

INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS ON THE KNOWLEDGE LEVEL OF POULTRY ENTREPRENEURS IN JHUNJHUNU DISTRICT OF RAJASTHAN#

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ABSTRACT

Received: 20.05.2016

Accepted: 13.10.2016

Influence of socio-economic factors like age, education, experience, organizational participation and mass media exposure on the knowledge level of poultry entrepreneur in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan state was studied. Most of the poultry farmers belonged to 31-50 years age group (60%), had education level atleast up to matriculation (60%) and were having poultry farming experience of 5.1 to 10 years (58.66%). Majority of the poultry entrepreneurs had medium level of organizational participation (64%) and mass media exposure (86.66%). Knowledge level of poultry entrepreneurs was found to be medium (65.33%). Correlation between the factors i.e. education, experience and mass media exposure under study and the knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs was found moderate to high, positive and significant. However, negative correlation was observed between age of the poultry entrepreneurs and their knowledge level. Correlation between the organizational participation of the poultry entrepreneurs and their knowledge level of found non-significant.

Key words: Adoption, family income, poultry entrepreneurs, socio-economic factor

Introduction

Jhunjhunu district is situated in the North-eastern part of Rajasthan and accounts for 4, 49,248 poultry birds among which 2,95,150 are available at commercial farms (Census (2007). With rapid growth in population, providing food security has taken the government as well as planners in quandary. Increasing production in agriculture front has become a matter of concern for every government due to limited land availability. It cannot be gainsaid that, "agriculture production alone can meet the demand of human population". In this context, production through poultry sector has become centre stage as means of alternative source protein.

Entrepreneurship is regarded as one of the most crucial factors in the economic development of every region of the country. It widens the horizons of economic development even in the socially and industrially backward regions. Dynamic entrepreneurs are considered to be the agent of change in a society. Entrepreneurs play a very important role in generating new employment and setting up new business. The entrepreneurs are key persons of any country for promoting economic growth and technological change. The appearance of their activities, i.e. the development of entrepreneurship is directly related to the socio-economic development of the society.

In last decade, poultry enterprises in Jhunjhunu district had fluctuated business compared to other enterprises. However, the fact is that most of them are not sustainable in order to utilize the potential and keep their growth continuum. It is necessary to formulate strategies suitable for stimulating, supporting and sustaining the development of poultry entrepreneurship. Such a strategies need to be in congruence with realities and especially take cognizance of that poultry entrepreneurs face within current economic system of liberalization and globalization (GATT/WTO policies).

Management practices are a composite factor involving several components. Among them knowledge regarding poultry management practices, attitude towards poultry management practices, ability in planning, ability to make rational decisions, ability to mobilize resources, ability to coordinate activities, timely adoption, efficient use of resources, competence in evaluation and ability in rational marketing are important. For healthy adoption of improved management practices of poultry enterprise, one should have knowledge about it. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan state in the month of June to November, 2014. A sample size (n=75) was equally divided (25 each) among the poultry entrepreneurs of Khethri, Chirawa and Nawalgarh tehsils of the district.

Ex-post-facto research design (Kerlinger, 1976) was used in present investigation. The tool used for the study was interview schedule and was pre-tested for its validity. The interview schedule was prepared by keeping in view the objectives of the study and was common for all the respondents. By personal interview method from all the 75 respondents, responses were recorded in the schedule. Frequency and percentage were marked for the various items.

The age of respondents is categorized into three groups i.e. young age group (up to 30 years), middle age group (between 31 to 50 years) and old age group (above 50 years). Education level was measured with the help of socio-economic status (SES) scale developed by Pareek and Trivedi (1963) with due modifications. One score was given to each formal level of education of the respondent i.e., Illiterate (0), can read and write (1), up to 8th standard (8), 9th to 10th standard (10), up to 12th standard (12), and college level and above education

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(15). According to their experience in poultry farming, the respondents were classified into four categories as 1 to 5 years, 5.1 to 10 years, 10.1 to 15 years and above 15 years of experience. Organizational participation in the present study was operationalized as the degree to which an individual is associated with different formal organization and was measured by using SES scale developed by Pareek and Trivedi (1963). The score was given as no membership in any organization (0), Membership in one organization (1), membership in more than one organization (2) and holding position in organization (3). Mass media exposure refers to the frequency of reading newspaper, magazine and other literature relating to the poultry farming as well as use of radio and television, also attending the agricultural exhibition, demonstration and personal visit by the respondents. This variable was quantified by assigning scoring pattern for each medium as regular using media by respondents (2), occasionally using media by respondents (1) and never using media by respondents (0).

Knowledge about recommended poultry production technology was measured with the help of teacher made knowledge test based on the scale developed by Jha and Singh (1970) and was administrated with slight modifications to suit the present study. The knowledge index was calculated with the help of following formula,

$$\text{Knowledge index (K}_i\text{)} = [(X_1 + X_2 + \dots + X_n) / N] \times 100$$

Where,

K_i = knowledge index

X₁ + X₂ + + X_n = Total number of correct answers. i.e., total score

N = Total number of items in the test

The respondents were grouped into three categories with the help of mean and standard deviation i.e., low knowledge (< Mean - S.D), medium knowledge (Mean ± S.D) and high knowledge (> Mean + S.D).

Relationship between socio-economic characteristics of poultry farmers and their knowledge level regarding recommended poultry farming practices was ascertained by calculating correlation co-efficient (r) by SPSS version 14. The data were tabulated and statistically analyzed.

Results and Discussion

Distribution of the respondents according to their age, education level, experience, organizational participation, mass media exposure in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan are shown in Table 1.

Result showed that majority (60 per cent) of the poultry entrepreneurs belonged to middle age group followed by old age group (21.33 per cent) and young age group (18.66 per cent) in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan. The possible reason for this might be that the middle aged respondents had better experience and enough maturity for taking decision for better profitable occupation. Secondly, this occupation might be taken up by them due to unemployment. Old ones were unable to do poultry farming and young ones are in need of white collar job. Present findings were similar to those reported by Thorat (2005) and Esiobu *et al.* (2014).

There were only 9.33 per cent of respondents who had education level below 9th standard. Majority (60.00 per cent) of poultry owners were having their education level up to 10th

standard. Out of these 18.66 per cent and 12.00 per cent of respondents had their education level up to college or above and up to 12th standard, respectively. From the above fact, it can be concluded that great majority of the respondents had education from primary to secondary level of education. Their awareness regarding importance of education to improve their economic condition might be the possible explanation for these types of findings. Similar line of findings was reported by Razzaq (2011), Babalola (2014) and Esiobu (2014).

In respect to experience level of the poultry entrepreneurs, it was found that majority (58.66 per cent) were having 5.1 to 10 years of experience followed by 1 to 5 years and 10.1 to 15 years of experience by 25.33 per cent and 16.00 per cent of respondent, respectively. In Jhunjhunu district none of the poultry entrepreneurs have more than 15 years of experience, which may be possible due to the reason that poultry entrepreneurs in Jhunjhunu district have adopted this profession on large scale in the last decade only. Olagunju and Babatunde (2011), Babalola (2014), and Esiobu *et al.* (2014) also reported similar findings.

Study on organizational participation of poultry entrepreneur in Jhunjhunu district showed that majority (64.00 per cent) of poultry farm owners had medium level of organizational participation followed by low and high level of organizational participation by 25.33 per cent and 10.66 per cent of poultry entrepreneurs, respectively. Jatto (2012), Babalola (2014) and Esiobu *et al.* (2014) were in conformity that majority of respondents had middle level of organizational participation.

In Jhunjhunu district, 86.66 per cent of the poultry entrepreneurs had medium level of mass media exposure followed by 13.33 percent who had high level of mass media exposure. None of the poultry entrepreneur in Jhunjhunu district falls under the category of low level mass media exposure, which might be due to high literacy rate in Jhunjhunu. Moreover, it might also be due to availability of mass media and awareness of the respondents regarding programmes broadcasted and telecasted on radio and television and digital media penetration, respectively as well as availability of farm literature published by various agencies. Similar results are reported by Siddhartha (2001), Thorat (2005) and Bothoko and Oladete (2013).

The level of knowledge of poultry entrepreneurs about poultry management practices was also studied and results revealed that 65.33 per cent of the poultry entrepreneurs had medium level of knowledge followed by 18.66 and 16 per cent of the respondents in the category of low and high knowledge level, respectively. Similar results were obtained by Amudha and Veerabhadraiah (2000) and Thorat (2005).

Relationship between various socio-economic factors under study and knowledge level of poultry entrepreneurs about recommended poultry practices is shown in Table 2. Results indicate that all the factors except age had positive relationship with the knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs. Except organization participation of the poultry entrepreneurs, all the factors were significantly related to the dependent variable. Range of correlation coefficient was found to be moderate to high. Thus, young poultry entrepreneurs were observed superior in planning, organizing, directing, communicating, leading, supervising, controlling and decision making than

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age, education level, experience, organizational participation, mass media exposure and knowledge level of poultry entrepreneurs in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan

Age of the Respondents			
S. No	Category	Number	Per cent
1	Young age (up to 30 years)	14	18.66
2	Middle age (31 to 50 years)	45	60.00
3	Old age (above 51 years)	16	21.33
Total		75	100.00
Education Level			
S. No.	Level of education	Number	Per cent
1	Illiterate	00	00
2	Can read and write	00	00
3	Up to 8 th std.	07	9.33
4	9 th to 10 th std.	45	60.00
5	11 th and 12 th std.	09	12.00
6	College and above	14	18.66
Total		75	100
Experience of Poultry Entrepreneurs			
S. No.	Year of experience	Number	Per cent
1	1 to 5 years	19	25.33
2	5.1 to 10 years	44	58.66
3	10.1 to 15 years	12	16.00
4	Above 15 years	00	00
Total		75	100
Organizational Participation			
S. No.	Organizational participation	Number	Per cent
1	Low level (Below 0.04)	19	25.33
2	Medium Level (Below 0.04 to 2.91)	48	64.00
3	High level (Above 2.91)	08	10.66
Total		75	100
Exposure to Mass Media			
S. No.	Mass media exposure	Number	Per cent
1	Low level (Below 2.91)	00	00
2	Medium level (2.91 to 7.45)	65	86.66
3	High level (Above 7.46)	10	13.33
Total		75	100.00
Knowledge Level of Poultry Entrepreneurs			
S. No.	Knowledge Level	Number	Per cent
1	Low level (Below 8.11 score)	14	18.66
2	Medium level (8.11 to 16.17 score)	49	65.33
3	High level (Above 16.17 score)	12	16
Total		75	100

Table 2: Relationship between characteristic of poultry farmers and their knowledge level of recommended poultry practices (n= 75)

S. No.	Independent Variable	Correlation coefficient	Significance level
1	Age	-0.255	*
2	Education	0.740	**
3	Experience	0.295	**
4	Organizational participation	0.130	NS
5	Mass media exposure	0.328	**

*Significant at 0.05 level of probability.**Significant at 0.01 level of probability. NS-Non Significant

old aged poultry entrepreneurs. Knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs had high, positive and highly significant correlation with their level of education which indicates that education is an important variable which influences the knowledge regarding poultry management practices. It also shows that as the educational level of the respondents increased, knowledge level also increased. Likewise, poultry farming experience, organizational participation and Mass media exposure were also found to be an important variable which influence knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs. Similar findings were observed by Nimbalkar (1998) and Patel (2005).

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