Vol.12 No. 1, Page No. 85–90 (2023)
Received: February, 2023; Accepted: April, 2023

Farmers' Attitude and Practices Followed by the Farmers Related to Organic Farming

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Abstract

The study was focused to know the attitude and and practices related to organic farming in relation to socio-personal, psychological and communicational variables of the farmers. The study was conducted in Tikamgarh block of Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh state. Most of the organic farmers were having highly favourable attitude towards organic farming and were practicing organic farming up to medium extent. In case of relationship of independent variable with the practices followed related to organic farming, the variable family size showed positive and significant relationship whereas variable livestock and knowledge about improved agricultural practices had negative and significant relationship with the practices related to organic farming. Other variables viz., age, education, farm size, annual income, organic farming experience, innovativeness, attitude towards organic farming and mass media exposure and participation in social organization showed no relationship with the practices related to organic farming.

Keywords : Attitude, Practice, Organic farming.

Introduction

In modern agriculture indiscriminate application of pesticides has resulted in pesticide resistance in insects that compelled to use different molecules and higher dosages. These practices not only increase the cost of production but also quality of food is being affected and environment is polluted. Organic farming is now a promising option due to the low external input cost for cultivation such as low fertilizer and low pesticide amounts by increasing the efficient use of farm resources (Ramesh et al., 2005). Knowledge has been found to be an important factor contributing to adoption of recommended practices by the farmers and farmers' attitude and skill also depend on knowledge. The farmers may be aware of the benefits of going organic but what matters most is the attitude and preparedness of farmers to convert to organic farming. The nature of the attitude depends upon their cognitive component which is largely dependent upon the information about organic cultivation practices and factors responsible for that. Hence, assessment of farmer attitude towards organic farming, practices followed in organic farming and the responsible factors which inhibits them in practicing organic farming have become an important issue which needs to be explored. Thus, the present study on "Farmers' attitude and practices followed by

the farmers related to organic farming" was conducted.

Material and Method

The study was conducted in Tikamgarh block of Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh state. Tikamgarh block was selected purposively because the KrishiVigyan Kendra, Tikamgarh had adopted 15 villages from Tikamgarh block to impart knowledge on organic cultivation practices to 50 respondents from each village. Out of these 15 adopted villages, four villages were selected randomly. Thus a total of 60 farmers were selected from four villages.

Results and Discussion

1. Profile of the respondents

Table 1 reveals that out of total organic farmers, 65 per cent were of middle age group, education up to middle school and graduation (23.33%), medium family size (55%), were having small size of land holding (43.33%), medium level of annual income (90%), had low livestock possession (51.67%), majority of the respondents (56.67%) were having 1-5 years of experience of organic farming, high mass media exposure (45%), medium level of social participation (85%), medium level of innovative proneness (70%), medium knowledge (81.67%) andhighly favourable attitude towards organic farming (61.67%).The medium level of knowledge of farmers from organic villages may be because the organic villages were the adopted villages of KVK, Tikamgarh where information on organic cultivation practices had already been imparted by the KVK personnel.

Table 1 Profile of the respondents

S. No.	Response category		Respondent (N=60)
1.	**Age**	Young (up to 43 years)	11 (18.33
		Middle (43 to 59 years)	39 (65.00)
		Old (above 59 years)	10 (16.67)
2.	**Education**	Illiterate	05 (8.33)
		Primary	06 (10.00)
		Middle	14 (23.33)
		High school	10 (16.67)
		Higher secondary	11 (18.33)
		Graduation/More	14 (23.33)
3.	**Family size**	Small family size (up to 7 members)	13 (21.67)
		Medium family size (7 to 11 members)	33 (55.00)
		Large family size (above 11 members)	14 (23.33)
4.	**Farm size**	Marginal farmers (up to 2 ha)	04 (6.67)
		Small farmers (2 to 5 ha)	26 (43.33)
		Medium farmers (5 to 8 ha)	22 (36.67)
		Large farmers (above 8 ha)	08 (13.33)
5.	**Social participation**	Low (up to 2)	0
		Medium (3 to 5)	51 (85.00)

		High (above 5)	09 (15.00)
6.	**Annual income**	Low income (Below ₹31120)	05 (8.33)
		Medium income(₹31120 to 55646)	54 (90.00)
		High income (Above ₹55646)	01 (1.7)
7.	**Livestock possession**	Low (up to 2 score)	31 (51.67)
		Medium (2 to 4 score)	22 (36.67)
		High (above 4 score)	7 (11.67)
8.	**Innovative proneness**	Low (up to 23 score)	0
		Medium (23 to 29 score)	42 (70.00)
		High (above 29 score)	18 (30.00)
9.	**Organic farming experience**	No experience	0
		1-5 years of experience	34 (56.67)
		More than five years of experience	26 (43.33)
10.	**Mass media exposure**	Low (up to 5 score)	27 (28.33)
		Medium (5 to 7 score)	16 (26.67)
		High (above 7 score)	17 (45.00)
11.	**Attitude towards organic farming**	Not favourable (up to 19 score)	01 (1.66)
		Medium (19 to 23 score)	22 (36.67)
		High (above 23 score)	37 (61.67)
12.	**Knowledge about organic cultivation practices**	Low knowledge level (up to 1 score)	0 (0)
		Medium knowledge level (1 to 8 score)	49 (81.67)
		High knowledge level (above to 8 score)	11 (18.33)

2. Practicesrelated to organic farming

Table 2 shows the frequency of the respondents to the 18 practices listed in the interview schedule. The majority of the organic farmers stated that most of time they have been using kitchen waste (91.67%) and organic manure (58.33%). Manual weeding or hand weeding and crop rotation were sometimes practiced by 58.33 and 50.00 per cent of the respondents respectively. Applying rouging, using trap method (light trap) to control pest and green manuring or planting cover crop were sometimes practiced by 33.33 per cent of farmers. Twenty-five and near about per cent of farmers from organic village were sometimes using other biological pests, insect predator to control pest, sticky board for pest control, plant waste for making organic fertilizer, inoculum for nitrogen fixing and intercropping/mixed cropping.

Table 2 Practices related to organic farming

Practices	**Organic farmers N=(60)**		
	Never F (%)	**Sometimes F (%)**	**Most of the time F (%)**
1. Crop rotation	20 (33.33)	30 (50.00)	10 (16.67)
2. Manual weeding or hand weeding	16 (27.00)	35 (58.33)	09 (15.00)

3. Intercropping/mixed cropping	35 (58.33)	15 (25.00)	10 (17.00)
4. Sequential cropping	50 (83.33)	05 (8.33)	05 (8.33)
5. Using animal manure for organic fertilizer	3 (5.00)	12 (20.00)	45 (37.00)
6. Using inoculum for nitrogen fixing	40 (66.67)	15 (25.00)	05 (8.33)
7. Using plant waste for making organic fertilizer	30 (50.00)	15 (25.00)	15 (25.00)
8. Using organic manure	0 (0.00)	25 (42.00)	35 (58.33)
9. Mulching, types of mulching	44 (73.33)	10 (16.67)	06 (10.00)
10. Green manuring or planting cover crop	33 (58.33)	20 (33.33)	10 (16.67)
11. Using kitchen waste	0 (0.00)	05 (8.33)	55 (91.67)
12. Using drip irrigation	55 (91.67)	05 (8.33)	0 (0.00)
13. Using trap method (light trap) to control pest	40 (66.67)	20 (33.33)	0 (0.00)
14. Using sticky board for pest control	45 (75.00)	15 (25.00)	0 (0.00)
15. Using marigold or other plants for pest control	45 (75.00)	10 (16.67)	5 (8.33)
16. Using insect predator to control pest	46 (76.67)	14 (23.33)	0 (0.00)
17. Using other biological pests	35 (58.33)	15 (25.00)	10 (16.67)
18. Applying rouging	40 (66.67)	20 (33.33)	0 (0.00)

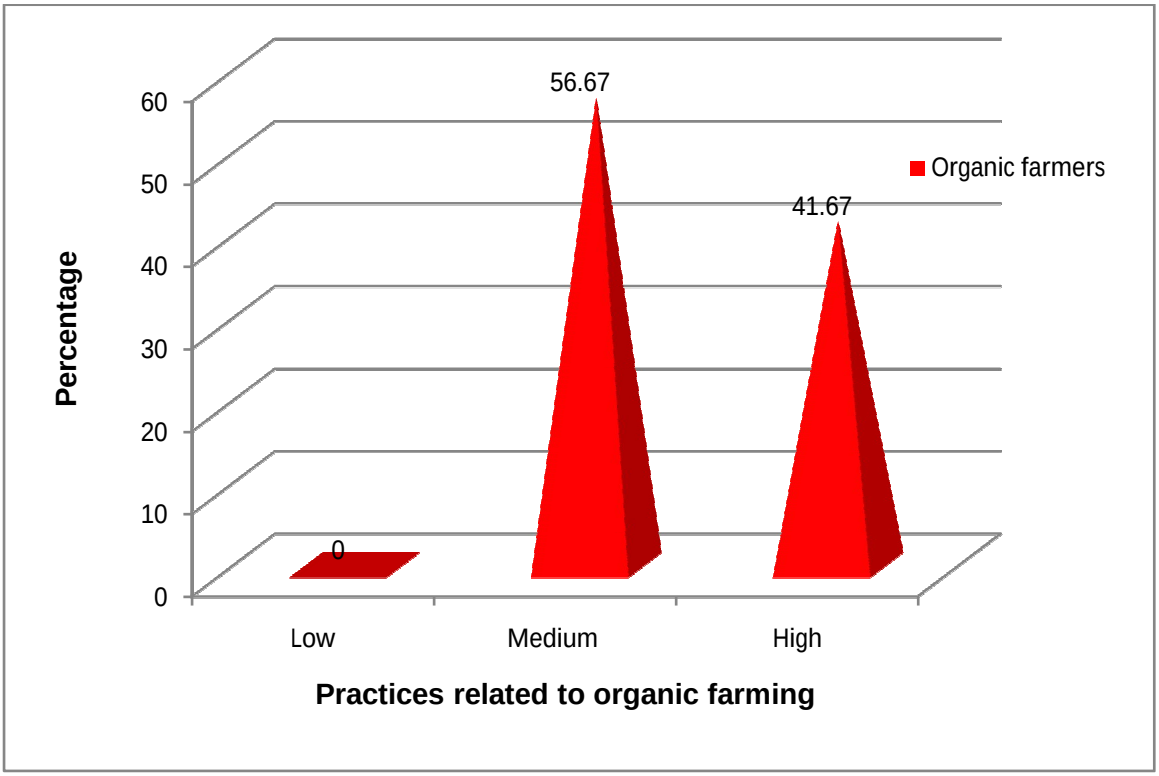

Fig.1 Practices related to organic farming

Fig.1 indicates that out of total organic farmers, 56.67 per cent were in medium category regarding practices related to organic farming followed by high (41.67%). None of the respondent was in the category of low related to organic farming practices.

3. Association of selected independent variables with practices related to organic farming

Several factors contributed to the use of organic farming practices by the respondents. Some of the selected variables were tested for the relationship with practices followed related to organic farming and has been depicted in Table 3. It was seen that in case of organic farmers the variable family size showed positive and significant relationship with practices related to organic farming. However, livestock possession and knowledge about improved agricultural practices had negative and significant relationship with the practices related to organic farming.

Table 3 Relationship of selected independent variables with practices related to organic farming

Variable	r value	
	Organic farmers (N=60)	**Inorganic farmers (N=60)**
Age	-0.088 ^{NS}	-0.162 ^{NS}
Education qualification	0.035 ^{NS}	-0.172 ^{NS}
Size of family	0.311*	-0.103 ^{NS}
Farm size	0.184 ^{NS}	-0.022 ^{NS}
Annual income	-0.122 ^{NS}	-0.185 ^{NS}
Livestock possession	-0.375**	0.004 ^{NS}
Organic farming experience	-0.056 ^{NS}	0.059 ^{NS}
Innovativeness	0.005 ^{NS}	-0.107 ^{NS}
Attitude towards organic farming	0.073 ^{NS}	-0.126 ^{NS}
Mass media exposure	0.239 ^{NS}	-0.150 ^{NS}
Participation in social organization	-0.126 ^{NS}	-0.219 ^{NS}
Knowledge about improved agricultural practices	-0.300*	-0.162 ^{NS}

** = Significant at 0.05 probability level*
*** = Significant at 0.01 probability level*
NS = Non-significant

It was seen that in case of organic farmers the variable family size showed positive and significant relationship with practices followed related to organic farming. Livestock is vital for practicing organic farming. In fact organic farming can be successful when there are sufficient farm animals which play a very

important role in the nutrient cycle; their dung is of high value and its use enables nutrients provided with the fodder to be recycled. However, livestock possession showed negative but significant relationship with the practices related to organic farming. The reason might be that traditionally all farming families practice integrated farming systems where one or two milch animals, a few bullocks, sometimes goats, sheep and a few birds were maintained. Thecowsor buffaloes were maintained since they provide additional income to the family in terms of milk which are sold for money.

Further, the variable knowledge about improved agricultural practices had negative and significant relationship with the practices related to organic farming. Though the farmers had knowledge of various improved agricultural practices as well as organic farming, despite that the farmers were not practicing organic cultivation practices. The reasons for not practicing organic cultivation are mentioned in the constraints perceived by the respondents.Other variables viz., age, education, farm size, annual income, organic farming experience, innovativeness, attitude towards organic farming, mass media exposure and participation in social organisation showed no relationship with the practices related to organic farming.

Conclusion:

The farmers were aware of organic farming and had highly favourable towards organic farming but they were reluctant in practicing organic farming as majority of the farmers not fully adopted most of the organic farming practices.Therefore, farmers should be encouraged by the government in using organic method with institutional support and providing financial services such as loans and subsidies for farmers and certification of organic produce. Also, training should be imparted to the farmers on managing organic matter, making compost and livestock maintenance, so that it is possible for them to utilize the scarce resources, save the environment and protect their health.

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