CHARACTERISTICS OF FARMERS INFLUENCING USE OF INFORMATION SOURCES

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Abstract: Agricultural education needs to be evolved in a very rapid manner to meet the expectation of the society. Under this situation Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) Programme is an important competence and confidence building programme introduced in all SAUs in India. In this regard a survey was done by interviewing eighty adopted farmers of Parsada village of Arang block of Raipur district of Chhattisgarh. The primary data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule and the statistical analysis was done with the help of computer. It was found that majority of the farmers interviewed were middle aged (27 to 49 years) belonged to other backward class (75.00%) had medium size (78.75%) and nuclear family (71.25%). 43.75 per cent of them had marginal land holding (less than 1 ha), less than half of them (48.75%) had tube well as the source of irrigation; and slightly more than half of them (52.50%) had agriculture alone as their principal occupation. Most of the farmers surveyed (47.50%) had annual income between Rs. 35,001 to 60,000/-. It was observed that a considerable majority of the farmers (77.50%) had medium overall contact with extension personnel. As regard to the overall use of information sources by the respondents, the data revealed that majority of them (43.75%) had medium overall use of information sources. Out of the nine independent variables under study only four variables *viz.* age, size of land holding, annual income and contact with extension personnel had positive and highly significant correlation with use of information sources; while the variables size of family and occupation had positive and significant relationship with use of information sources. The remaining three variables *viz.* caste, type of family and sources of irrigation had non significant correlation with use of information sources. On multiple regression analysis it was found that the variables age, annual income and contact with extension personnel had positive and highly significant contribution towards use of information sources; whereas the variables size of family, size of land holding and occupation had positive and significant contribution towards use of information sources.

Keywords : Agriculture education, Farmers, Chhattisgarh, information sources

INTRODUCTION

Experiential learning approaches are adopted towards problem solving and improving interaction throughout the world. It helps the students to develop their holistic development. Under the changing dynamics of economical and industrial growth agriculture has undergone a sea change with new approaches. Agricultural education needs to be evolved in a very rapid manner to meet the expectation of the society. Under this situation Rural Agricultural Work Experience (RAWE) Programme is an important competence and confidence building programme introduced in all SAUs in India.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The survey was done by interviewing eighty adopted farmers of Parsada village of Arang block of Raipur district of Chhattisgarh. The primary data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule and the statistical analysis was done with the help of computer.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their socio-personal characteristics

n =80

S. No.	Characteristics	Frequency	Per cent
(a)	**Age**		
1.	Young (below 27 years)	08	10.00
2.	Middle (27 to 49 years)	57	71.25
3.	Old (above 49 years)	15	18.75
(b)	**Caste**		
1.	Schedule tribes	06	07.50
2.	Schedule caste	10	12.50
3.	Other backward class	60	75.00
4.	General	04	05.00
(c)	**Size of family**		
1.	Small (up to 2 members)	02	02.50
2.	Medium (2 to 8 members)	63	78.75

3.	Big (> 8 members)	15	18.75
(d)	**Type of family**		
1.	Nuclear	57	71.25
2.	Joint	23	28.75

The distribution of respondents according to their socio-personal characteristics is given in Table 1. It is evident that 71.25 per cent of the farmers interviewed were middle aged (27-49 years), 18.75 per cent of them belonged to old age group (above 49 years) and only 10.00 per cent farmers were young (below 27 years).

As far as caste of the respondents is concerned it was found that majority of the farmers majority of the farmers (75.00%) belonged to OBC followed by schedule caste (12.50%), schedule tribes (07.50%) and the remaining 05.00 per cent belonged to general caste category.

As regards the size of family, majority of the farmers belonged to medium sized family (2 to 8 members), 18.75 per cent farmers belonged to big family with more than 8 members in each family and 02.50 per cent of them belonged to small family having up to 2 members.

With reference to type of family, the data revealed that majority of the farmers surveyed (71.25%) belonged to nuclear family and 28.75 per cent belonged to joint family. It is noteworthy that even in rural areas and amongst farm families nuclear family has become the norm. Thus we may conclude that joint families no longer characterise rural social system.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their size of land holding

n=80

S. No.	Size of land holding	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Marginal (less than 1 ha)	35	43.75
2.	Small (1.1 to 2 ha)	22	27.50
3.	Medium (2.1 to 4 ha)	14	17.50
4.	Large (above 4 ha)	09	11.25
	Total	**80**	**100.00**

From the data given in Table 2 we may infer that less than half of the respondents (43.75%) were marginal farmers with less than 1 ha. Land holding, 27.50 per cent farmers had small sized land holding (1.1 to 2 ha.), 17.50 per cent of them had medium sized land holding (2.1 to 4 ha.) and 11.25 per cent had large sized land holding (above 4 ha.).

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to sources of irrigation

n=80

S. No.	Sources of irrigation	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Tube well	39	48.75
2.	Pond	04	05.00
3.	Well	12	15.00
4.	Cannel	20	25.00
5.	Others	08	10.00
6.	No source of irrigation	08	10.00

*Frequency based on multiple responses

It is observed from the data in the Table 3 that just less, than half of the farmers interviewed (48.75%) had tube well as the source of irrigation, one fourth of them (25.00%) had canal as a source of irrigation, 15.00 per cent of the farmers had well followed by other sources (10.00%) and ponds (05.00%) as their sources of irrigation, whereas 10.00 per cent of the farmers had no sources of irrigation.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to their occupation

n=80

S. No.	Occupation	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Agriculture	42	52.50
2.	Agriculture + Animal husbandry	04	05.00
3.	Agriculture + Labour	21	26.25

4.	Agriculture + Service	04	05.00
5.	Agriculture + business	08	10.00
6.	Agriculture + Other	02	02.50

The data in Table 4 shows that just more than half of the respondents (52.50%) of the respondents had Agriculture as their main occupation followed by agriculture + labour (26.25%), agriculture + business (10.00%), agriculture + animal husbandry (05.00%), agriculture + service (05.00%) and agriculture + other (02.50%).

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to their annual income

n=80

S. No.	Annual income	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Up to Rs.35,000	30	37.50
2.	Rs.35,001 to 60,000	38	47.50
3.	Rs.60,001 to 1,00,000	08	10.00
4.	Above Rs.1,00,000	04	05.00
	Total	**80**	**100.00**

As regards annual income of the respondents (Table 5) it was found that slightly less than half of the respondents (47.50%) had annual income between Rs. 35,001 to Rs. 60,000/-, 37.50 per cent of the respondents had annual income of up to Rs. 35,000/-, 10.00 per cent of them had annual income from Rs. 60,000 to Rs. 1, 00,000/- and the remaining 05.00 per cent of the respondents had annual income of above Rs. 1, 00,000/-.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to over all contact with extension personnel (last one year)

n=80

S.N.	Categories	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Low (up to 8 score)	04	05.00
2.	Medium (9 to 12 score)	62	77.50
3.	High (above 12 score)	14	17.50
	Total	**80**	**100.00**

$\bar{X}$ = 10 S.D. = 2.045

Regarding contact with extension personnel (Table 6) majority of the farmers surveyed (77.50%) had medium contact with extension personnel, 17.50 per cent of them had high contact with extension personnel while 05.00 per cent of them had low contact with extension personnel.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to overall use of Information sources n=80

S.N.	Sources of information	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Low (up to 8 score)	21	26.25
2.	Medium (8– 18 score)	35	43.75
3.	High (above 18 score)	24	30.00
	Total	**80**	**100.00**

$\bar{X}$ = S.D. = 4.20

So far as the use of information sources are concerned (Table 7) less than half of the respondents (43.75%) had medium use of information sources, 30.00 per cent of them had high use of information sources whereas 26.25 per cent of the respondents had low use of information sources.

Table 8: Correlation analysis of independent variables with the use of information sources

S.N.	Independent variables	Correlation coefficient "r" value
01.	Age	0.298**
02.	Caste	0.167
03.	Size of family	0.255*
04.	Type of family	0.203

05.	Size of land holding	0.305**
06.	Occupation	0.232*
07.	Annual income	0.299**
08.	Contact with extension personnel	0.365**

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability
* Significant at 0.05 level of probability

On correlation analysis it was observed (Table 8) that the variables age, size of land holding, annual income and contact with extension personnel had positive and significant correlation with use of information sources at 0.01 level of probability while the variables size of family and occupation had positive and significant relationship with use of information sources at 0.05 level of probability. The positive and significant relationship between the variables denote that as the value of independent variable will increase the value of dependent variable will also increase and if the value of independent variable decrease than the value of dependent variable will also decrease. The remaining two variables viz. caste and type of family had non significant correlation with use of information sources.

Table 9: Multiple regression analyses of independent variables with the use of information sources

S.N.	Independent variables	Correlation coefficient "b" value	"t" Value
01.	Age	0.132**	3.010
02.	Caste	0.035	0.527
03.	Size of family	0.610*	2.132
04.	Type of family	-0.270	-1.031
05.	Size of land holding	0.401*	2.221
06.	Occupation	0.215*	2.421
07.	Annual income	0.232**	3.143
08.	Contact with extension personnel	0.453**	3.627

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability R^2= 0.750
* Significant at 0.05 level of probability F= 20.895

The results of the multiple regression analysis (Table 9) reveals that the variables age, annual income and contact with extension personnel had positive and significant contribution towards use of information sources at 0.01 level of probability whereas the variables size of family, size of land holding and occupation had positive and significant contribution towards use of information sources at 0.05 level of probability. The remaining three variables viz. caste and type of family had on significant contribution towards use of information sources. The positive and significant relationship shows that if there is one unit increase in age, annual income, contact with extension personnel, size of family, size of land holding and occupation than there will be age, annual income, contact with extension personnel, size of family, size of land holding and occupation unit increase in use of information sources by the respondents.

CONCLUSION

Form the above findings we may conclude that the rural farm families are still medium to large size however the pattern of nuclear family which was common to urban areas has become dominate in rural area also. Agriculture remains to be the pre dominant occupation of rural people however as the size of land holding is marginal to small their annual income it also correspondingly low. It was also found that the respondent had medium to high contact with extension personnel which may be due to the proximity of the village under study to the agricultural University and Raipur city where all the state level officers are located. Since size of land holding, annual income, contact with extension personnel and occupation had positive and significant relationship with overall use of information sources we may also infers that if the size of land holding, annual income, contact with extension personnel and occupation is increase then the overall use of information sources by the respondents will also increase. The extension personnel should design their extension strategy based on the above conclusion.

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