Socio- Economic Status of Maize Growers in Udhampur District of Jammu Region

Sunish Sharma[1]*, S.P. Singh[2], Maninder Singh[3] and Sanjeev Kumar[4]
[1]Ph.D. Scholar, Division of Agricultural Economics and Agri-Business Management,
SKUAST-Jammu, 180009, JK-UT, India.
[2]Associate Professor, Division of Agricultural Economics and Agri-Business Management,
SKUAST-Jammu, 180009, JK-UT, India.
[3]Ph.D. Scholar, Division of Agricultural Economics and Agri-Business Management,
SKUAST-Jammu, 180009, JK-UT, India.
[4]Agricultural Economist, Department of Economics and Sociology, PAU, Ludhiana, Punjab, India.

(Corresponding author: Sunish Sharma*)

ABSTRACT: A study was conducted in Udhampur district of Jammu region wherein eighty respondents of different land holding were randomly selected to accomplish the study. The proposed study adopted the purposive sampling technique in selection of district Udhampur as it exhibited a concentration of 71.068 thousand MT of Maize production in the Jammu region of the J&K (Directorate of Agriculture, 2018). The average age of Maize growers in Udhampur district was 42.07 years, with a minimum of 26 years and a maximum of 64 years. The study has examined that 33.75 per cent of maize growers of the study area were primary literate whereas only 2.50 per cent were the graduates. A nuclear type of family was seen among the 70 per cent of the maize growers in the study area. The major occupation of the growers was Agriculture (70.00 per cent) followed by Agriculture and other activities (23.75 per cent). The use of local maize varieties, lack of technical knowledge among the growers along with inefficient use of resources were the major challenges that were faced by 11.25 per cent of the maize growers whereas   level of literacy among the majority of growers have put a great contribution in better perception of new technology along with the adoption of hybrids.

Keywords: Purposive Sampling, Maize Production, Age, Literate, Maize Growers, Occupation, Family size.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture, which employs over 1.3 billion people worldwide, or about 40% of the global workforce, is the main economic sector in many parts of the world (Momagri, 2017) [6]. As a result of which agriculture is one of the world's largest and most important industries. Agricultural output is not only critical for a country's trade balance, but also for the security and health of its people**.** The maize (*Zea mays* L.) crop is amongst one of the world's most significant cereal crops. The Maize crop is a important source of dietary food crop in continent of Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. The crop is often termed as miracle crop due to its capability of high yielding than other cereal crops. It is a seasonal crop that can be harvested three times a year, in the Kharif, Rabi, and summer seasons. India stands fourth in terms of area and seventh in terms of production among maize-growing countries, accounting for around 4% of global maize area and 2% of total production [5]. During the 2018-19 crop year, India's

maize area increased to 9.2 million hectares [1]. Maize is found to be a very important crops amongst the farmers of J&K, especially of the hills as it is vital to the people's livelihood. The crop is grown in almost all the areas of the hills and the   concentration of Maize in terms of production in Udhampur was 71.068 thousand MT (Directorate of Agriculture, 2018) [2].

II. MATERIAL AND METHOD

The Chenani and Panchari block of Udhampur district were randomly selected out of 17 blocks of the study area having high concentration of Maize production. Further, two villages from Chenani block namely Kud and Sira and from Panchari block namely Kalsote and Katyar were randomly selected for the present study. The farmers were classified according to size of land holding in three categories *i.e.* marginal, small, and medium groups viz. marginal(up to 1 ha.), small(1.01- 2 ha.) and medium (2.01- 4.0 ha). Here this is worth mentioning that no one large farmer found in the study

area. The present study had been based on primary data as well as secondary data.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A descriptive statistics was used to analyse the age, family size, land holding and education of Maize growers of Udhampur district (Table 1). The average age of growers in Udhampur district was 42.07 years, with a minimum of 26 years and a maximum of 64 years. Growers had an average formal education of 6.55 years, with a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 15 years. The average land holding size was 2.30 acres, with a minimum of 0.12 acres and a maximum of 6.69 acres. These findings are consistent with those of Chidi (2015); Kumar *et al.* (2017) [3, 7].

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of the Maize growers of Udhampur District.

Udhampur District				
Variable	**Unit**	**Mean**	**Standard Error**	**Range**
Age	Years	42.07 (**±9.97**)	1.11	26-64
Family size	Numbers	4.62 (**±2.16**)	0.24	3-10
Land Holding	Acres	2.30 (**±1.56**)	0.17	0.12-6.69
Education	Years of Schooling	6.55 (**±3.48**)	0.39	0-15

The study (Table 2) has examined that majority *i.e* 33.75 per cent of maize growers of the study area were primary literate followed by matric (18.75 per cent), middle educated (17.50 per cent), senior secondary (16.25 per cent) whereas only 2.50 per cent were the graduates. The majority of maize producers i.e 70.00 percent, belonged to small families with three to five members of the nuclear family culture whereas only 11.25 per cent were having the family members above the count of eight. The findings are in accordance with those of Sharma *et al.* (2018) [8], who investigated the educational status of farmers in his study of Economic Analysis of non-Timber forest Based Commodities in Jammu region of J&K.

Table 2: Educational Status of Maize Growers of Udhampur district.

Education qualification	Udhampur district			Overall (80)
	Marginal	**Small**	**Medium**	
Illiterate	04 (10.26)	02 (6.67)	03 (27.27)	09 (11.25)
Primary	16 (41.03)	11 (36.67)	00 (00.00)	27 (33.75)
Middle	09 (23.07)	05 (16.66)	00 (00.00)	14 (17.50)
Matric	02 (5.12)	09 (30.00)	04 (36.37)	15 (18.75)
Senior Secondary	08 (20.51)	02 (6.660	03 (27.27)	13 (16.25)
Graduate	00 (00.00)	01 (3.34)	01 (9.09)	02 (2.50)
Post Graduate	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)
Total sample size	39 (100.00)	30 (100.0)	11 (100.0)	80 (100.00)

Note- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Table 3: Family Composition of Maize Growers of Udhampur district.

Family size	Udhampur district			Overall (80)
	Marginal	**Small**	**Medium**	
3-5	27 (69.23)	22 (73.33)	07 (63.64)	56 (70.00)
6-8	10 (25.64)	03 (10.00)	02 (18.18)	15 (18.75)
Above 8	02 (5.13)	05 (16.67)	02 (18.18)	09 (11.25)
Total sample size	39 (100.00)	30(100.0)	11 (100.00)	80 (100.00)

Note- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Agriculture is the major mainstay of the rural society and so as for the maize growers of Udhampur district (Table 4). The critical findings of the study has resulted that the major occupation of the growers was Agriculture (70.00 per cent) followed by Agriculture and other activities (23.75 per cent) and very few farmers opted for the agriculture & dairy (06.25 per cent) as their mainstay. The similar study has been carried out by Elahi *et al.* (2016); Wardani *et al.* (2019) [4, 9] to study the cropping patterns followed by the farmers.

Table 4: Occupational Status of Maize Growers of Udhampur District.

Occupation	Udhampur district			Overall (80)
	Marginal	Small	Medium	
Agriculture	27 (69.23)	22 (73.33)	07 (63.64)	56 (70.00)
Agriculture and Dairy	02 (5.13)	00 (00.00)	03 (27.27)	05 (06.25)
Agriculture and other activities	10 (25.64)	08 (26.67)	01 (9.09)	19 (23.75)
Total sample size	39 (100.00)	30 (100.0)	11 (100.00)	80 (100.00)

Note- Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

FUTURE SCOPE

The study may be useful to formulate the policies to improve upon the socio-economic status of the maize growers in Udhampur district of J&K. The study will also help in enhancing the extension services to the targeted sections of the farmers which in turn will improve the technical skills of the growers and will enhance their sustainable approach towards the resources.

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