

Research Article

Socio-economic characteristics of Bidi tobacco growers and factor associated with technological gap

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SUMMARY : Study was conducted in Chikkodi and Hukkeri talukas of Belgaum district based on highest area under tobacco cultivation in the state. The ex-post-facto research design was used for the study. Each of six villages were identified from two talukas, respectively, based on highest area under tobacco cultivation. Intern ten respondents were selected randomly from each village. Thus, the total sample size constituted 120 respondents. Data were personally collected by personal interview method using pre-structured interview schedule. Totally eight independent variables were studied in addition to dependent variables. The results revealed that majority of the respondents were middle aged. It was observed that out of the eight variables selected age and education showed non significant and negative relationship with technological gap. Economic status, size of holding and area under Bidi tobacco of respondents were found to have negative and significant relationship with technological gap.

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SES of tobacco growers, Factors of TG, Relationship

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Agriculture in India continues to be a game of natural hazards. Over 65 per cent of the cultivated area in India depends on the vagaries of monsoon. Development of agricultural to its fullest potential is, therefore, the king-pin of the Indian economy and a prosperous farm economy can usher in an area of lasting peace and economic stability. In the past two decades, agricultural technology has changed from conventional method and techniques to new methods and techniques. Technological changes however, have opened up a new era for Indian farming community. At present, adoption of agricultural technologies is confined only to certain sections of farming community leading to socio-economic disparities. As a result, new technologies will have to be developed for smaller farmers with different socio-economic

conditions for their uptake. This pre-supposes not only a managerial view of development but also efforts to carry the new agricultural strategy, depending upon the potentiality for growth, based upon the characteristics of each region, to sectors of rural society and to areas hitherto not understood. The adoption of technology involves a series of decisions that farmers have to talk appropriate times and in a rational manner. Tobacco is an export crop grown worldwide in more than 120 countries (Rweyemanu and Kimaro, 2006). Tobacco sub-sector offers employment in both tobacco farms and in the tobacco processing factories. In addition, the crop provides raw material for cigarette manufacturing factories, thus, offering further employment opportunities to people in the country (Rweyemanu and Kimaro, 2006). several studies such as study on technological gap and constraints of bidi tobacco cultivation (Swami, 2006), discrimination and

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classification of tobacco wastes by identification and quantification of polyphenols (Wang, 2010), biological indicators of air quality (Azadi, 2004) have been undertaken.

Keeping this in view, the present study was conducted to study the profile of Bidi tobacco farmers and to find out the relationship between different personal, psychological and socio-economic characteristics of farmers and their technological gap.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Chikkodi and Hukkeri talukas of Belgaum district based on highest area under tobacco cultivation. The ex-post-facto research design was used for the study. Each of six villages were identified from two talukas, respectively, based on highest area under tobacco cultivation. Intern ten respondents were selected randomly from each villages. Thus, the total sample size constituted 120 respondents. Data were personally collected by personal interview method using pre-structured interview schedule. Totally eight independent variables were studied in addition to dependent variables.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results presented in Table 1 indicated that majority of the respondents were middle aged. Farmers of middle age proved to be more enthusiastic and have more work efficiency than the old and young farmers. Majority of the respondents were having secondary school education, only 26.00 per cent studied upto primary school followed by 10.67 per cent illiterate and only 8.00 per cent were educated upto college and degree. In general, the respondents were found to be educated. This could be as a result of a common social environment. In the present scenario, almost everybody wants to be literate because of awareness about the importance of the education by the various government literacy programmes. One fourth of the respondent families (35.83%) had annual income above Rs. 33,000. The possible reason that could be attributed was their large size land holdings. Nearly 38.00 per cent of the respondent families had land holding upto 5 acres. The fragmentation of ancestral land from generation to generation might have led to smaller size of land holdings. Majority of the respondents (58.00%) had medium risk taking ability, while 24.00 per cent had high risk taking ability. The possible reason could be the dryland nature of farming in the study area. Farmers in such areas tend to possess medium risk based on profits assumed. Nearly half of the respondents (44.17%) were found in medium category of credit orientation. The probable reason for the above results might be that the farmers are not aware of the institutionalized credit agencies and they hesitate to go through the lengthy procedures. Majority of the respondents (78.00%) were found to have medium

innovativeness, while 12.67 and 9.33 per cent of them had high and low innovativeness, respectively. This could be attributed to the medium level of education of the respondents that helped them to acquire new technology on their fields. Further, because of dryland farming, they might be interested to adopt new innovation to increase their income level.

Table 1: Personal and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents (n=120)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Young - < 34 years	30	24.67
Middle – 34-40 years	55	46.00
Old - > 40 years	35	29.33
Education		
Illiterate	13	10.67
Primary school	31	26.00
Secondary education	66	55.33
Graduate and above	10	8.00
Annual income		
Upto Rs. 11,000	17	14.67
Rs. 11,001 to Rs. 22,000	27	22.50
Rs. 22,001 to Rs. 23,000	23	19.33
Above Rs. 33,000	43	35.83
Land holding		
Upto 2.5 acres	14	12.00
2.5 – 5.0 acres	30	25.33
5.1 – 10 acres	33	28.00
10.1 – 25 acres	36	30.00
> 25 acres	07	4.67
Area under Bidi tobacco		
Upto 2.5 acres	22	18.34
2.5 – 5.0 acres	35	29.16
5.1 – 10 acres	21	17.50
10.1 – 25 acres	40	33.33
> 25 acres	02	1.67
Innovativeness		
Low (Mean – S.D.)	11	9.33
Middle (Mean \pm S.D.)	93	78.00
High (Mean \pm S.D.)	16	12.67
Risk orientation		
Low (Mean – S.D.)	22	18.00
Middle (Mean \pm S.D.)	69	58.00
High (Mean \pm S.D.)	29	24.00
Credit orientation		
Low (Mean – S.D.)	29	24.17
Middle (Mean \pm S.D.)	53	44.17
High (Mean \pm S.D.)	38	31.66

Factors associated with gaps in Bidi tobacco adoption among farmers:

It was observed from the results of Table 2 that out of the eight variables selected, age and education showed non significant negative relationship with technological gap. The findings are in tune with that of Bhaskaran and Thampi (1986), Patil (1995) and Nagabhushanam and Kartikeyan (1998). Economic variables like economic status, size of holding and area under Bidi tobacco were found to have negative significant relationship with technological gap. This may be expected as better economic status can lead to better technology adoption and their by lesser technological gap. The results find support from the findings of Nikhade *et al.* (1997), Nagabhushanam and Kartikeyan (1998) and Sulaiman and Prasad (1993). Psychological variables like innovativeness and risk orientation also showed a significant negative relationship with technological gap. It is self explanatory that an individual having more of these characteristics end to be more scientific and hence, experimental adopt newer technologies. This would result in decreased technological gap. The findings are in conformity to those of Mercy Kutty (1997) and Venkatesh Prasad *et al.* (1999) in case of innovativeness and risk orientation.

Table 2: Factors associated with gaps in bidi tobacco technologies adoption among growers

Sr. No.	Variables	Correlation co-efficients (r)
1.	Age	-0.11 ^{NS}
2.	Education	-0.16 ^{NS}
3.	Annual income	-0.39**
4.	Land holding	-0.31**
5.	Area under tobacco	-0.42**
6.	Innovativeness	-0.41**
7.	Risk orientation	-0.60**
8.	Credit orientation	-0.22*

*and ** indicate significance of values at P=0.05 and 0.01, respectively
NS = Non-significant

Conclusion:

The study concluded that majority of the respondents were middle aged (46.00%), educated upto high school

(28.00%) and had land holding upto 5.0 acres (37.33%). All the eight variables showed a negative relationship with the technological gap. Two variables *viz.*, age and education had a non-significant negative relationship. It clearly shows that series of trainings, result demonstration, method demonstration, block demonstration should be designed to empower the tobacco growers.

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