of income (>200000 Rupees)⁵.

Family size indicated that majority (47.50%) of the Maldhari dairy farmers belonged to the large sized families i.e. above 7 members, while 37.50 per cent of them belonged to medium sized families having 5 to 7 members and only 15.00 per cent of the Maldhari dairy farmers belonged to small sized families having up to 4 members. Majority (70.83 %) of the Maldhari dairy farmers belonged to the joint families and only 29.17 per cent of them belonged to nuclear families⁶.

It was concluded from Table-1 that more than half (54.17 %) of Maldhari dairy farmers had animal husbandry as major occupation along with agriculture followed by 45.00 per cent of Maldhari dairy farmers were performing only animal husbandry occupation while only 0.83 per cent had occupation as animal husbandry along with agriculture and other services. Table 1 also indicated that more than half (53.34 %) of the Maldhari dairy farmers had medium level of participation in extension activity followed by 33.33 per cent and 13.33 per cent as low and high participation in extension activity, respectively [7] who stated that majority (85.50 %) of the respondents were found to be dependent on farming and animal husbandry. It is apparent from the data of table-1 that 32.50 per cent of the respondents were landless followed by 29.17 per cent of Maldhari dairy farmers were found with marginal land holding i.e. up to 1.00 hectare, 18.33 per cent with small land holding i.e. 1.01 to 2.00 hectare, 08.33 per cent with medium size of land holding i.e. 2.01 to 3.00 hectare and

Table 1: personal and socio-economic characteristic of maldhari dairy farmers

Sr. No.	Personal Characteristics N=120	Frequency	Percentage
1	Age		
	Young age (less than 35 years)	17	14.17
	Middle age (35 to 50 years)	85	70.83
	Old age (above 50 years)	18	15.00
2	Education		
	Illiterate (no formal education)	13	10.84
	Primary (up to 7th standard)	24	20.00
	Secondary (8th to 10th standard)	49	40.83
	Higher secondary (11th to 12th standard)	28	23.33
	Graduate (above 12th standard)	06	05.00
3	Caste		
	General (OPEN)	00	00.00
	Other backward class (OBC)	94	78.33
	Schedule tribe (ST)	26	21.67
	Schedule caste (SC)	00	00.00
4	Annual income		
	Low income (Up to Rs. 1,00,000)	31	25.83
	Medium income (Rs. 1,00,001 to 2,00,000)	71	59.17
	High income (Above Rs. 2,00,000)	18	15.00
5	Size of family		
	Small family (up to 4 members)	18	15.00
	Medium family (5 to 7 members)	45	37.50
	Large family (>7 members)	57	47.50
6	Type of family		
	Nuclear Family	35	29.17
	Joint Family	85	70.83
7	Occupation		
	Animal Husbandry	54	45.00
	Animal Husbandry + Agriculture Farming	65	54.17
	Animal Husbandry + Agriculture Farming + Others	01	00.83
8	Extension participation		
	Low (less than 15.16 score)	40	33.33
	Medium (between 15.16 to 29.84 score)	64	53.34
	High (above 29.84 score)	16	13.33
9	Size of Land holding		
	Landless (no land)	39	32.50
	Marginal (up-to 1.00 hectare)	35	29.17
	Small (1.01 to 2.00 hectare)	22	18.33
	Medium (2.01 to 3.00 hectare)	10	08.33
	Large (above 3.00 hectare)	14	11.67
10	Social participation		
	No membership	65	54.17
	Membership in one organization	46	38.33

	Membership in more than one organization	09	07.50
	Holding position	00	00.00
11	Experience in dairy farming		
	Less (up to 10 years)	22	18.33
	Medium (between 11 to 20 years)	65	54.17
	High (above 20 years)	33	27.50
12	Herd size		
	Small (6-14 dairy animals)	55	45.83
	Medium (15–30 dairy animals)	52	43.33
	Large (More than 30 dairy animals)	13	10.84
13	Extent of sources of information used		
	Less used (less than 9 score)	28	23.33
	Medium used (between 9 to 13 score)	80	66.67
	More used (13 and above score)	12	10.00

11.67 per cent of respondents were with large size of land holding having above 3.00 hectare⁹.

It is clear from the Table-1 that more than half (54.17 %) of the Maldhari dairy farmers had no membership in any organization, followed by 38.33 per cent had membership in one organizations and 07.50 per cent of Maldhari dairy farmers had membership in more than one organizations. None of the Maldhari dairy farmers were holding position in any organizations. It also indicates that more than half (54.17 %) of the respondents were with medium level of experience followed by 27.50 and 18.33 per cent with high and low level of experience respectively in dairy farming⁹.

Sources of information for obtaining information pertaining animal husbandry practices indicated that two-third (66.67 %) of the Maldhari dairy farmers used medium sources of information, whereas 23.33 per cent and 10.00 per cent of them used less and more sources of information,

respectively. Herd size shows that 45.83 per cent of the Maldhari dairy farmers had small herd size followed by 43.33 per cent of Maldhari dairy farmer found with medium level of herd size while 10.84 per cent of them had large herd size¹⁰.

CONCLUSION

Majority of the Maldhari dairy farmers belonged to middle age group, educated up to secondary level and belonged to OBC category, had medium annual income with large size of family and majority of them belonged to joint family, had animal husbandry plus agriculture as main occupation, had medium extension participation and low social participation. Maldhari farmers possessed medium experience in animal husbandry, used medium sources of information and had small size of herd. Socio-economic parameters of maldhari dairy farmers reveals that there is a scope for further improvement in socio-economic status, which ultimately lead to animal husbandry development.

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