

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

Personal profile and information sources used by the finger millet cultivators

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SUMMARY : Millets are small grained cereals, referred as “Poor man’s cereals”. The study was undertaken in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra State during the year 2016-17. Four tahasils namely Panhala, Karveer, Radhanagari and Shahuwadi were selected purposively for the study having good area under finger millet crop. On the basis of the highest area, 3 villages from each tahasil were selected. 10 finger millet growing farmers were selected on the basis of highest area for interview from the selected villages. Thus, in all 120 farmers were finally selected for the study. Majority of the respondents were from middle age group of 36 to 50 years (60.00%), 52.53 per cent finger millet growers had primary education *i.e.* upto 7th std., 60.83 per cent of them possessed medium family size *i.e.* 6 to 10 members, 73.33 per cent of them had joint family and 61.66 per cent of them had 6 to 10 years of farming experience. About 59.17 per cent of them owned land from 1.01 to 2.00 ha and majority of them (74.16%) were having annual income upto Rs.1.00 lakh. 47.50 per cent of finger millet growers were always obtained agricultural information from progressive farmers, friends and relatives followed by All India Radio Programme (65.84%) and Television (56.66%). Majority of the respondents suggested that free of cost inputs may be supplied (100.00%), the seed of improved varieties may be made easily available (71.67%), the farmers may be given training in finger millet cultivation and preparation of bi-products (63.33%) and the economic incentives may be given for the installation of processing unit (60.83%).

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Millets are small grained cereals, referred as “Poor man’s cereals”. These hardy cereals are grown where other cereals failed to yield satisfactorily due to unfavorable agro-climatic conditions. Millets are known in India from Vedic times and have their own position at religious functions and consumed in fasting. As small millets are highly nutritious

now called as nutri millets even superior to rice and wheat in certain constituents like calcium, iron etc. In view of this millet diet is advocated to children’s, pregnant women’s, patients recovered from prolonged illness and anemic patients.

Small millets formed a group of six minor coarse cereals, namely finger millet (*Eleusine coracana*), little millet (*Panicum miliare*), kodo millet (*Paspalum*

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scrobiculatum), foxtail millet (*Setaria italica*), barnyard millet (*Echinochloa frumentacea*) and proso millet (*Panicum miliaceum*).

Finger millet also known as ragi, finger millet or Nachani is one of the important millets of semi-arid regions particularly of India and East Africa. It is supposed to be originated in Ethiopia and later transferred to India during pre-aryan periods. It is extensively grown in the state of Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Bihar, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. Finger millet is the most important millet grown in Maharashtra State which alone accounts tentatively for about 50 per cent area and more than 2/3rd production of total small millets. The area, production and productivity of finger millet in Maharashtra (Table 1) revealed that, the area under finger millet was highest during 2000-01. However, the production and productivity was highest during 2001-02.

Over all the area and production of finger millet during the period of 1999 to 2010 shows declining trend (173600 ha to 115700 ha and 168000 tons to 97000 tons, respectively). The area and production of finger millet during the period of 1999 to 2010 shows declining trend. While the productivity of finger millet seems to be fluctuate from 830 kg/ha to 1205 kg/ha. The average production of finger millet of state is 903 kg/ha and Kolhapur region is 1396 kg/ha. Thus, the study was undertaken with the following objectives.

Objectives:

- To study the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the finger millet growers.
- To study the information sources used by the finger millet cultivators.

To study the suggestions made by the finger millet growers for efficient use of finger millet production technology.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The study was undertaken in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra State. Four tahasils namely Radhanagari, Shahuwadi, Gaganbawada and Karveer were selected purposively for the study having good area under finger millet crop. On the basis of highest area, 3 villages from each tahasil were selected. The villages selected were Pungaon, Shirgaon and Dhamod from Radhanagari; Shembawane, Barki and Mosam from Shahuwadi; Kode Khurd, Dhundawade and Jargi from Gaganbawada and

Berkalwadi, Mandhare and Chafodi from Karveer tahasil. With the consultation of Taluka Agril. Officer of the concerned tahasil, 10 finger millet growing farmers were selected on the basis of highest area for interview from the selected villages. Thus, in all 120 farmers were finally selected for the study.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

Personal and socio-economic characteristics of the finger millet growers:

The data regarding personal and socio-economic characteristics of the finger millet growers are presented in Table 1.

From Table 1, it is observed that, 60.00 per cent of the finger millet growers were from middle age group *i.e.* 36 to 50 years, 52.53 per cent finger millet growers had primary education *i.e.* upto 7th std., 27.49 per cent of them were having secondary education *i.e.* 8th to 10th std.

It is also revealed from Table 1 that 60.83 per cent of the finger millet growers possessed medium family size *i.e.* 6 to 10 members, 73.33 per cent of them had joint family and 61.66 per cent of them had 6 to 10 years of farming experience.

The Table 1 also revealed that 59.17 per cent of the finger millet growers owned land from 1.01 to 2.00 ha.

In case of annual income, it is observed that majority of them (74.16%) were having low annual income upto Rs.1.00 lakh.

Source of information:

The source of information plays an important role in disseminating agricultural and allied information to the farmers. Generally, the farmers seek information from various sources. The data regarding the information sources used by the respondent farmers are presented in Table 2.

The data presented in Table 2 reveals that 47.50 per cent of the finger millet growers were always obtained information from progressive farmers/friends and relatives followed by Agricultural Assistants (32.50%) of the Department of Agriculture and University Scientists (17.49%).

In case of electronic media, 65.84 per cent respondents obtained information always from All India Radio programmes, followed by Television (56.66%).

In case of printed literature, 15.84 per cent of the respondents used News papers, Magazines as a source of information, while 10.83 per cent of the finger millet growers used Krishidarshani of MPKV, Rahuri as a source of information.

Suggestions obtained from the finger millet growers:

The information in respect of the suggestions made by the respondents for effective adoption of finger millet production technology is give in Table 3.

The data in Table 3 indicates that, most of the

respondents suggested that free of cost inputs may be supplied for the cultivation of finger millet (100.00%), The seed of improved varieties of finger millet may be made easily available (71.67%), the farmers may be given training in finger millet cultivation and preparation of bi-products (63.33%), the economic incentives may be given for the installation of processing unit (60.83%) and the scientist or the personnel from the Department of Agriculture may visit farmers fields frequently for the continuous guidance in finger millet cultivation (49.17%).

Conclusion:

Majority of the respondents were from middle age group of 36 to 50 years (60.00%), 52.53 per cent finger millet growers had primary education *i.e.* upto 7th std.,

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their personal and socio-economic characteristics			(n=120)
Sr. No.	Characteristics	No. of respondents	Per cent
1.	Age		
	Young (Upto 35 years)	17	14.16
	Middle (36 to 50 years)	72	60.00
	Old (51 and above years)	31	25.84
2.	Education		
	Primary (Upto 7 th std.)	63	52.53
	Secondary (8 th to 10 th std.)	33	27.49
	Higher secondary (Above 11 th to 12 th std.)	21	17.49
	Higher education (College and above)	3	2.49
3.	Family size		
	Small (Upto 5 members)	18	15.00
	Medium (6 to 10 members)	73	60.83
	Large (11 and above members)	29	24.17
4.	Type of family		
	Joint	88	73.33
	Nucleus	32	26.67
5.	Farming experience		
	Upto 5 years	19	15.84
	6 to 10 years	74	61.66
	11 years and above	27	22.50
6.	Size of land holding		
	Small (Upto 1.00 ha.)	31	25.83
	Medium (1.01 to 2 .00ha.)	71	59.17
	Large (2 .01ha. and above)	18	15.00
7.	Annual Income		
	Low (Upto Rs.1.00 lakh)	89	74.16
	Medium (Rs.1.1 to 2.00 lakh)	23	19.17
	High (Above 2.00 lakh)	8	6.67

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents by their source of agricultural information used (n=120)

Sr. No.	Source of information	Always		Sometimes		Never	
		Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Agril. Asstt., Deptt. of Agriculture M.S.	39	32.50	29	24.17	52	43.33
2.	University Scientists and Research Stations	21	17.49	28	23.33	71	59.18
3.	Progressive Farmers/ Friends / Relatives	57	47.50	47	39.17	16	13.33
4.	Agril. Programmes on T.V.	68	56.66	9	7.50	43	35.84
5.	All India Radio Programmes	79	65.84	8	6.67	33	27.49
6.	Printed literature like news papers, magazines, etc.	19	15.84	43	35.84	58	48.32
7.	Krishidarshani of MPKV.	13	10.83	11	9.17	96	80.00
8.	Krishi Sheva Kendra	3	2.49	22	18.33	95	79.18
9.	Krishi Vigyan Kendra	--	--	--	--	120	100.00
10.	Kisan Call Center	--	--	--	--	120	100.00
11.	Internet	--	--	--	--	120	100.00

Table 3 : Distribution of the respondents according to their suggestions (n=120)

Sr.No.	Suggestions made	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Free of cost inputs may be supplied for the cultivation of finger millet	120	100.00
2.	The seed of improved varieties of finger millet may be made easily available	86	71.67
3.	The farmers may be given training in finger millet cultivation and preparation of bi-products	76	63.33
4.	The economic incentives may be given for the installation of processing unit	73	60.83
5.	The scientists or the personnel from the Department of Agriculture may visit farmer's fields frequently for the continuous guidance in finger millet cultivation	59	49.17

60.83 per cent of them possessed medium family size *i.e.* 6 to 10 members, 73.33 per cent of them had joint family and 61.66 per cent of them had 6 to 10 years of farming experience. About 59.17 per cent of them owned land from 1.01 to 2.00 ha and majority of them (74.16 %) were having annual income upto Rs.1.00 lakh.

47.50 per cent of finger millet growers were always obtained agricultural information from progressive farmers, friends and relatives followed by All India Radio Programme (65.84%) and Television (56.66%).

Majority of the respondents suggested that free of cost inputs may be supplied (100.00%), the seed of improved varieties may be made easily available (71.67%), the farmers may be given training in finger millet cultivation and preparation of bi-products (63.33%) and the economic incentives may be given for the installation of processing unit (60.83%). Similar work related to the present investigation was also conducted by Gupta *et al.* (2003); Sahu *et al.* (2003); Suryawanshi (2009); Vedpathak (2001) and Wagh and Patil (2007).

Implications:

- Middle age group of farmers is engaged in finger

millet cultivation. This portion of society may be given complete and need based training in finger millet cultivation.

- The agribusiness based on the finger millet crop such as papad making, biscuit making may be generated on large scale for the unemployed youth and training may be given accordingly.

- The seed of improved varieties may be made easily available to the finger millet growers though the personnel from the Department of Agriculture.

- The selected finger millet growers may be treated as contact farmers and they may be guide regularly through the personnel from the Department of Agriculture.

- Remunerative price in the market for the finger millet may be fixed by the Government.

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