

Profile Characteristics of the Vegetable Grower Members and Non-members of Farmer Producer Organization

P.B. Kharde^{1*}, G.K. Sasane², P.S. Latamble¹ and Ramesh C. Bunkar³

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Agricultural Extension Education,

Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth Rahuri (Maharashtra), India,

²Associate Dean, Punyashlok Ahilyadevi College of Agriculture Halgaon, MPKV, Rahuri (Maharashtra), India.

³Ph.D. Scholar, Division of Dairy Extension, ICAR-NDRI, Karnal (Haryana), India.

(Corresponding author: Kharde P.B.*)

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ABSTRACT: Collectivization of producers, especially small and marginal farmers, into producer organizations has emerged as one of the most effective pathway to address the many challenges of agriculture such as small and fragmented land holdings, lack of marketing and storage facilities, credit availability etc. Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt. of India has identified that FPO is the most appropriate institutional form to mobilize farmers and build their capacity to leverage their production and marketing strength. Two functional FPO were selected from Pune district of Maharashtra and from that 180 vegetable grower members of FPO and 180 non-members were selected for the research. Primarily socio-economic and personal characteristic of each member and non-member was considered for the study. According to the study, Majority of FPC members vegetable growers were middle age (45.55%) and 42.78 per cent non-members were middle aged, 34.44 per cent and 28.33 per cent vegetable grower members of FPC and non-members are having secondary education, 29.44 per cent and 31.67 per cent members and non-members had very low farming experience up to 14 years, Majority of Member (63.89%) and Non-members (54.44%) had medium level of annual income, majority of member and non-members are under small farmer category i.e. having land 1.01 to 2.00ha, 54.44 per cent and 43.89 per cent of FPC member and non-members had medium area under vegetable crop. The results also showed that most respondents have medium extension contact, mass media exposure, economic motivation and marketing behaviour.

Keywords: FPO, Vegetable growers, Member, Non-member and marketing strength.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture had always been a lifeline of the Indian economy, providing livelihood to millions of farmers. India's agriculture has been crucial in meeting almost the entire food requirement of country and production trend has reached to a commendable state of self-sufficiency. However, huge increase in production of agricultural commodities has not resulted in that much better level of financial status of farmers. The primary issue facing Indian agriculture is the declining amount of land held. These farmers experience a number of innate issues because they are small holders especially lack of economies of scale, accessibility of information and their unwillingness to be involved in the process of price discovery. Therefore, the agriculture sector's top priority is to address the issues facing small holders due to their current circumstances. The integration of food markets, due to the rise of modern retail chain and supermarkets, has created opportunities as well as challenges for farmers (Trebbin, 2012). To improve bargaining power of agricultural producers through collaborative farm and marketing [practices, farmer producer companies and farmer producer organizations (FPOs) were introduced in India during 2011-12 (Singh

et al., 2018). This will help the farmers in networking and linkage with other stakeholders (Ganai *et al.*, 2016). Smallholders have been attempted to be connected with the input and output markets through a variety of institutional interventions launched by the public, commercial, and civil society sectors. Taking this into consideration, many attempts have been made to group farmers together into various configurations such as agricultural cooperatives, Self-help group, commodity interest group etc. But the amount of success has been modest.

Optimizing benefits via efficient and effective aggregation model methods is currently the challenge. The transition of Indian agriculture into high-value commodities as a result of the agri-food market brought about by liberalization, globalization, and increased purchasing power has made an ideal model of aggregation increasingly important. The major issue in India i.e. ongoing decline in farmers' per capita land size. The main difficulty in these circumstances would be to integrating these small holders with agricultural markets. In order to maximize the benefits of the changing agricultural trade environment and expanding economy and support farmers' realization of higher

incomes which leads to more inclusive growth of nation's economy.

Farmers Producer Company (FPC) is a new aggregation model that has recently emerged. An efficient tool for meeting the needs of farmers at the local level is the FPC, which is registered under the Companies Act, 1956. Enhancing production, productivity and profitability is the foremost objective of integrating particularly for small farmers into member-owned producer companies. The limitations faced by small farmers cannot be addressed by any other model. Currently, a major factor in FPCs success is the leadership they receive. Establishing an atmosphere that draws in individuals with leadership abilities is equally crucial. In comparison to alternative models, the government and policy makers are working to make it a feasible option for aggregation.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Pune district of Maharashtra state was purposively selected for the present study, because it is having maximum number of Farmer Producer Organization in

the Maharashtra. A consultation meeting was held with the Block Technology Manager (BTM) of ATMA, Pune during the meeting it was decided to select two FPOs Fargade Farmers India Producer Company Ltd., Warwand Taluka- Daund, and Kendraimata Agro Producer Company Ltd., Kendur Taluka- Shirur because these FPOs completed five years of establishment and most of the members are engaged in vegetable growing activities. From these 90 FPO member vegetable growers and 90 non-member farmer from two village were selected using simple random sampling method. Thus, total sample size for the study constituted 360 out of which 180 were FPO member farmer and 180 were non-member farmers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile characteristics of the vegetable grower member and non-member of FPC. The respondents descriptions based on chosen personal, socio-economic, communicational and psychological variables. Each variable's results have been explored separately. These findings are listed below:

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their profile characteristics.

Sr. No.	Variables	Categories	Member		Non-Member	
			Percentage	Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Distribution of respondents based upon Age (n=180)						
1.	Age	Young (Up to 35 years)	43	23.89	36	20.00
		Middle (36 to 55 years)	82	45.55	77	42.78
		Old (above 55 years)	55	30.56	67	37.22
Distribution of respondents based upon Education (n=180)						
2.	Education	Illiterate	11	6.11	17	9.44
		Pre-primary education (I-IV std)	12	6.67	15	8.33
		Primary education (V-VII std)	21	11.67	35	19.45
		Secondary education (VIII-X std)	62	34.44	51	28.33
		Higher secondary (XI-XII std)	31	17.22	32	17.78
		Higher education (Graduation and above)	43	23.89	30	16.67
Distribution of respondents based upon Farming Experience (n=180)						
3.	Farming Experience	Very Low (Up to 14 years)	46	29.44	57	31.67
		Low (15 to 21 years)	41	22.78	48	26.67
		Medium (22 to 28 years)	53	25.55	44	24.44
		High (29 to 35 years)	26	14.44	21	11.67
		Very High (36 and above)	14	7.78	10	5.55
Distribution of respondents based upon Annual Income (n=180)						
4.	Annual Income	Low (Up to 212000)	29	16.11	57	31.67
		Medium (212001 to 311000)	115	63.89	98	54.44
		High (311001 and above)	36	20.00	25	13.89
Distribution of respondents based upon Land Holding (n=180)						
5.	Land Holding	Marginal (Up to 1.00)	62	34.44	53	29.45
		Small (1.01 to 2.00)	93	51.67	96	53.33
		Medium (2.01 to 4.0)	19	10.56	23	12.78
		Large (4.01 to 5.00)	6	3.33	8	4.44
Distribution of respondents based upon Area under Vegetable Crop (n=180)						
6.	Area under Vegetable Crop	Less (Up to 0.6 ha)	37	20.56	61	33.89
		Medium (0.7 to 1.0 ha)	98	54.44	79	43.89
		More (1.1 and above)	45	25.00	40	22.22
Distribution of respondents based upon Extension Contact (n=180)						
7.	Extension Contact	Low (Up to 14)	25	13.89	46	25.56
		Medium (15 to 16)	112	62.22	103	57.22
		High (17 and above)	43	23.89	31	17.22
Distribution of respondents based upon Mass Media Exposure (n=180)						
8.	Mass Media Exposure	Low (Up to 13)	38	21.11	61	33.89
		Medium (14 to 16)	92	51.11	85	47.22
		High (17 and above)	50	27.78	34	18.89
Distribution of respondents based upon Economic Motivation (n=180)						
9.	Economic Motivation	Low (Up to 23)	36	20.00	39	21.67
		Medium (24 to 25)	95	52.78	101	56.11
		High (26 and above)	49	27.22	40	22.22
Distribution of respondents based upon Marketing Behaviour (n=180)						
10.	Marketing Behaviour	Low (Up to 5.0)	34	18.89	48	26.67
		Medium (5.1 to 6.0)	93	51.67	100	55.55
		High (6.1 and above)	53	29.44	32	17.78

1. Age. The Table 1 shows that majority of the vegetable grower members of FPC were middle age (45.55%) followed by old farmers (30.56 %) and young farmers (23.89 %). Similarly in case of non-members majority of vegetable growers were middle aged (42.78 %), followed by old and young farmers 37.22 per cent and 20.00 per cent respectively. In both categories it is noticed that the respondents were middle-aged. The results are consistent with the findings of Reddy (2021) and Patil (2023).

2. Education. According to Table 1, majority of the vegetable grower members of FPC are having secondary education (34.44 %) followed by Higher education (23.89 %), Higher Secondary (17.22 %), Primary Education (11.67 %), Pre-primary education (6.67 %) and Illiterate 6.11 per cent. Likewise, in case of non-member vegetable growers most of the farmers possess Secondary education (28.33 %), followed by Primary education (19.45 %), higher secondary (17.78 %), Higher education (16.67 %), Illiterate (9.44 %) and Pre-primary education 8.33 per cent. The results are consistent with the findings of Patil (2023).

3. Farming Experience. According to Table 1, regarding FPC members 29.44 per cent had very low farming experience up to 14 years, after that 25.55 per cent had medium i.e. 22 to 28 years farming experience and 22.78 per cent had low farming experience (15 to 21 years). Whereas, 31.67 per cent non-member had very low up to 14 years farming experience afterwards 26.67 per cent non-members had low (15 to 21 years) farming experience, 24.44 per cent had medium level farming experience. The findings align with the findings of Kokate (2020).

4. Annual Income. With regard to FPC members three fifth of the members (63.89%) had medium level (Rs. 212001 to 311000) annual income after that high level (20.00%) and low level (16.11%) annual income. Whereas, majority (54.44%) of non-members had medium level annual income after that low (31.67%) and high (13.89%) annual income. The findings listed were discovered to be closely connected to the observations made by Kokate (2020) and Patil (2023).

5. Land holding. According to the statistics in the Table, over fifty per cent (51.67%) FPC members are under small farmer category i.e. having land 1.01 to 2.00ha after that 34.44 per cent in marginal category and just 3.33 per cent members are big farmers having

4.01 to 5.00ha land. Whereas, non-members also majority (53.33%) are falls under small farmers followed by 29.45 per cent marginal and 4.44 per cent are large farmers i.e. having land 4.01 to 5.00ha. Similar conclusions were published by the Reddy (2021) and Patil (2023).

6. Area under Vegetable Crop. The data in Table 1 revealed that over fifty per cent (54.44%) FPC members had medium area under vegetable crop followed by more area i.e. 1.1ha and above and less area up to 0.6ha with 25.00 per cent and 20.56 per cent respectively. While in case of non-members majority (43.89%) had medium area followed by 33.89 per cent and 22.22 per cent with less area and more area under vegetable crop respectively. Similar conclusions were published by the Garje (2010) and Madhu (2014).

7. Extension Contact. According to the data presented in Table 1, three fifth (62.22%) FPC members had medium extension contact after that high and low level extension contact with 23.89 per cent and 13.89 per cent respectively. With regard to FPC non-members 57.22 per cent falls under medium extension contact afterwards low and high extension contact with 25.56 per cent and 17.22 per cent respectively. Similar conclusions were published by the Reddy (2021) and Patil (2023).

8. Mass Media Exposure. According to Table 1, over fifty per cent (51.11%) FPC members had medium level mass media exposure afterwards high and low level with 27.78 per cent and 21.11 per cent respectively. Whereas, majority (47.22%) non-members had medium level mass media exposure afterwards 33.89 per cent and 18.89 per cent with low and high level mass media exposure respectively. Similar results reported by Dechamma (2020); Reddy (2021) and Patil (2023).

9. Economic Motivation. According to Table 1, both members (52.78%) and non-members (56.11%) majority are falls under medium level economic motivation. With regards to FPC members 27.22 per cent are falls under high level and 20.00 per cent are low level. Whereas 21.67 per cent of non-members were classified as having low economic motivation and 22.22 per cent as having high economic motivation. Similar findings are reported by Autade (2017); Koli (2019) and Reddy (2021).



10. Marketing Behaviour. In Table 1 shows that Majority of FPC member (51.67%) exhibit medium level marketing behavior after that 29.44 per cent and 18.89 per cent had high level and low level marketing behaviour respectively. With regards to non-members large number of farmers (55.55%) had medium level marketing behaviour after that 26.67 per cent had low level and 17.78 per cent had high level marketing behaviour. The findings align with the Aitawade (2017) and Patil (2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Overall findings of the study stated that majority of vegetable grower members of FPC had 36 to 55 years age received up to secondary education, were having 22 to 28 years farming experience, medium annual income, small land holders, having medium area under vegetable crop, extension contact, mass media exposure, economic motivation and marketing behaviour is medium level.

Majority of FPC non-members middle aged, secondary level education, up to 14years farming experience, medium annual income, having land from 1.01 to 2.00ha, medium area under vegetable crop, medium level of extension contact, mass media exposure, economic motivation and marketing behaviour. The empirical findings of the study can produce helping hands for the future researchers, reviewers, policymakers to study impact of the similar type of research.

FUTURE SCOPE

FPOs can help to establish market linkages, provides input services and network of PACS, expanding their reach and enhancing their bargaining power and ultimately attains overall socio-economic development of small and marginal Farmers.

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Conflict of Interest. None.

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