STUDY ON THE SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MAIZE GROWERS IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken on the Socio-Psychological Characteristics of the Maize Growers in Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu aimed to bring out a strategy to increase the institutional behaviour of maize growers. The study was undertaken at three blocks viz. Ikkumalpet, Pallachi and Palladam blocks of Coimbatore district in Tamil Nadu. The analysis of the socio-psychological characteristics of the maize growers indicated that majority had medium level (48.89 %) of farming experience and (21.11 %) were literate studied up to secondary level. They had medium level (71.11 %) of extension agency contact, out of which Assistant Agricultural Officers (2.21 %), Private agencies (2.20 %) and Input dealers (1.87 %) were more frequently contacted by the farmers. TV (2.36 %), Radio (1.99 %) and Newspapers (1.69 %) were the main sources of information to the farmers. Most of them had inadequate storage facilities and (53.33 %) stored the corns in gunny bags. Some (2.10 %) of the farmers adopted drip irrigation for COH (M) 4 maize hybrids under IAMWARM project. Majority of the maize growers (45.56 %) marketed the entire harvested produce and kept none for their house consumption. Self-decision was taken by (45.45 %) of them. Their market perception and market potential were observed at a medium level.

Key words: Maize growers, Socio psychological characteristics.

INTRODUCTION

India is essentially an agricultural economy and agriculture remains the main occupation of large majority of Indians. Production and marketing are the two basic elements in the system of agriculture. Agriculture marketing is as critical to better performance in agriculture as farming itself. An efficient network of agricultural marketing system is a vital link between farmers and consumers. Since agriculture is an important sector of Indian economy, the changing scenario in agricultural marketing is the study of all activities, agencies and policies involved in the procurement of farm inputs by the farmers and the movement of agricultural products from the farmers to the consumers. There has been a feeling that the producers do not realize the full benefit of their hard work in spite of the fact that the new technologies are readily accepted by the farmers. Higher productivity gained in their farm is lost when they take the produce to the market. In Tamil Nadu, maize is cultivated in an area of 0.20 million hectares with a production of 0.24 million tonnes and an average productivity of 1189 kg/ha (Season and Crop Report, 2006 - 07). By 2020 AD, the requirement of maize for various sectors would be around 100 million tonnes, of which the poultry sector demand alone will be around 31 million tonnes. It is a very difficult task for our agriculturists to increase the maize production from the present level of 34 to 100 million tonnes (Shochi 2006). The only option is to increase the maize productivity per unit area of land and time. Since maize is considered to be a promising option for diversifying agriculture in

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upland areas of India, its area has shown a steady increase over the past few years. Maize is cultivated mainly for food, fodder, feed and industrial use. More than 3500 value-added products of daily application are derived from maize (Chandran, 1993). The poultry feed manufacturing industries are on the increase during recent years (Dale 2007). In this situation, maize growers face specific problems to enrich their socio-psychological needs because through various agencies like extension agency content, private agencies and others. In order to analyse the present status of socio-psychological characteristics of maize growers the present study was contemplated.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Among 30 districts in Tamil Nadu, Coimbatore District was selected for the study since it is one among the districts where maize is cultivated in a large area. Among the 20 blocks in Coimbatore District, three blocks viz, Udumalpet, Palladam and Pollachi south were selected because the area under maize is more. As per the 2008-09 statistical survey, the area of maize in Udumalpet block is 4500 ha, 1200 ha in Palladam, and 700 ha in Pollachi south block (Season & Crop Report, 2007-08). Therefore, Udumalpet, Palladam and Pollachi south blocks were selected for the study. A total of six villages were selected, two from each block for the study based upon the area of maize crop through purposive sampling. The six villages are namely, Elayamuthur, Chinnaveerampatti of Udumalpet block, Guamanagampudur, Guamanagalam of Pollachi south block and Ganapathipalayam, Namapuram of Palladam block. A total of 90 respondents were selected for the study through random sampling method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of respondents on the basis of socio psychological characteristics

The data related to the Socio Psychological characteristics of maize growers, indicated that there was wide dispersion in the same. The study has its own distribution of respondents based on the variables selected for the analysis of socio psychological characters. The study shows majority has school level education (57.78 %) from primary to secondary level. There were about one fourth illiterates and about one tenth college educated. 10 – 25 years of farming experience was more observed with (48.89 %) of the respondents. Operating of five to ten acres of farm size was reported among majority of the respondent (44.33 %). More than half of the maize growers (58.89 %) had maize area upto five acres. A medium level of socio-economic status existed among (65.56 %) of the respondents. More than two third (71.11 %) of

Table 1: Distribution of respondents based upon the variables selected for the analysis of socio psychological characteristics
maize growers were seen having low to medium level of extension agency contact. Assistant Agricultural officers, Input Dealers and Private Officers were most frequently contacted sources. Among the media sources television, radio and newspaper were the major sources for the maize growers. The use of non-institutional and mass media sources were less than the institutional sources. Friends were the only important noninstitutional sources for 40.00% of the respondents. Two third (65.56%) of the respondents were found borrowing credit only through banks. More than three fourth (66.67%) had storage facility. Gunny bags were widely used for storage (53.33%) followed kuthir (7.78%) and storage bins (5.59%). Cent per cent of the maize growers marketed the entire harvested produce and kept none of the produce for their house consumption. Most of the maize growers (81.12%) took self-decisions and consulted their farm friends and neighbour. Consultation with the marketing officials for decision was found for 7.78% of the respondents. 73.33% of the maize growers were found to have neutral market perception. Nearly half (45.56%) of the respondents had medium level of market potential to market their goods by updating latest market information and trends with the available sources. Distribution of respondents based upon the variables selected for the analysis of socio psychological characteristics and Correlation analysis to find out the relationship of socio psychological characteristics of maize growers with adoption and marketing are presented in Table 1 and 2. It was found that, Socio economic status (x5), extension agency contact (x6), information seeking behaviour (x7), market perception (x12) and market potential (x13) were found to have positive and significant association with extent towards socio psychological characters at one % level of probability.

CONCLUSION:

It may be concluded that majority of the maize growers had positive impact over their socio psychological characters related to the cultivation and marketing of maize. Many respondents in the study were found to have good knowledge on cultivation practices and this may be attributed due to educational status, farm size to interpret many innovative thoughts practically, socio economic status, extensionists help, potential to market high quality produce from their own farm etc.

REFERENCES


