

Research Article

Constraints encountered by paddy growers of Tripura

■ D. NATH AND L.C. PATEL

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SUMMARY : The study was conducted in undivided West Tripura district of Tripura with 180 randomly selected paddy growers. The data collection was done with a structured interview schedule through personal interview method where identified constraints were grouped in three categories such as technological, infrastructural and economical constraints. In order to ascertain the degree of seriousness of the constraints the items under each category were measured in most serious, serious and not so serious level with score 3, 2 and 1, respectively. Out of technological constraints; the most serious problem was occurrence of insect-pests and diseases with mean score 2.45 followed by lack of knowledge on scientific crop production with mean score 2.41 which got 1st and 2nd rank, respectively. Among the infrastructural constraints; the most serious problem was lack of irrigation facilities (MS 2.83, Rank I) and less cultivable land (MS 2.73, Rank II) whereas non-availability of labour during peak period (MS 2.86) was the most serious problem under economical constraints which got 1st rank. The less serious problem was moisture stress during crop growth period (MS 1.45, Rank V) followed by poor seed germination due to low soil moisture at the time of sowing (MS 1.30, Rank VI) under technological constraints with non-availability of quality seed (MS 1.47, Rank VI), non-availability of timely credit facilities (MS 1.47, Rank III) and high cost of agricultural chemicals (MS 1.33, Rank IV) under infrastructural and economical constraints.

KEY WORDS :

Constraints,
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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Tripura, a land locked state of North-Eastern Region of India has a total geographical area of 10,491.69 km² (*i.e.* 0.32% of the total geographical area of the country) with altitude 780 m (north-eastern part) to 15 m (western part) above mean sea level. Terrain of the state is parallel hills and ridges alternated with narrow valleys and vegetation is tropical forest type (Dutta *et al.*, 2009). The basic agricultural statistics of the state is that more than 60 per cent out of total geographical area mentioned above is under forest and the net cultivable area is only 2800 km² (26.68% of total geographical area). Food crops cover 96.81 per cent of the net cultivable area with 176 per cent cropping intensity and 51 per cent of total working force is engaged in agriculture

(Anonymous, 2008). Paddy area to the total cultivable area is 78.1 per cent with major rice seasons are April to June (Aush), July to Nov (Aman) and December to March (Boro). States contribution to national paddy production is 0.66 per cent with an average productivity of 3.71 tons per ha and the all-India rank in productivity is 7th (www.sri-india.net).

Keeping this in view, the study was undertaken in undivided West Tripura district (West Tripura and Khowai district) to find out the constraints faced by the paddy growers of Tripura.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The study was conducted in undivided West Tripura district (West Tripura and Khowai

Author for correspondence :

D. NATH

Krishi Vigyan Kendra,
KHOWAI (TRIPURA)
INDIA

Email: spd020@yahoo.co.in

See end of the article for
authors' affiliations

district) of Tripura with 180 randomly selected paddy growers. A structured interview schedule was administered to individual respondents to collect the relevant data/ information from the

respondents. The socio personal characteristics like age, educational level, mass media exposure, marital status and social participation of the respondents were also measured.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their socio- personal characteristics

(n= 180)

Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	25- 29 years	16	8.89
	30- 34 years	59	33.78
	35 years and above	105	58.33
Educational level	Illiterate	2	1.11
	Up to primary school	17	9.44
	Up to class X	126	70.00
	Up to class XII	34	18.89
	Up to degree level or above	1	0.56
Mass media exposure	Low	121	67.22
	Medium	55	30.56
	High	4	2.22
Marital status	Single	18	10.00
	Married	162	90.00
Social participation	No membership	65	36.11
	Member of one organization	94	52.22
	Member of more than one organization	12	6.67
	Office bearers (secretary/president etc.)	9	5.00

Table 2: Constraints encountered by paddy growers of Tripura

(n= 180)

Sr. No.	Constraints	Distribution of respondents based on seriousness of the constraints						Weight mean score	Rank
		Most serious		Serious		Not so serious			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
Technological									
i.	Lack of knowledge on scientific crop production	89	49.44	75	41.67	16	8.89	2.41	II
ii.	Lack of regular visit by extension personnel to villages	65	36.11	55	30.56	60	33.33	2.03	III
iii.	Poor fertility of soil	34	18.89	90	50.00	46	25.56	1.82	IV
iv.	Occurrence of insect-pests and diseases	103	57.22	55	30.56	22	12.22	2.45	I
v.	Poor seed germination due to low soil moisture at the time of sowing	12	6.67	29	16.11	139	77.22	1.30	VI
vi.	Moisture stress during crop growth period	19	10.56	51	28.33	102	56.67	1.45	V
Infrastructural									
i.	Less cultivable land	134	74.44	41	22.78	7	3.89	2.73	II
ii.	Non-availability of quality seed	23	12.78	39	21.67	118	65.56	1.47	VI
iii.	Non-availability of agricultural chemicals in time	45	25.00	121	67.22	14	7.78	2.17	IV
iv.	Inability to purchase modern agricultural implements	44	24.44	131	72.78	5	2.78	2.22	III
v.	Lack of irrigation facilities	155	83.33	20	11.11	5	2.78	2.83	I
vi.	Unawareness of govt. subsidy programme	13	7.22	147	81.67	10	5.56	1.91	V
Economical									
i.	Non-availability of labour during peak period	155	86.11	25	13.89	0	0	2.86	I
ii.	Non-availability of timely credit facilities	17	9.44	51	28.33	112	62.22	1.47	III
iii.	High cost of agricultural chemicals	12	6.67	36	20.00	132	73.33	1.33	IV
iv.	Low selling price	81	45.00	65	36.11	34	18.89	2.26	II

The identified constraints were grouped in three categories such as technological, infrastructural and economical constraints. In order to ascertain the degree of seriousness of the problems, the items under each category were measured in most serious, serious and not so serious level with score 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The weights mean score for each problem were also calculated to find out the seriousness of the problem in low (1-1.66), medium (1.67-2.32) and high (2.33-3.00) category with rank.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The socio personal characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1. Data presented in Table 2 reveal that out of technological constraints; the most serious problem was occurrence of insect-pests and diseases with mean score 2.45 followed by lack of knowledge on scientific crop production with mean score 2.41 which got 1st and 2nd rank, respectively. Among the infrastructural constraints the most serious problem was lack of irrigation facilities (MS 2.83) and less cultivable land (MS 2.73) with 1st and 2nd rank, respectively. Non-availability of labour during peak period (MS 2.86) was the most serious problem under economical constraints which got 1st rank. The moderate technological constraints were lack of regular visit by extension personnel to villages (MS 2.03, Rank III) and poor fertility of soil (MS 1.82, Rank IV) with inability to purchase modern agricultural implements (MS 2.22, Rank III), non-availability of agricultural chemicals in time (MS 2.17, Rank IV) and unawareness of govt. subsidy programme (MS 1.91, Rank V) under moderate infrastructural constraints whereas moderate economical problem was low selling price with MS 2.26 which got 2nd rank. The less serious or not a problem were moisture stress during crop growth period (MS 1.45, Rank V) followed by poor seed germination due to low soil moisture at the time of sowing (MS 1.30, Rank VI) under technological constraints. The less serious problem under infrastructural and economical constraints were non-

availability of quality seed (MS 1.47, Rank VI), non-availability of timely credit facilities (MS 1.47, Rank III) and high cost of agricultural chemicals (MS 1.33, Rank IV).

Conclusion:

It is very much evident from the study that there existed a wide gap between development of technologies and their transfer to actual farming situations. Hence, these constraints perceived by the farmers could be overcome by the following proper strategies like suitable and intensified awareness and training programme on production technologies among the farmers of the district. Improved and short duration of high yielding varieties recommended for the district should be made available to the farmers. State Department of Agriculture and Zonal Research Stations may take concerted initiatives in this regard supported by financial institutions to provide credit facilities in terms of short-term loan to the farmers. Moreover, the State Government should prepare policy to provide the minimum support price, irrigation facility, availability of agricultural chemicals, more nos. of subsidy programme for farm machineries etc in the state, which will encourage the growers for extensive cultivation in the district.

Authors' affiliations :

L.C. PATEL, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, KHOWAI (TRIPURA) INDIA

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