



Research Article

## Study on the profile of awardee farmers in North Karnataka

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**SUMMARY :** The present study was carried out in the twelve districts of Karnataka State. The profile analysis of respondents revealed that, an equal per cent of awardee farmers (45.00% each) belonged to middle and old age group, one fourth of them had education up to middle school and above, majority of them had medium family size, high farming experience, one fourth of them are big farmers, had high annual income, medium material possession, high leadership ability, high decision making ability, high information seeking behaviour, medium mass media exposure, medium extension participation, low social participation and low scientific orientation.

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### BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Indian Agriculture is striving towards inclusive growth by ensuring augmentation in productivity, sustainability and profitability by integrating experiences and efforts of the concerned stakeholders. To achieve this, innovation in technology, institution and policy is certainly a major and crucial key. "Many technologists believe that advantageous innovations will sell themselves, that the obvious benefits of a new idea will be widely realized by potential adopters, and that the innovation will therefore diffuse rapidly. Seldom is this the case. Most innovations, in fact, diffuse at a disappointingly slow rate" (Rogers, 1995).

In order to encourage effective transfer of proven technology to the farming community in the jurisdiction of the University and also to create a healthy competition among farmers / farm women in obtaining higher productivity in agriculture and allied fields, the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad introduced "Best farmer" and "Best farm women" awards for the eligible farmers and farm women from 12 districts of Northern Karnataka under its jurisdiction during 2003. A number of state and national level sponsored programs on extension activities are being implemented in India. Special programs have

been launched in the memory of great leaders to honor farmers / farm women by recognizing their contributions in the field of agriculture and allied activities. The timely efforts made by the transfer of technology centers and by the active involvement of scientists in the transfer of technology, several farmers from Northern Karnataka have been recognized and won the prestigious awards such as, ASPEE L.M.Patel Award, Krishi Pandit award, Krishi Prashsti award etc. The brief highlights of the awards since inception and efforts made by the transfer of technology centres are indicated below.

#### **Shreshta Krishika and Shreshta Krishi Mahile award:**

In order to encourage innovative men farmers and women farmers in all the 12 districts of the University's jurisdiction, one man and one woman per district per year were identified and honored with the title of 'Shreshta Krishika' and 'Shreshta Krishi Mahile' during Krishi Mela, since 2003 – a big farm festival of the University for the cause of progressive and prosperity of the farming community.

With this central idea in mind, the present research work was aimed at throwing light on the successful farmers who have got recognition from UAS, Dharwad for their achievement in farming.

**KEY WORDS :**

Awardee farmers, Age, Family size, Annual income, Agriculture

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Since, 2003, UAS, Dharwad has been awarding farmers and farm women by 'Shreshta Krishika' and 'Shreshta Krishi Mahile' award, respectively. Every year this award is conferred to the awardee during KrishiMela organized by the university. UAS, Dharwad had 12 districts under its jurisdiction *viz.*, North Kanara, Haveri, Gadag, Dharwad, Belgaum, Bijapur, Bagalkot, Koppal, Bellary, Gulbarga, Raichur and Bidar till the formation of new Agricultural University at Raichur in the year 2009. At present, the jurisdiction is restricted to seven districts *viz.*, North Kanara, Haveri, Gadag, Dharwad, Belgaum, Bijapur and Bagalkot.

From each district, one farmer and one farm women is selected for the award by the committee formed by university. From 2003 to 2012, 105 farmers and 101 farm women had received the awards.

## RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in 12 districts of North Karnataka under the erstwhile jurisdiction of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad *viz.*, North Kanara, Haveri, Gadag, Dharwad, Belgaum, Bijapur, Bagalkot, Koppal, Bellary, Gulbarga, Raichur and Bidar.

A list of farmers who have been conferred the Shreshta Krishika and ShreshtaKrishiMahileaward was obtained from the concerned officials of the Directorate of Extension, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad. All the farmers who have been given Shreshta Krishika and Shreshta Krishi Mahile award during the period from 2003 to 2012 constituted the population of the study. From 2003 to 2012 total numbers of awardees is 206, which included 105 men and 101 women farmers. From the total of the 206 awardee farmers, 120 farmers were selected using random number table.

## OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

A perusal of Table 1 indicated that, an equal per cent of awardee farmers (45.00% each) belonged to middle and old age group, while a meager 10.00 per cent were observed in young age category. The finding is supported by the findings of Manjula (2003).

The reason might be that, these farmers might be practicing or are engaged in the agricultural activities from their young age itself. To be considered for prestigious award competition, one's professional capabilities and experiences is counted. This requires a sufficient time period to gain experience in the field apart from other requirements. Hence, the farmers might have reached middle to old age category to participate in the award competition.

An insight in Table 1 indicated that an equal percentage of awardee farmers (24.17%) had education up to high school and degree level (24.17%), respectively. Nearly 16.67 per cent of the respondents were illiterate and had middle school

education, followed by PUC and diploma education (10.00%), a meager percentage of the respondents studied up to primary school (5.00 %) and post-graduation (4.17%). These findings are supported with the findings of Vimalraj (2010)

One of the possible reasons might be that, farmers with higher education are better exposed to outside world which resulted in better contact with the extension personnel and likely to acquire more information for their upcoming. Few farmers came back to farming after their education and few other engaged themselves after retirement from job. Therefore, it is reasonable to find better education level among awardee farmers.

It was noticed from Table 1 that 58.33 per cent of the respondents belonged to medium family size, followed by an equal percentage of respondents (20.83%) belonging to small and large family size, respectively.

Farm operations depend upon working labour available in each family. Generally medium and big family size will have more labour force when compared to small family; this finding is supported by the findings of Manjula (2003).

Distribution of respondents according to land holding as presented in Table 1 revealed that, 35.00 per cent of the awardee farmers were big farmers with 10.01 ha land, followed by medium farmers (29.17%) with a land of 4.01 to 10.00 ha. While 17.50 per cent were semi medium farmers (2.01 to 4.00 ha) and 10.83 per cent of them were small farmers (1.01 to 2.01 ha). A meagre 7.50 per cent of them were marginal farmers with < 1 ha. Vimalraj (2010) reported similar findings.

A Land holding is a time bound asset which might have been passed on from generation to generation. Moreover, these are progressive farmers and might have purchased more land because they are confident of doing more crop enterprises due to their rich experience. Land holdings are significantly found to be related to, the geographical area reflecting large holdings in dry land zone, while smaller areas in hilly areas or irrigated areas.

The data pertaining to overall farming experience of awardee farmers showed that 57.50 per cent of the respondents belonged to high farming experience category followed by medium (25.00%) and low farming experience (17.50%) (Table 1).

Profile analysis of age aptly supports the above findings that the middle and old age farmers have been selected for the award.

The reason for this could be that, in order to take up efficient farming, one need to have longer experience, if one wants to compete in an award competition. Higher confidence and more knowledge is usually associated with higher farming experience. These findings are in line with the findings of Manjula (2003).

It is observed from Table 1 that majority of the respondents (62.50%) were in 'high' income group followed

**Table 1 : Socio economic profile of the awardee farmers****(n=120)**

Sr. No.	Variables	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>			
1	Young (< 35 years)	12	10.00
2	Middle (35-50 years)	54	45.00
3	Old (>50 years)	54	45.00
<b>Education</b>			
1	Illiterate	19	16.67
2	Primary school	6	5.00
3	Middle school	18	15.00
4	High school	29	24.17
5	PUC/Diploma	12	10.00
6	Degree	29	24.17
7	Post graduate	5	4.17
<b>Family size</b>			
1	Small (up to 4 members)	25	20.83
2	Medium (5 to 8 members)	70	58.33
3	Large (above 8 members)	25	20.83
<b>Size of the land holding</b>			
1	Marginal farmers (upto 1.00 ha)	9	7.50
2	Small farmers (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	13	10.83
3	Semi-medium farmers (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	21	17.50
4	Medium farmers (4.01 to 10.00 ha)	35	29.17
5	Big farmers (>10.01 ha)	42	35.00
<b>Farming experience</b>			
1	Low (<10 yrs)	21	17.50
2	Medium (10.01-20 yrs)	30	25.00
3	High (>20.01 yrs)	69	57.50
<b>Annual income</b>			
1	Low (Rs< 145815.08)	23	19.16
2	Medium (Rs 145815.08- 2230318.25)	22	18.33
3	High (Rs>2230318.25)	75	62.50
	Mean= 1188066.66SD= 2452356.67		
<b>Material possession</b>			
1.	Low (< 9.44)	40	33.33
2.	Medium (9.44 -12.48)	41	34.16
3.	High (>12.48)	39	32.50
	Mean= 10.95 SD=3.58		
<b>Leadership Ability</b>			
1.	Low (<9.87)	39	32.50
2.	Medium (9.87-13.06)	6	5.00
3.	High (>13.06)	75	62.50
	Mean= 10.95 SD=3.58		
<b>Decision Making ability</b>			
1.	Low (<16.63)	28	23.33
2.	Medium (16.63-17.79)	16	13.33
3.	High (>17.79)	76	63.33
	Mean = 17.20 SD=1.36		

Table 1 contd....

Contd.... Table 1

<b>Information seeking behaviour</b>			
1.	Low (<15.50)	30	25.00
2.	Medium (15.50-19.13)	13	10.83
3.	High (>19.13)	77	64.16
	Mean=17.31 SD= 4.27		
<b>Mass media exposure</b>			
1.	Low (<18.45)	31	25.83
2.	Medium (18.45-23.14)	56	46.66
3.	High (>23.14)	33	27.50
	Mean= 19.26 SD= 5.19		
<b>Extension participation</b>			
1.	Low (<7.31)	48	40.00
2.	Medium(7.31-13.29)	37	30.83
3.	High (>13.29)	35	29.16
	Mean= 5.59 SD=4.68		
<b>Social participation</b>			
1.	Low (< 2.13)	49	40.83
2.	Medium(2.13-5.52)	48	40.00
3.	High (>5.52)	20	16.66
	Mean= 1.67 SD=2.66		
<b>Scientific orientation</b>			
1.	Low (<9.20)	17	56.67
2.	Medium (9.20-10.12)	75	29.17
3.	High (>10.12)	35	14.17
	Mean= 9.62 SD=1.14		

by 19.16 per cent in 'low' income group and 18.33 per cent in 'medium' income group.

The possible reason might be the land holdings possessed by the farmers and their interest to adopt new innovations, grow commercial crops and engage in different occupations other than agriculture might have contributed to the above findings. This finding is supported by the findings of Amol (2006).

A close observation of Table 1 reveals that well over one third (34.16%) of the respondents belonged to medium material possession category, followed by 33.33 per cent and 32.50 per cent were categorized under low and high material possession category, respectively.

Owning of farm implements is a pre-requisite for efficient farming. It is difficult to attend timely operations without the required farm implements. Since these farmers are highly committed to farming, it is likely that they possessed the farm implements important to them in carrying out day to day farming operations. Because of high mass media exposure, extension contact, information seeking behaviour nature and high aspiration, might have influenced purchase of modern equipments among these farmers. These findings are in line

with the findings of Manjula (2003), who observed majority of respondents belonged to medium material possession category, followed by low and high material possession category.

It is quite clear from Table 1 that, 62.50 per cent of the respondents had high leadership ability, followed by low leadership ability (32.50%). However, only five per cent of them belonged to medium leadership ability category.

Awardee farmers are perceived to be influential leaders in several aspects due to their innovative behaviour. In a social system, progressive farmers who generally are early adopters are consulted by fellow farmers for information and are readily accepted as leaders. They gain status of accepted leaders due to their experience and easy approach among fellow farmers. The results are in conformity with the finding of Suresh (2004).

The results presented in Table 1 clearly indicated that majority (63.33%) of the respondents had high level of decision making ability, followed by 23.33 and 13.33 per cent in low and medium level of decision making ability category, respectively.

Decision making is the process of consciously choosing courses of action from available alternatives and integrating

them for the purpose of achieving the desired goal.

Decision making is an integral part of planning. Decision making concept is highly influenced by close interaction among co-farmers, family members and friends. Most of the decisions are influenced by these close members of group dynamics which in turn effect the decision making process of an individual. Decision making is also enhanced by experience, social contact and exposure through participation in activities, mass media use and contact with experts, which help an individual in understanding the relative importance attached to available alternatives and choosing the best option from available alternatives. Decision making may vary from very simple routine type to a complex and difficult one. It is generally influenced by the level of knowledge, cost involved and time available in taking and implementing the decision. The findings are supported by the findings of Belli (2008), who observed that majority of the respondents had high level of decision making ability, followed by low and medium level of decision making ability category, respectively.

A close observation of Table 1 reveals that well over one third (64.16%) of the respondents belonged to high information seeking behaviour category, while 25.00 per cent and 10.83 per cent of them were observed under low and medium information seeking behaviour category, respectively.

Sources which are easily approachable and had more credibility are the one which are frequently and might be of interest to awardee farmers in getting information. In order to gain up to date knowledge, the farmers might have felt to establish contact with extension functionaries, so that they can adopt improved practices in order to get higher yield and income. This finding is supported by the findings of Patil (2008) and Manjula (2003).

A close observation of Table 1 revealed that nearly half (46.66%) of the respondents belonged to medium mass media exposure category, followed by 27.50 and 25.83 per cent were observed under high and low medium mass media exposure category, respectively.

This may be due to the awareness and importance of mass media as a source of getting information. Moreover educational qualification and annual income of the respondents might have contributed to the above results; this finding is supported by the findings of Manjula (2003).

A close observation of Table 1 reveals that well over one third of the respondents (40.00%) had low extension participation category followed by 30.83 and 29.16 per cent were categorized under medium and high extension participation category, respectively.

These activities are organized locally by the extension personnel and such awardee farmers are sought as speakers to share their vast experience and are consulted before organizing these events. As a result, awardee farmers invariably participate, share their experiences and contribute in the

programme. Participation in such activities usually demands experience and knowledge useful for other farmers and society as a whole. Resourceful and motivated farmers would generally participate in such events. Awardee farmers are bestowed with characteristics of leadership and are considered as role models by fellow farmers. These results are supported by the findings of Manjula (2003).

The data with regard to social participation of the respondents were analysed and findings in this respect are presented in Table 1 that 53.33 per cent of respondents were the members of co-operative society, with regular participation (30.00%), followed by membership of self-help groups (42.50%), school betterment committee (15.83%), mahila mandals (15.00%), religious institutions (11.67%) and youth club office bearers (6.67%).

A close observation of Table 1 reveals that well over the third (40.83%) of the respondents had low social participation category, followed by 40.00 and 16.66 per cent of them in under medium and high social participation category, respectively. This finding is supported by the findings of Manjula (2003).

Discussion made earlier with respect to extension participation holds good for social participation too, as it is observed that most of the activities are carried out in tandem and awardee farmers are considered as influential leaders to members of society.

Analysis of data in table revealed that 56.67 per cent of the awardee farmers belonged to medium scientific orientation category, whereas, 29.17 and 14.17 per cent of them were observed in high and low scientific orientation category, respectively (Table 1).

Scientific orientation refers to the extent of use of scientific methods in each of his actions. It is the foresight, logical thinking and rationality which helps the individual to understand the object. It might be due to this reason that respondents with higher scientific orientation also had medium innovative behaviour qualities score. The results are in conformity with the findings of Ajaykumar (1989) and Karapagam (2000).

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