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Attitude, Perception, Life Style and Satisfaction of Organic and Inorganic Farmers: a Qualitative Inquiry

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Abstract

Agricultural practices are generally organic and inorganic practices. Organic agriculture is more about producing agricultural products without disturbing the ecosystem, biodiversity and the soil health; whereas, inorganic farming is completely opposite of organic farming. Use of chemicals nutrients, hybridisation of seeds, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, is commonly used to get high yield. Since inorganic agriculture is practicing from long time and we are used to get more yield in less time, farmers are bit hesitant to change to organic farming. Behavioural, economic and social attributes of the farmers largely influence the future of organic farming. ***Objectives:*** *The principal aim of the study is to assess the attitude, perception, lifestyle and satisfaction of organic and inorganic farmers.* ***Methodology:*** *A sample of 30 organic and inorganic farmers were selected from different districts of Karnataka state. Semi-structured tool was designed to collect data from the farmers through interview method. Thematic and free-listing techniques were used to analyse and present the data.* ***Results:*** *Organic farmers tend to be resilient and motivated as compared to the inorganic farmers. There were issues as perceived by the inorganic farmers that the organic farming was not an easy way to reap economic benefits and high yield for which conventional farming has been in practice. However, the shared views were that the agriculture has to receive the due place and dignity as compared to other market occupations which are more profitable.* ***Conclusion:*** *The study observes that organic farming needs sustainable systems to support, promote, advocate and practice it. Behavioural domains and economic domains are equally important to influence the lifestyle and satisfaction of the farmers.*

Introduction

Globalization and increasing competitiveness have increased the demand for knowledge-intensive work performance across all industries. In the agricultural industry, regular application of new ideas and improved work technology is critical to increasing productivity in the interest of farmers' economic well-being and guaranteeing

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food security (Malhan & Rao, 2017). To achieve food security inorganic or chemical farming was introduced, now it is slowly causing environmental degradation (Gomiero, Pimentel , & Paoletti, 2011). In order to stop and reduce the environmental damage organic farming plays an instrumental role in a holistic manner, where the productions of agriculture sustain and improve soil health, ecosystem, biodiversity, and people health (Oluwasusi, 2014). At the same time, the organic farming too has its challenges and benefits pertaining to quantity of production, pest and diseases management (Njeru, 2015). Farmers are little hesitant to go for organic farming, since initially it gives low yield than the inorganic faming (Haque, Miah, & Rahman, 2007). In the present context of the neo-liberal economy, globalization has affected largely the life of farmers. It has created a competition and made farmers to act according to the market demands (Forum, 2013). It is also causing rural transition, agricultural transitions and other changes are putting farmers and their families in distressful situations (Booth & Lloyd, 1999). There has been change in the perspective towards the farming from human need-based to commercial enterprise (Bareja, 2014). Thus, now agriculture production is for earning money rather than merely growing food for them, their family and communities (Bareja, 2014). It is therefore, essential to understand the farmers' perspective and attitude towards the organic and the inorganic farming.

Review of Literature

In this part of the paper, studies are reviewed to throw light on the attitude, perception, lifestyle and satisfaction of farmers, who are engaged in organic and inorganic forming.

It is observed that perceptions of organic farming and sources of organic forming information are deeply associated. Farmers do contemplate over determining the economic benefits of organic farming, determining the key crops, evaluating the producers' sources of organic knowledge, as well as evaluating their perceptions towards organic farming. Those farmers who have greater access to information have a higher chance of succeeding in organic farming. Their attitude tends to be positive. The farmers who are well-versed in the field and working in organic farming have a more positive attitude about it than those who are into the conventional farming. (Oyesola & Obabire , 2011) Change in attitude towards organic farming can also be attributed to changing food consumption patterns all over the world. People are increasingly choosing to eat food that is free of synthetic chemicals, fertilisers, and pesticides, i.e. organic food, which is not only excellent for their health but also for the environment. Due to lower farm productivity, organic products are less popular with customers, resulting in a high market price for organic food. The necessity is to inform people about benefits of organic food and encourage to consume it, while farmers must be urged to cultivate their land in an organic manner. Organic food production, organic food markets, organic food consumption, there needs a proper mechanism to bring appropriate coordination. (Sharma & Singhvi, 2018) There are traits of farmers, namely age, education, family size, farm size, farming experience, and annual income household income, organisational involvement, organic farming knowledge, and extension media contact, which influence the attitude of the farmers towards organic

farming. The study found that the organic and conventional farmers' attitude toward organic farming can be linked to the traits of the farmers, except age and farming experience. (Haque, Miah, & Rahman, 2007) Another study attempted to have a better understanding of Indian farmers' post-adoption experiences with hybrid rice technology, as well as the factors that influence their happiness and willingness to continue using it. Farmers' levels of satisfaction and willingness to continue cultivating hybrid rice are influenced by a number of characteristics, including agronomic potential, agro-economic potential, effective demand, distribution, location, geography, and cropping pattern. Farmers in rainfed areas with low crop yields were happier than others, and they were more ready to cultivate hybrid rice in the future. Policies should be formed in a way that guides path to targeting appropriate technologies by providing adequate supply of agriculture inputs according to the needs of the farmers. (Khandkera & Gandhi, 2018) A study conducted in Nepal where, the agriculture witnessing deterioration; favourable circumstances are visible to promote organic vegetable production through village Development Committees in different parts of the country. The study rightly observes that farmers' participation in organic farming depends on organic farming related trainings and visits, farm size and compatibility. It was also found that the farmers' socio-economic characteristics and their impressions of organic farming also have considerable influence. (Kafle, 2011) In general context, the farmers do experience occupational stress due to various factors. Their health and mental health status suggests high level of anxiety and depression and low level of coping with the new situations. (Booth & Lloyd, 1999) Hybrid way of agricultural practices have shown good result. Utilising a combination of organic and inorganic manures increased yields in small, medium, and big farms. The increased net profit lead to a high level of satisfaction among farmers. (Verma, Singh, Srivastava, Singh, & Kumar, 2017) However, due to sustainable agriculture systems, organic farming is gaining momentum in different parts of the world. Organic farming expertise, environment, marketing and expenses found to influence farmers' perspectives regarding organic farming. (Chouichom & Yamao, 2010) The consequences non-organic farming have harmed soil health and polluted the environment. Switching to organic farming is necessary to reverse the situation. There are instances that the organic farmers had obtained larger returns than the non-organic farmers. Organic farmers' key obstacles have been noted as a lack of an uniform set of methods, a costly and complex certification procedure, and insufficient marketing facilities. (Meena, 2010) Human health risks in terms of chronic cardiovascular diseases has changed the vulnerability of lifestyle factors. This trend has been able to positively change the lifestyle of people. Gender, age, educational level, farm size, and farm income observed to be significant factors in affecting the lifestyle of people. (Adebisi, Adebisi, Oludare, Daodu, & Owolabi, 2021) Conventional farming has been the order of the day, and Bangladesh is no exception to this. Dreaded consequences of such agriculture has resulted in soil degradation over time. Perception of people is consolidated in terms of better income out of the non-organic farming as compared to the organic farming. Thus, income matters more for the farmers than the environmental consequences. The Dhaka market of organic food products is managed by producers,

consumers and the government, has shown cost-effective outcome of the organic farming; although the returns of the organic farming in terms of production is lesser than the non-organic farming. (Islam, Khan, & Bash, 2019) Contrary to this, another study emphasizes upon the fact that the farm income is enhanced by adopting organic agricultural practises over conventional farming. (Ghosh, et al., 2019) Another agricultural strategy is about crop diversification. It was discovered that crop diversification has a favourable and proportionate impact on the spending habits of tribal farmers in the study area. Farmers are focusing their efforts on agricultural and modern life practises, which are critical in today's world. (Tripathy & Das, 2011)

Methodology:

Statement of the problem

There has been swift in the behaviour, lifestyle and experience of the farmers. The unpredictable conditions, and so non-dependable agriculture are primarily posing challenges to the farmers to sustain in the agriculture, opting it a way of life. Small and medium land-holding is the main challenge for the stakeholders to understand farmers' experiences and versions. It has been established, from the literature on agriculture that largely, farming is no more a profitable enterprise or job due to multifarious factors. However, a large segment of the Indian population largely rests on the agriculture with subsidiary income from other either allied or seasonal job sources. Therefore, it is important to understand the behavioural aspects and experiences of the farmers engaged in both organic and inorganic farming.

Aim of the Study:

The principal aim of the study is to assess farmers' attitude, perception, life-style and satisfaction towards organic and inorganic farming.

Universe and Sample

Thirty farmers, 14 organic farmers and 16 inorganic farmers were selected from the districts of Hyderabad-Karnataka Region (6 districts) and the central and southern parts of the Karnataka state. Purposive sampling method was employed to select the small, medium and large farmers. The study districts that the farmers represent were Kalaburagi, Yadagir, Raichur, Hubballi, Davangere, Hasan and Chikkamagaluru.

The Study Design, Tool and Methods Used for Study:

The present study has adopted a case study method to understand insights and life time challenges through testimonies, the data collected through case studies. The study used qualitative method for collecting data, a semi-structured thematic-based tool was designed to collect data through intensive case interviews.

The Case studies were presented in a thematic and free-listing style depicting the situational analysis of the organic and inorganic farming as both the organic and inorganic farmers perceived and experienced.

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Results:

In this part, a comparative analysis of the farmers in terms of their attitude, perception, lifestyle and satisfaction towards agriculture is presented.

Details of Land and Farmer Distribution

S. No	Land Size (In Acre) Organic Farmers	Organic Farmers (14 Farmers)	Land Size (In Acre) for Inorganic Farmers	Inorganic Farmers (16 Inorganic Farmers)
1	Small Farmer 0.01 to 2.5	4	Small Farmer 0.01 to 2.5	7
2	Medium Farmer 5-10	5	Medium Farmer 6-8	3
3	Large Framer 13-15	4	Large Framer 12-90	6
4	**Total**	**14**	**Total**	**16**

The Attitude towards Agriculture

Inorganic farmers are having a negative attitude towards agriculture. They said that they are in agriculture because they are not having other options for their livelihood. “This profession is not by our choice it is by chance we are here”. It is becoming burden for small and medium farmers, they are facing difficulty in managing their family and agricultural activities. In the case of large nonorganic farmers, they are not feeling it as a burden; but they are also feeling it as a difficult task. Subsequently, they don’t want their children to continue in agricultural activity.

Organic farmers are doing agriculture with more interest and enthusiasm, they are more positive towards their agricultural activities. Small medium and large farmers are having a positive attitude towards agriculture and they want their children to continue their agriculture practice and they are training their children too. They don't want their children to go and work under someone when they are giving the job to others. They said that here in agriculture they have all the freedom to decide what to do when to do how to do which is not in many other jobs. Initially, some of the organic farmers also joined the agriculture profession by chance but later they have developed interest and converted by it as a choice. They feel happy to be in their agriculture land and doing all the works.

The Cooperation among the Farmers

Cooperation among the farmers is essential to provide support and hold each other in adverse conditions. In case of the inorganic farmers, cooperation exists among the small and medium farmers; whereas it does not exist among the inorganic farmers.

However, among organic farmers, they have very strong cooperation with each other. Small, medium and large farmers, irrespective of their land holding power, they cohesively work and manage their most of agricultural works. This attitude does not exist in the large inorganic farmers. This shows how the organic farmers have developed their support system to sustain in agriculture.

Perception of Farmers' Issues

Both organic and inorganic farmers have listed out the issues of the farmers. They have explained the issues and problems of farmers. Free-listing, a qualitative technique is used to present the issues -

1. No proper price for the agriculture products: both inorganic and organic farmers shared the view that for every product there is a fixed MRP; but in the case agriculture products there is no fixed price or MRP.

2. Farmers do not have the power to fix the price for their products; whereas other producers have the right to fix price for their products.

3. Good quality of seeds: getting good quality of seeds is very important but farmers are not getting quality of seeds in time and they get cheated by people.

4. Proper Information: Appropriate and adequate information related to fertilizers, micronutrients, seed treatment and other pertinent information ought to reach each and every farmer in time.

5. The farmer should be free from the exploitation of middleman in the market. Normally, the middlemen buy the products from farmers with very less price and sell the same products for a high price in the market. Middlemen will not allow the farmers to sell products without their help. Farmers irrespective of organic or inorganic cultivators, do experience harassment or nuisance.

6. Environment or weather variation. The uncertainty of nature always affects agricultural production.

7. Government services like subsidies, loans, and other facilities will not reach in time and take lots of time and energy. Access to agricultural services is a hilarious task, the farmers share this experience.

8. Shortage of Agriculture labourers. Farmers were of the opinion that many people, who want work show laziness due to programmes like food security and program-support services. They mostly work only two or three days in a week and rest of the days simply waste time. This trend had been increasing over the years.

Life Style Aspects

Inorganic farmers are depending on external sources to fulfill their basic needs such as vegetables, food grains (except a few). Small and medium inorganic farmers are struggling to maintain even a simple lifestyle. Whereas in case of the large farmers although not struggling but finding it difficult to sustain. Maintaining the agriculture expenses and the household expenses becoming difficult for them. This situation, pushing them to a situation indebtedness to maintain their life.

The lifestyle of organic farmers was very simple. They have a complete hold on their expenses. They grow all varieties of food grains, vegetables, fruits, flowers and some herbs in their land along with the other commercial products. They grow all the basic things which they need for their daily consumption. Since the farmers were growing organic produces, which ensure their health and fitness. The expenses of the organic farmers found to be lower than the inorganic

farmers. Moreover, saving observed to be a common practice and a lifestyle of the small, medium and large inorganic farmers.

Satisfaction in Agriculture

Satisfaction level among the inorganic farmers was very low. They were not satisfied with the outcomes which they were getting from agriculture. Large farmers were having little satisfaction but in the case of medium and small farmers, their satisfaction level was very low too. The amount of energy and money they invest in their agriculture land, the small and medium inorganic farmers were not getting even half of their expected outcome. This was the major worry and concern affecting their low level of satisfaction. Most of the farmers expressed a state of helplessness in this regard. That was the reason that no inorganic farmers wish their children to continue in agriculture. The farmers urge that the troubles and problems which they faced, never want their children to suffer the same.

Organic farmers were having complete satisfaction of their work and output. They were of the opinion that energy and money they invested could able to get in good agricultural output. This always motivates them in adopting better practices. Irrespective of the landholding size, the organic farmers found to be content and satisfied. The farmers wish that their children should continue their career in the agricultural activities. They love to train their children in agriculture, and also they were making their children involved in the regular agriculture activities.

Conclusion

Although there are concerns and challenges with regard to immediate returns in the organic farming; the study shows that the organic farming found to be sustainable economically, socially and in behavioural sense. Organic farmers possess positive and meaningful attitude, right perspective, eco-friendly lifestyle and content and satisfied in the agricultural activities, as contrary to the inorganic farmers. The concept and meaningfulness of the sustainability tend to be strongly inbuilt in case of the organic farmers. However, the shared view of both the organic farmers and inorganic farmers was that there happen to be enough freedom and space in doing agriculture deciding what to do what not to do in their land. They are boss in their land no need of working under someone. There is a need, in the initial phase, to converge both the organic and conventional farming as a move towards complete sustainability of the organic farming. National policy has to devise the resilient agricultural systems, which is stagnant with the conventional farming practices to move towards comprehensively integrate the organic farming practice. Then, incentivise the work culture to

promote, advocate and sustain the organic farming. Regenerative organic agriculture models need to be part of the education, skill-development training and social entrepreneurship to promote agriculture enterprises to sustain the organic farming on a high scale.

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