

Socio-economic status of mulberry sericulturists of Udaipur, Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted during 2006-07 in two Tehsils of Udaipur district of South Rajasthan to know the socio-economic status of the sericulture adopters. The study revealed that majority of the respondents belonged to agricultural castes with cultivation as main occupation. Most of the respondents having Primary level of education, had no participation in any organization. The study also suggests that majority of respondents were having nuclear family and they mostly belonged to middle class socio-economic status.

KEY WORDS : Socio-economic status, Sericulture, Middle class, Udaipur

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INTRODUCTION

Sericulture is an art of rearing silkworm for the production of cocoon which is the raw material for the production of silk. India has a long tradition of producing and using silk. India has the unique distinction of being the only country producing all the four varieties of silk *i.e.*, mulberry, eri, tasar and munga (Krishnaswamy, 1986). However, mulberry silk accounts for about 93 per cent of the total production. Sericulture thus has become a highly remunerative agro based cottage industry. Mulberry sericulture is an important cash crop in rural parts of India. It is considered to be one among the poverty alleviation programmes in the rural areas. It offers periodical income and generates viable own family employment opportunities for marginal and small farm holdings round the year (Lakshmanan and Geethadevi, 1998). Keeping all these facts in consideration, the study has been undertaken in tribal areas of Udaipur district in Rajasthan state with the objective to know the socio-economic characteristics of sericulturists.

METHODOLOGY

The present research study has been conducted in Udaipur district of South Rajasthan during 2006-07. Two Tehsils namely, Mavli and Jhadol of Udaipur district were

selected purposively because of having maximum number of sericulture adopters in the district. The list of villages along with the name of adopters including year of adoption of sericulture of selected Tehsils was obtained from the voluntary institute, Rajasthan Vidyapeeth working specially on sericulture in these two Tehsils. From the list of sericulture adopters of the selected village, 70 adopters (35 from each Tehsil) who were engaged in sericulture since last 2-3 years, were selected for the present investigation as the respondent.

To measure the socio-economic status of the respondents, the socio-economic status scale developed by Trivedi (1969) was modified and used. The respondents were grouped in three categories as described below on the basis of score and standard deviation:

Sr. No.	Categories	Score range
1.	Low socio-economic status	18.44 and below
2.	Medium socio-economic status	18.45 to 29.44
3.	Higher socio-economic status	29.45 and above

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

Caste:

Perusal of Table 1 shows that majority (52%) of the respondents belonged to agricultural caste. The remaining

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48 per cent of the respondents were from other castes. It showed that sericulture is more popular in agricultural castes, followed by scheduled tribe and scheduled castes as an auxiliary occupation.

Occupation:

Information related to occupation was recorded in six categories *i.e.*, cultivation, caste occupation, independent occupation, service, business and labour. Majority of the respondents (67%) were having cultivation as the main occupation. It showed that sericulture is popular in the people having the occupation of cultivation followed by the people doing their caste occupation as a supplement to their primary occupation.

Education:

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents (40%) had occupation upto Primary level. 10 per cent of the respondents had education above primary level while 29 per cent of the respondents were illiterate and 18 per cent of the respondents had ability to read and write. So, it shows that the sericulture is extensively done by the people having education upto Primary level followed by the group of respondents who were illiterate because they can not get any other job requiring higher education.

Social participation:

Only 12 per cent respondents had membership of co-operative society. Remaining respondents had no participation in any organization. It shows lack of awakening to take advantage of the co-operative societies and other organizations who could guide them for technical know-how and the latest devices and trends in sericulture.

House, farm power, land holding and material possession:

Table 1 also shows that majority of the respondents (66%) had kuccha housing facility followed by 27 per cent respondents with pucca house. Only seven per cent of the respondents had mixed type of house. Majority of the respondents (71%) had 1-2 drought animals followed by 16 per cent of respondents who had 3-4 drought animals. The percentage of respondents who had 5-6 drought animals was equal to the percentage of respondents with no drought animals (*i.e.* 5%). There was only one farmer who had tractor. The Table 1 also reveals that maximum number of respondents (32%) has one to five bighas of land followed by 21 per cent of the respondents who had five to ten bighas of land. 77 per cent respondents were possessing bullock carts and 43 per cent possessed bicycle/moped. The number of farmers who possessed radio,

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents on the basis of personal characteristics (N=70)

Sr. No.	Characters	Percentage
1.	Caste:	
	Schedule caste	16
	Schedule tribe	22
	Lower caste	1
	Artisan caste	5
	Agricultural caste	52
2.	Occupation:	
	Cultivation	67
	Caste occupation	11
	Independent occupation	9
	Service	5
	Business	4
	Labour	4
3.	Education:	
	Illiterate	29
	Can read only	3
	Can read and write	18
	Primary	40
	Middle	6
4.	Social participation:	
	Member of one organization	12
5.	House:	
	Kaccha house	66
	Mixed house	7
	Pucca house	27
6.	Farm power:	
	No drought animal	5
	One to two drought animal	71
	Three to four drought animal	18
	Five to six drought animal	5
	Tractor	1
7.	Land holdings:	
	Less than one bigha	17
	1-5 bigha	32
	5-10 bigha	21
	10-15 bigha	14
	Above 15 bigha	16
8.	Material possession:	
	Bullock cart	77
	Bicycle/Moped	43
	Radio	11
	Chairs	15
	Deshi plough	61
9.	Family type:	
	Upto 5 members	68
	More than 5 members	32

chairs and deshi plough were 11, 15 and 61 per cent, respectively. All these facts showed that sericulture practices were followed by adopters of lower socio-economic status as a supplementary occupation to uplift their requirements.

Family size and type:

The present study showed that majority of the respondents (76%) were having nuclear family and the remaining 24 per cent of the respondents were having joint families. Sixty eight per cent of the respondents were having upto five members in their families and 32 per cent of the respondents had more than five members in their families. So, it proves that sericulture is more popular in the people having nuclear and upto 5 members in their family.

Socio-economic status :

The data presented in Table 2, indicate that majority of the respondents (66%) belonged to middle level socio-economic status, followed by 18 and 16 per cent of the mulberry sericulture adopter farmers which were grouped under low and higher socio-economic status, respectively.

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their socio-economic status

Sr. No.	Categories	Score range	Percentage
1.	High class	29.45 and above	16
2.	Middle class	18.46 to 29.44	66
3.	Low class	18.45 and below	18

It is concluded from the finding that the majority of the sericulturists belonged to agricultural caste having farming as a main occupation, they were educated upto Primary level, having no exposure to co-operative societies, they were having kuccha housing facilities with 1-2 drought animals. Maximum number of respondents possessed one to five bighas of land and having bullock carts. The majority of respondents had nuclear family. On the basis of the above informations the majority of sericulturists belonged to middle level socio-economic status. The results are supported by the findings of Satheesh (1990), Gopala (1991), Geetha *et al.* (2001), Munikrishnapa *et al.* (2002)

and Sunildutt and Chole (2002) who also concluded that the majority of the sericulture adopters belonged to various agricultural caste with agriculture and animal husbandry as the main occupation, as they were less educated and unknown about the activities of co-operative societies working in their areas.

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