

Study on the profile of papaya growers in Bidar and Gulbarga districts of Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out in Bidar and Gulbarga districts of Karnataka State. The profile analysis of respondents revealed that, they belonged to all the three age groups, one fourth of them had education up to middle school and above; majority of them belonged to medium extension participation, medium farming experience, low papaya farming experience, medium economic orientation, and high annual income. The results indicated that, majority of the respondents belonged to medium knowledge level with respect to papaya cultivation practices.

INTRODUCTION

Indian agriculture, the backbone of economy, dictates the livelihood system of farmers and millions of people, as it influences industries too. An agrarian structure has transformed owing to the production process, but the sector is presently at cross roads, with the advent of new forces in policy and trade sector. India has achieved self-sufficiency in food grain production but not in fruit production.

In recent years, greater attention is being paid to horticulture for better utilization and development of waste lands, which are not suitable for economic cultivation of field crops. (Agribusiness and Food Industry, February 2008).

Papaya (*Carica papaya* L.) belongs to the family *Caricaceae* and is commonly known as papaya, papaw or paw (Australia), Mamao (Brazil) and tree melon. It is believed to be a native of southern Mexico and neighbouring Central America.

It is now being cultivated in every tropical and subtropical country. Papaya needs specific climatic requirements for vigorous growth and fruit production. In general papaya needs warm climate throughout the year and will be damaged by light frosts. Brief exposure to 32° F is damaging and prolonged cold without overhead sprinkling will kill the plants. Cold, wet soil is almost always lethal and may lead to altered fruit flavour. Papaya makes excellent container and greenhouse specimens where soil moisture and temperature will be moderate.

Karnataka is a progressive state in the field of modern horticulture in the country. The diverse agro-ecological conditions prevailing in Karnataka has made it possible to grow different types of horticultural crops such as fruits, vegetables, flowers, spices, plantation crops, root and tuber crops, medicinal and aromatic crops etc. The vividity with respect to agro-climatic setting in the state can be a boon for planned horticultural development.

In spite of the progress made, the productivity of horticultural crops in general is still quite low and the post-harvest losses, particularly of perishable commodities, are considerable. Improvement in quality standards of the produce and their marketing is the need of the hour, to increase our share in the global market. Now, the progress in agriculture depends on the willingness and ability of farmers to use the new technology and required inputs. In this context, it is essential to understand the multi-dimensional behaviour of the farmers for adoption of improved agricultural practices. The extent of adoption of innovation which is the function of various personnel and socio-psychological characteristics of farmers can be used as the yard stick to measure the modernization in agriculture. Hence, the present study was undertaken to know the profile of the papaya growers of Bidar and Gulbarga districts of North Karnataka.

METHODS

The research design adopted for the study was ex-post-facto since the phenomenon had already occurred. The study was conducted during 2009 in selected taluks of Bidar and Gulbarga districts of North Karnataka. Out of the fifteen taluks from two districts, five talukas were selected which were the major areas that covered papaya cultivation. From each selected taluka, four villages were selected with highest area of papaya cultivation considered as the criteria. Six farmers from each village were selected for the study. The total sample size was 120.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

It could be seen from Table 1 that majority of the respondents (63.33%) belonged to middle age group, followed by young age (26.67%) and old age (10.00%) category. Usually, farmers of middle aged are enthusiastic having more responsibility and are more efficient than the younger and older ones. Further, respondents between 31 to 45 years of age group have more physical vigour and responsibility towards family than the younger ones. Majority of the respondents were in the age group of 31 to 45 years, who were active in adoption of agricultural practices. This category of farmers was highly composite and with high economic motivation. The results were in line with the research findings reported by Babanna (2002) and Thippeswamy (2007).

As is clear from Table 1, in respect of formal education level obtained, it was observed that 21.67 per cent were illiterates, whereas 20.00 per cent of the respondents had received primary education, followed by middle school education (25.00%) and only 13.33 per cent of respondents had received high school education, while 7.50 per cent, 10.83 per cent and 1.67 per cent of the respondents had education up to PUC, graduate level and, post graduate level, respectively. Non-realization of the influence of formal education in one's

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to their personal, economical, psychological characteristics (n=120)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Young (<30)	32	26.67
Middle(31-50)	76	63.33
Old(>51)	12	10.00
Education		
Illiterate	26	21.67
Primary school	24	20.00
Middle school	30	25.00
High school	16	13.33
PUC	9	7.50
Graduate	13	10.83
Post graduate	2	1.67
Annual income		
High (>51,000)	97	80.83
Medium (34,001-51,000)	13	10.83
Semi medium (17,001-34,000)	8	6.67
Cosmopolitaness		
Low (<3.76)	26	21.66
Medium (3.76-4.43)	57	47.50
High (>4.43)	39	32.50

life, illiteracy of the parents might have come in the way of getting them better education by their parents. Another contributing reason could be the rural social environment might not have encouraged their parents to provide education to their children. As the rural people have still traditional base, they generally do not prefer to send their children to school rather they want them to assist in farm and household activities. The distance of higher study centers from the villages and need for more investment also might have prevented the parents from providing higher education to their children. The above findings get support from the studies conducted by Babanna (2002) and Thippeswamy (2007).

The data of Table 1 pertaining to the annual income of the families of the respondents indicated that 80.33 per cent of respondents had an income more than Rs. 51,000. Whereas 10.83 per cent of respondents had an income Rs. 34,001 to Rs. 51,000 followed by 6.67 per cent of the respondents had an annual income between Rs. 17,001 to Rs. 34,000.

This is attributed to the family background of the respondents. The other reasons could be the larger land holding, practice of subsidiary occupations and more importantly practice of the papaya cultivation which is highly profitable and ensures higher income. The results get support from the findings of Thiranjangowda (2005) and Thippeswamy (2007).

The cosmopolitaness was analyzed with respect to respondent's frequency of visits and purpose of visits to the nearest town. Results of Table 1 revealed that 47.50 per cent of

the respondents were medium cosmopolite in nature followed by 32.50 per cent of beneficiaries were highly cosmopolite and 21.66 per cent of respondents were of low cosmopoliteness in nature.

The possible explanation for such a behaviour might be that papaya cultivation was newly introduced in the area and majority of respondents had low farming experience in papaya cultivation with high annual income, and medium economic motivation. So, the farmers seek more information on papaya cultivation. Naturally they need to visit nearest town frequently and collect the information and update their knowledge. The results were in line with the results of Keshavamurthy (2005) and Jayaprada (2007).

The data pertaining to overall farming experience of papaya growers is depicted in Table 2 which revealed that 50.00 per cent of the respondents belonged to low farming experience category followed by medium farming experience (37.50 %) and high farming experience (12.50%). Farming experience mainly depends upon age of the farmer. A majority of papaya growers belonged to middle age and old age category and they might have started farming in their middle and above. So majority of respondents had low farming experience. The findings get support from studies of Aski (2007).

A perusal of Table 3 revealed that, 46.67 per cent of the respondents regularly participated in field visits, while 25.00 per cent occasionally participated in field visits. Regarding extension meeting it was observed that, 42.50 per cent of the respondents regularly participated, while, 31.67 per cent of the respondents participated occasionally. In case of field days, it was observed that, the majority (56.67%) of the respondents occasionally participated, whereas only 10.83 per cent had regularly participated in field days. Regarding agricultural exhibition, 59.17 per cent of the respondents participated regularly while 28.33 per cent of the respondents participated occasionally in agricultural exhibition.

It is also clear from the result of Table 3 that only 29.17 per cent of the respondents participated occasionally in training programmes, whereas 13.33 per cent of the respondents participated regularly. Regarding Krishimela, it was observed that 51.67 per cent of the respondents visited occasionally, whereas 24.70 per cent visited regularly. Further, it was observed that 21.67 per cent occasionally participated in education tours,

whereas 13.33 per cent of respondents participated regularly. Only 16.00 per cent of the respondents participated occasionally in demonstrations, whereas 10.00 per cent of respondents participated regularly.

The participation of the respondents in other activities was comparatively low. The results implied that the participation in various extension activities was low because of lack of motivation and less interest and low educational level of the respondents might be the reason for the low participation in the extension activities. Extension participations are very important through which farmers can update their knowledge about papaya cultivation and which can increase adoption of technologies and reduce the technological gap.

The results from the Table 4 showed that, among informal information sources, relatives/friends and input agencies were regularly consulted sources of information by 84.17 per cent, and 63.33 per cent of the respondents, respectively, whereas, the same information sources were occasionally consulted by 15.83 per cent and 28.33 per cent of the respondents, respectively. Neighbours were occasional source of information for 54.17 per cent of the respondents. Among formal sources, 35.00 per cent of the respondents used to get information occasionally from Bank officials further 16.67 per cent of the respondents consulted Agril./Hort. Dept. As sources for information occasionally, 31.67 per cent of the respondents used to get information occasionally from NGO officials.

Among mass media information source consultancy, forty five per cent of the respondents, 31.67 per cent and 30.00 per cent, resorted to television, radio and news paper occasionally as information source consultancy, respectively followed by 36.67 per cent, 15.00 per cent and 58.33 per cent of them regularly used the same sources of information source consultancy.

Relatives/friends and input agencies were the regularly consulted and neighbours were occasionally consulted as source of information. Good relation with the relatives and also with the friends was the reason to consult them regularly. To seek technical information input agencies were next best important source of information so they might have consulted input agencies regularly for seeking the technical information.

Among formal sources, NGO officials and Bank officials were consulted occasionally for the source of information, which showed the good relationships between NGO officials

Sr. No.	Category	Overall farming experience		Papaya farming experience	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	37	30.83	60	50.00
2.	Medium	52	43.33	45	37.50
3.	High	31	25.83	15	12.50
	Total	120	100	120	100
	Mean = 18.45	SD = 8.36 (Farming experience)			
	Mean = 1.65	SD = 0.77 (Papaya experience)			

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to their extension participation (n=120)

Sr. No.	Extension activity	Regular		Occasional		Never	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Training	16	13.33	35	29.17	69	57.50
2.	Demonstration	12	10.00	28	16.00	84	70.00
3.	Field day	13	10.83	68	56.67	39	32.50
4.	Field visit	56	46.67	30	25.00	34	28.33
5.	Extension meeting	51	42.50	38	31.67	31	25.83
6.	Agricultural exhibition	71	59.17	34	28.33	15	12.50
7.	Krishi mela	29	24.17	62	51.67	29	24.17
8.	Educational tours	16	13.33	26	21.67	78	65

F= Frequency % = Percentage

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents according to their information source consultancy (n=120)

Sr. No.	Sources	Regularly		Occasionally		Never	
		F	%	F	%	F	%
1. Informal sources							
	Relatives /Friends	101	84.17	19	15.83	0	0.00
	Neighbours	21	17.50	65	54.17	34	28.33
	Input agencies	76	63.33	34	28.33	10	8.33
2. Formal sources							
	Bank officials	21	17.50	42	35.00	57	47.50
	Agril./Hort.Dept. staff	68	56.67	20	16.67	32	26.67
	NGO officials	14	11.67	38	31.67	68	56.67
3. Mass media							
	News paper	70	58.33	36	30.00	14	11.67
	Radio	18	15.00	38	31.67	64	53.33
	Television	44	36.67	54	45.00	22	18.33

and respondents. Majority of the respondents had high income and middle aged category so they have regularly consulted the formal sources and Agri/horticultural department officials.

Mass media sources such as television, radio and news paper were occasionally used as source of information by majority of the respondents, followed by news paper and radio were least used as source of information by more number of respondents. The findings of the study are in conformity with the findings of Biradar (2008).

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