

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Socio-economic status of bullock owners in Akola district of Maharashtra state

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ABSTRACT : Akola, Patur and Barshitakli Tahsil were selected from Akola district. From each Tahsil, 45 farmers were selected randomly for collecting the data making a total number of 135 farmers. The data were collected through personal interview. It was noticed that out of 135 farmers, 93 farmers were having local non-descript bullocks while 42 farmers had cross bred bullocks. The average percentage of total land holding under some major crops was cotton (34.33%), soybean (23.50%), food grain (11.57%) and pulses (6.58 %). On average 2.25 and 5.21 members were present in small and medium family, respectively. It was also noted that majority of the farmers in both the groups were of younger age (up to 35) through 23.66 to 26.19 per cent of the farmers were of middle age. Majority of the farmer (31.18 %) had education up to High School standard. Moreover another good indication noticed was the membership of maximum farmers in Grampanchayat (37.63 – 38.10 %) though substantial number of farmer (28.89 %) were remained away from social participation. Majority of the farmers (77.77 %) were found keen themselves up to date by acquiring recent knowledge through T.V. and attending farmers day in Agriculture University.

Key words : Bullock owners, Socio-economic status

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of work animal to human being has been closely associated with the origin and progress of civilization. Large population of the country is confined to rural area and is dependent on agriculture. Therefore, the farmers mainly reared the working bullocks for generating the sole motive power for crop production and other farm works, beside this the bullocks are maintained as a symbol of social status in the village. It is estimated that depending upon the size of land holding, the harness of bullock power for cultivation; worked out to the extent of 62 to 93 per cent which is less under small holding and increases with the land holding. In spite of this facts, the farmers do feed the bullocks quantitatively without considering the nutritional requirement as a result the past reported work do indicate that the bullocks, experience nutritional gap to the extent of 50 to 60 per cent in terms of routine requirement though the energy need and are near to the level of fulfillment. Perhaps this situation may adversely affect the bullock work capacity. To test this hypothesis, the present work was undertaken and the results obtained in the study are presented herein.

At present, the draught animals are being used to plough some 100 millions hectares of farmland in country, which forms 60 per cent of total cultivable areas (Singh, 1999). Draught animal power's importance is due to its renewable source of energy, sustainable, dependable and reliable which maintains ecological balance for sustainable agricultural production and 1.8 billions men per days employment generation.

Besides high rate of mechanization and introduction of tractor, animal power could not be replaced because of small fragmentary land holding and poor socio-economic status of farmers. About 54.6 per cent of farmers have below 1 hectare of land that can hardly afford a pair or even a single bullock. Further, even an average tractor owner maintains 1.66 draft animals as he can not totally dispense with them (Yawalikar, 2001).

The socio-economic status of the farmer has relevance for application of scientific management practices in rearing of working animal. The physical fitness of the bullocks has direct impact on working capacity and indirectly on generating the power for cultivation of land in reference to this the socio-economic character of the selected farmers has been studied.