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Profile Characteristics of Bengalgram Farmers in Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Bengalgram is the most important pulse crop in India. The study was taken up in, Parchur, Inkollu, Korisapadu, Nagulauppalapadu, and Ongole mandals of Prakasam district by following random sampling procedure. Three villages from each of the selected mandals were selected by following simple random sampling procedure. Thus making a total of 15 villages. A total sample of 120 bengalgram growers were selected by selecting 8 farmers from each village by simple random sampling procedure .Majority of the Bengal gram farmers had high school education, small land holding with high farming experience and medium socio-Politico participation. They had medium extension contact, medium mass media exposure, medium Innovativeness, medium scientific orientation, medium risk orientation, medium economic orientation and medium market orientation.

Key words: *Bengalgramfarmers, Profile characteristics.*

Bengalgram is the most important pulse crop in India. It occupies about 7.58 million hectares, with production of 6.91 million tonnes which represents 30 per cent and 37 per cent of the national pulse area and production respectively. In combined Andhra Pradesh bengalgram is grown over an area of 6.38 lakh hectares with annual production of 9.37 lakh tonnes with a productivity of 1469 Kg per hectare. (http:// **www.indiastat.com**)

In combined Andhra Pradesh it is mostly grown in the districts of Kurnool, Prakasam, Adilabad, Nizamabad, Rangareddy, Medak and Guntur. Though the area under bengalgram is more we could not meet the demand of people due to low production and productivity.

In Prakasam district bengalgram is the main crop. Though the area under bengalgram is constantly increasing in the district, productivity levels are not increased and here is a need to address this problem. Keeping this in view a study was undertaken to analyse profile characteristics of the Bengalgram growers in Prakasam district of combined Andhra Pradesh.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A study was conducted with an expost-facto research design to assess profile characteristics of bengalgram farmers in Prakasam district of combined Andhra Pradesh state. Prakasam district was purposively selected because of its largest area, production and productivity under bengalgram crop in coastal districts of combined Andhra Pradesh. Out of three revenue divisions in the Prakasam district, Ongole revenue division was selected purposively because of highest acreage of bengalgram crop in the district. Out of 20 mandals in Ongole revenue division, five mandals namely Parchur, Inkollu, Korisapadu, Nagulauppalapadu, and Ongole were selected by following random sampling method. Three villages from each of the selected mandals were selected by following simple random sampling procedure, thus making a total of 15 villages. A total sample of 120 bengalgram growers were selected by selecting 8 farmers from each village by simple random sampling procedure. The data were collected through well structured pre-tested interview schedule, which was coded, tabulated, analysed and presented in tables to make the findings are meaningful and easily understandable. Various statistical Measures such as Frequency, Percentage, Mean and standard Deviation was used. The findings were suitably interpreted and necessary conclusions and interference were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Cursory look at Table 1 revealed that majority (28.34%) of the respondents had high school level of education followed by those who are middle School (16.66%), Primary School (14.17%), collegiate education (12.50%), illiterate (12.50%), functionally literate (10.83%), graduation (4.17%) and post graduation (0.83%).The probable reason for majority of farmers to be in high school might be due to the fact that majority of the respondents were small farmers and could not go for higher education because of their financial problems, non-availability of education facilities in the villages, and lack of awareness among elders in the village regarding the importance of education. This finding was in conformity with findings of Abhishek Gowda (2009).

It is inferred from the Table 1 indicated that majority (53.33%) of the respondents had small size of land holding followed by big (26.66%) and marginal (20.00%) land holding. The reason for possession of small land holding could be due to fragmentation of land because of separation of families, more over on medium farms it might be easier to employ the latest technology. While big size of land holding might be due to continuation of ancestral property. The finding was in line with the studies of Gopinath (2005).

It was evident from the Table 1 that majority (38.33%) of the farmers had high level of farming experience followed by medium (36.67%) and low (25.00%) levels of farming experience. It could be inferred that their experience could be better exploited to adopt recent agricultural technologies. The results were in accordance with the findings of Nirmala and Annamalai (1997).

It could be comprehended from the Table 1 that a lion's share (56.67%) of the farmers had medium level of socio-politico participation followed by 22.50 per cent of the farmers with low level and 20.83 per cent of the farmers with high level of socio-politico participation. For medium and high social participation the reason could be the farmers with high formal education and good economic conditions are keen to participate in social organizations for getting some social status. For low socio-politico participation, either the farmers did not consider necessary to have their own groups or did not seek membership in the organization that was already available. The socio-politico participation of their low group can be improved through education and by encouraging them to participate in such activities in the village. Extension agencies should encourage the farmers in social participation by helping them to form youth clubs, welfare associations, farmers discussion groups etc. so that they will get more exposure. This observation was in conformity with the findings of Rajendra Kumar (2002).

It was evident from the Table 1 that majority (51.66%) of the respondents had medium extension contact followed by high (29.16%) and low (19.18%). This might be due to the fact that majority of the respondents were small farmers with high school education. Hence they could not go out to meet the officials of Agricultural department. Further the extension workers were busy in their administration works and concentrated their contacts on big farmers and those who visited them, therefore it is desirable to improve the level of extension contact of the farmers through regular visits by extension personnel with emphasis on small and marginal farmers.The present finding was in compliance with Rajendra Kumar (2002) and Gopinath (2005).

Results furnished in Table 1 indicated that majority (57.50%) of the respondents had medium mass media exposure followed by 31.67 per cent with high and 10.83 per cent of the respondents with low mass media exposure. This trend might be due to the existing rich exposure to agricultural officer, progressive farmers, as of latest information, vivid experience they had, and mass media provides information on experiences of successful farmers through various channels like television, radio, newspapers etc. which provides confidence to other farmers to take up similar activities or try out new innovations. The reason for low mass media exposure due to low educational levels, lack of awareness of farmers regarding the broadcast timings, lack of awareness about farm magazines like Annadata, Vyvasaya panchangam, lack of interest about to know new technologies, financial problems, pre occupation of farmers in other important activities and non addressal of situation specific problems. The finding was in concurrent with the findings of Gopinath (2005) and Abhishek Gowda (2009).

Table 1. Profile characteristics of the bengalgram farmers.

n= (120)

S.No	Independent variables	Category	Respondents	
			F	P
1.	Education	Illiterate	15	12.50
		Functionally literate	13	10.83
		Primary school	17	14.17
		Middle school	20	16.66
		High school	34	28.34
		College education	15	12.50
		Graduation	05	4.17
		Post-graduation	01	0.83
2.	Land Holding	Marginal (< 2.5acres)	24	20.00
		Small (2.5-5 acres)	64	53.33
		Big (> 5acres)	32	26.67
3.	Farming experience ($\overline{X}$ = 3.75, σ = 0.64)	Low (< 3.28)	30	25.00
		Medium (3.28 to 4.21)	44	36.67
		High (> 4.21)	46	38.33
4.	Social-politico participation ($\overline{X}$ = 3.20, σ =0.83)	Low (<2.38)	27	22.50
		Medium (2.38 to 4.03)	68	56.67
		High (>4.03)	25	20.83
5.	Extension contact ($\overline{X}$ = 17.56, σ = 1.31)	Low (< 16.25)	23	19.18
		Medium (16.25 to 18.87)	62	51.66
		High (> 18.87)	35	29.16
6.	Mass Media exposure ($\overline{X}$ = 20.12, σ = 1.27)	Low (< 18.84)	13	10.83
		Medium (18.84 to 21.40)	69	57.50
		High (> 21.40)	38	31.67
7.	Innovativeness ($\overline{X}$ = 15.81, σ = 0.72)	Low (< 15.08)	21	17.50
		Medium (15.08 to 16.54)	62	51.67
		High (> 16.54)	37	30.83
8.	Scientific orientation ($\overline{X}$ = 19.56, σ = 1.26)	Low (<18.29)	13	19.17
		Medium (18.29 to 20.83)	80	47.50
		High (> 20.83)	27	33.33
9.	Risk orientation ($\overline{X}$ = 11.4, σ = 0.62)	Low (< 10.77)	05	4.17
		Medium (10.77 to 12.02)	89	74.16
		High (> 12.02)	26	21.67
10.	Economic orientation ($\overline{X}$ = 19.56, σ = 1.26)	Low (< 18.18)	23	19.17
		Medium (18.18 to 20.33)	68	56.67
		High (> 20.33)	29	24.16
11.	Market orientation ($\overline{X}$ = 10.75, σ = 0.67)	Low (< 10.08)	14	11.67
		Medium (10.08 to 11.42)	80	66.66
		High (> 11.42)	26	21.67

F: Frequency P: Percentage

$\overline{X}$: mean σ: S.D (Standard deriation)

It was asserted from the the Table 1 that majority (51.67%) of the respondents had medium innovativeness followed by high (30.83%) and low (17.50%) levels of innovativeness. The possible reason for this might be that majority of the respondents had high school education and medium extension contact. Low innovativeness of farmers might be due to their less education and lesser social participation which lead to restricted information about new technologies. The possible reason for high innovativeness may be due to majority of the farmers belonged to small and big farmers so they have more chance to adopt new technologies and greater scope to contact with extension personnel. This finding was in line with Mallarayudu (1997) and Gopinath (2005).

From the Table 1 it was evident that 47.50 per cent of the respondents had medium scientific orientation followed by high (33.33%) and low (19.17%) level of scientific orientation. The probable reason for majority having medium scientific orientation might be due to their educational qualifications *i.e* higher formal education, medium to high extension contact and mass media exposure helped the respondents to apply scientific practices in bengalgram cultivation. The results were in accordance with the findings of Palaniswamy and Sriram (2001) and Rajendra Kumar (2002).

It was vivid from the Table 1 that majority (74.16%) of the respondents had medium risk orientation followed by high (21.67%) and low (4.17%) risk orientation. This might be due to the reason that majority of the farmers had small holdings and their conditions were mediocre. Medium level of extension contact and involvement in subsidiary occupation by majority of the farmers also might have prevented them from taking much risk in farming. This finding derives support from the findings of Suleman khan Mohammed (1999) and Damodaran and Vasanthakumar (2001).

The data furnished in Table 1 revealed that majority (56.67%) of the respondents had medium economic orientation followed by high (24.16%) and low (19.17%) levels of economic orientation. The reason for the above finding might be due to majority of farmers had small to big land holdings with high school education and are mostly engaged in agriculture for their livelihood. Farmers having high economic orientation were willing to take calculated risk for their field operations. Whereas poor economic condition may be due to poor credit orientation of farmers and less exposure to modern agricultural technologies and less extension contact. High score on economic orientation could be achieved by improvement in their education level, financial incentives from co-operatives and banks cooperation and through proper guidance from their neighbour farmers. Besides exposure visits can be intensified to educate them about better use of inputs and to get inspired in harvesting more yield. This finding was in agreement with the findings of Palaniswamy and Sriram (2001) and Rajendra Kumar (2002).

From the perusal of Table 1 it could be inferred that majority (66.66%) of the respondents had medium market orientation followed by high (21.67%) and low (11.67%) respectively. It was observed that only 11.67 per cent of respondents belonged to low level of market orientation and most of them belonged to medium to high level. The plausible reason for this trend might be that majority of respondents had small holding with medium income, medium to high extension contact and mass media exposure and they wanted to gain more profits out of their produce. The findings were in concurrence with the studies reported by Palaniswamy and Sriram (2001), Rajendra Kumar (2002) and Gopinath (2005).

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