Socio-economic characteristics of the Sugarcane growers in the Balrampur district of Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

Sugarcane (Saccharum officinarum) is primarily grown for its juice, which is used to make sugar. The vast majority of the world's sugarcane is grown in subtropical and tropical climates. Sugarcane is a well-established source of sugar and the current first-generation feedstock benchmark for efficient biofuel production. The current study was carried out to assess the socioeconomic characteristics of sugarcane growers in the Balrampur District, which was selected purposively. The study was carried out in selected villages of Tulsipur Tehseel in the Balrampur district of Uttar Pradesh. The samples consisted of 316 respondents who were selected through a proportionate random sampling method. The respondents were interviewed personally and data were collected through a pre-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents (51.58%) had middle age group, most of the respondents were illiterate (62.78%), They engaged Agriculture farming as a primary occupation and had operational landholding size up to 1 ha with income levels ranging from 75000/- it was also revealed that most of the respondents occasionally participate in social participation, 67.08 per cent of the sugarcane growers had a medium level of participation in extension program, whereas 33.86 and 44.30 per cent of them had a medium and low level of innovativeness respectively. It was also found that 58.86 per cent of the respondents had medium cosmopolites. Respondents are interested in more information and try out new ideas and technologies within their budget and limits and also farmers who are prone to innovations will try to gather information regarding the new technology from various aspects, they wanted to learn new ways of farming, improved production technologies and want to adopt those technologies at a faster rate with maximum accuracy.

Keywords: *Sugarcane Growers, Socio- Economic Status, Psychological Characteristics*

1. INTRODUCTION

Sugarcane is considered one of the main and most environmentally friendly crops of Indian agriculture. Sugarcane continues to be the most predominant sector of the Balrampur District economy, as some percent of the population is engaged in agriculture and allied activities for their livelihood. Government policy and objectives have been to ensure stability in agricultural production and to increase the agricultural production sustainably to meet the food requirement of the growing population and also to meet the raw material needs of agro-based industries, thereby providing employment opportunities to the rural population. Keeping this in view, the present study has been made to know the socio-economic conditions of sugarcane growers.

Sugarcane (Saccharum officinarum) family Gramineae (Poaceae) is a widely grown crop in India. It employs more than a million people directly or indirectly besides contributing significantly to the national exchequer. Sugarcane growing countries of the world lay between the latitude 36.7° north and 31.0° south of the equator extends from tropical to subtropical zones. Sugar cane originated in New Guinea where it has been known for thousands of years. Sugar cane plants cultivated along human migration routes to Asia and the Indian subcontinent. Here, in India, it cross-bred with some wild sugar cane varieties to produce the commercial sugar cane we know today.

Sugarcane farming in India stretches back to the Vedic period. Sugarcane farming is mentioned for the first time in Indian scriptures from 1400 to 1000 B.C. It is now largely acknowledged that Saccharum species originated in India. In India's economy, agro-based

sectors have played a key role. Sugarcane production, harvesting, and related operations employ about 7.5 percent of the rural population, which includes about 60 million cane farmers, their dependents, and a considerable number of agricultural laborers.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Balrampur district is located in Uttar Pradesh, India, and is a part of the Devipatan division as well as the historic Awadh areas.The area, production and productivity of important crops grown in Balrampur district. The district of Balrampur is divided into nine blocks, two of which were chosen at random for the study. A total number of 316 respondents were identified from the selected twenty four villages by using the random sampling technique. An attempt was made in the study to understand the socio economic characteristics of the respondents such as age, educational status, occupational status, family type, area of land holding, annual income, experience on sugarcane cultivation, social participation, extension agency contact, mass media exposure, decision making ability, information sharing behaviour, risk orientation and innovativeness were considered for the present study. Percentage analysis and cumulative frequency method were used for analyzing and interpreting the data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section includes the findings of the study, as well as its interpretation and discussion in light of the study's goals.

Table --1 Age wise distribution of the respondents

S.No.	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
A.	Age		
1.	Young (Up to 35)	69	21.84
2.	Middle (36 to 55)	163	51.58
3.	Old (Above 55)	84	26.58
B.	Education		
1.	Illiterate	74	23.42
2.	literate (Can read and write)	23	7.28
3.	Primary	49	15.51
4.	Junior High School	53	16.77
5.	High School	55	17.40
6.	Intermediate	43	13.61
7.	Graduate and above	19	6.01
C.	Occupation		
1.	Agriculture+ Horticultural	145	45.85
2.	Agriculture + Animal husbandry	120	37.93
3.	Agriculture+ Fisheries	28	8.85
4.	Agriculture + Poultry	23	7.27
D.	Annual income		
1.	Low(up to Rs. 75,000)	146	46.20
2.	Medium (Rs. 75,001 to 1,50,000)	108	34.17
3.	Large (above Rs. 1,50,000)	62	19.62
E.	Land holding		
1.	Up to 1 ha. (Marginal)	160	50.63

2.	1 – 2 ha.(Small)	112	35.44
3.	Large (Above 2 ha.)	44	13.93

From above Table 1, it can be seen that 51.58% of the respondents belonged to the middle age group, followed by the old age group (26.58%) and the young age group (21.84%), whereas clearly shows that 23.42 percent of the respondents were found to be completely illiterate while 7.28 percent of the respondents were literate and could read and write. Whereas 15.51 % of the respondents were found to have passed primary school, 16.77 % of the respondents were junior high school and 17.40 % of the respondents were found to have passed high school. Further, 13.61 % of the respondents were pursuing higher education up to intermediate level and only 6.01 % respondents were of graduation and above level. From the above data it is also found that the majority of farmers are not able to attain high level of education but most of the farmers are from poor educational background and they are improving their educational status. Also found that 45.85 % respondents were engaged in agriculture + horticulture as their main occupation for their livelihood, followed by 37.93 % and 8.85 % respondents in agriculture + animal husbandry and agriculture + fisheries respectively, discussion it can be seen that most of the respondents adopted agriculture + horticulture and agriculture + animal husbandry as their main occupation for their livelihood. It can be seen from the above discussion that most of the respondents took agriculture + horticulture and agriculture + animal husbandry as their main occupation for their livelihood. The possible reason for adopting horticulture and animal husbandry practices along with agriculture could be higher annual income and better environmental condition as well as availability of resources. The results of the present study are consistent with the results of **Raj et al. (2019)** Table also shows that 46.20 percent of the respondents were in the low annual income group up to Rs.75,000 whereas 34.17 percent of the respondents were in the medium-level annual income group of Rs.75001 to Rs.1,50,000, while 19.62 per cent respondents were in high level of monthly income groups of above Rs.1, 50, 0000. Thus, the table shows that most of the respondents were enjoying better remuneration, as a result of which their status was higher in their families as well. Clearly indicated that according to land holding 50.63 % respondents were marginal farmers, 35.44 % respondents were small farmers while 13.93 % respondents were from large farmer group. Similar findings also reported by **Pal et al. (2017)**

4. CONCLUSION
The findings revealed that more than 50 per cent of the respondents (51.58%) were in middle age category about nearly one-fourth of the respondents (23.42%) belonged to illiterates. Most of the respondents (45.85%) were found to have agriculture and (37.93%) respondents were found to have agriculture + animal husbandry as their primary occupation. And (46.20%) the respondents were found to low income and (34.17%) respondents have medium level of income, while half of the respondents (50.63%) were small farmers. As far as social participation of the respondents is concerned most of the (37.04%) respondents regularly participate in Cooperative Society and (52.21%) respondents occasionally participate in social organization. And more than 60% of the respondents (67.08%) had medium level of contact with extension agency contact and (44.30%) of the respondents had low level of innovativeness and more than half of the respondents (58.86%) respondents had medium level of cosmopolitness.

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