



## Socio-Economic Correlates of Livelihood Security of Small Farmers in Jabalpur District of Madhya Pradesh

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### ABSTRACT

The research study was conducted during the year 2019 to analyze the socio-economic profile of the small farmers and their relationship with livelihood security in Shahpura block of district Jabalpur. Regarding relationship of respondent's profile with their livelihood security showed that education, landholding, annual income, innovativeness, extension contact, social participation, mass media exposure, economic orientation and risk orientation found to have a positive and significant correlation with livelihood security of respondents. Farming experience was found to be positive and non-significant relationship with the livelihood security of small farmers. Age and family type had negative and significant correlation with the livelihood security of respondents, while the family size was negative and non-significantly correlated with the livelihood security of small farmers.

### INTRODUCTION

India is a land of small farmers. Small farmers and their families make up almost 50 per cent of the total population of India, according to the agricultural census 2010-11, marginal and small farmers had accounted for around 85 per cent of the operational holding in India (Kumar et al., 2020). In general social welfare of India, the condition of small farmers is of immense importance but small holding farmers in Indian agriculture are much more prominent today than before. The fragmentation of land holding within each passing generation has reduced the per capita availability of land in India. This is accompanied by rapid urbanization and preference of people of nuclear families has aggravated the situation (Kumar and Nain, 2013). Agriculture is the mainstay of the State's economy and 74.73 per cent of the people are rural in Madhya Pradesh. The Economy of Madhya Pradesh depends mainly on the agricultural sector as more than 80 per cent of the people of the state depend on this sector for their livelihood. Around 65 per cent of the total land holdings belong to small and marginal farmers. In rural areas, there are 76.31 per cent of households earning their livelihood from agricultural activities, which includes 29.03 per cent of households

who are working as agricultural labourers in the rural area of the state (NSS, 2005). Although several projects have from time to time been undertaken by the Government for poverty reduction purposes, the results have only been palliative without generating sustainable livelihood earning prospects. However, there often exists a sort of socioeconomic inertia in rural areas that inhibit the process of the best capability in terms of adoption of higher education and health service facilities (Datta and Singh, 2011). The livelihood is a means of living; livelihood security can be defined as adequate and sustainable access to income and other resources to enable households to meet basic needs. This includes adequate access to food, potable water, health facilities, educational opportunities, housing, time for community participation and social integration (Frankenberger, 1996). Therefore, it was considered worthwhile to study the existing socio-economic profile of small farmers and their relationship with livelihood security of Jabalpur district.

### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on a sample of 120 small farmers from Jabalpur district. Shahpura block was selected purposively

because of having the maximum number of small farmers as compared to other blocks of Jabalpur district; eight villages were randomly selected from the block. Fifteen small farmers from each of the eight selected villages were selected as respondents for study. Thus, altogether 120 farmers were selected for the investigation. The data was obtained with the help of structured interview schedule. Livelihood Security was the dependent variable represented by Y1. Age (X1), Education (X2), Farming experience (X3), Annual income (X4), Family type (X5), Family size (X6), Innovativeness (X7), Extension contact (X8), Social participation (X9), Mass media exposure (X10), Economic orientation (X11), Risk orientation (X12) were the independent variables. In order to assess the extent of relationship between the selected dependent variable and the independent variables, the data was put to correlation analysis. The values of correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) were computed and tested for their statistical significance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Maximum number (45.84%) of the farmers were in the middle age group, per cent of the farmers were educated up to middle school level (39.16%) per cent of the farmers had a medium farming experience (48.33%), low annual income (51.66%), joint family (55.84%) with 64.16 per cent of them had 5 to 7 members in a family, 62.50 per cent of farmers had medium level of innovativeness, and 50.00 per cent of the farmers with medium extension contact. Majority (55%) had a low level of social participation, 48.33 per cent of the farmers had medium mass media exposures, whereas 48.34 per cent of farmers had medium economic orientation, and 45.83 per cent of the respondents had medium risk orientation.

It is evident from the Table 1 that there was a negatively significant relationship between age with livelihood security ( $r = -0.636$ ). This was due to fact that, in the younger age, people are relatively versatile, generally with great eagerness and desire to learn and seek different jobs, and they switch from one job to another in the non-farm sector. Hence the livelihood security is likely to be negatively related to the age of farmers. The present finding is conformity with the finding of Mishra et al., (2020). Education was found to have positively significant ( $r = 0.537$ ) relationship with the livelihood security. It is well articulated by the facts that education increases the knowledge and understanding power of an individual, which helps to perceive new technologies quicker and

enables a person to adopt innovations with confidence (Kumar et al., 2019) leads to greater exposure to scientific knowledge. Also educated individuals are more technically competent and have higher knowledge (Kademani et al., 2020). The present finding is in line with the research work of Mishra et al., (2020) and Ramya et al., (2017). The relationship of farming experience with livelihood security was found to be non-significant ( $r = 0.137$ ). It could be attributed to the fact that livelihood security is a result of how the farmers access to income and resources to meet their basic needs in an adequate and sustainable way not on how many years of farming he had undertaken. The present finding finds support with the research work of Sunanda et al., (2014) and Ramya et al., (2017).

With regard to the relationship between annual income and livelihood security, it was found to be positively significant ( $r = 0.385$ ). This was mainly due to fact that the high level of annual income broadens the scope for leveraging the innovative ways of raising additional income and also the sense of saving. The present finding is in line with the research work of Sunanda et al. (2014), and Ramya et al., (2017). The family type has shown negatively significant ( $r = -0.276$ ) and family size has found negatively non-significant security ( $r = -0.163$ ) relationship with the livelihood security of small farmers. The present finding is in line with the research work Mahadik and Sawant (2012), Innovativeness has shown positively significant relationship ( $r = 0.587$ ) with livelihood security of small farmers. This might be due to the fact that innovativeness gives space to imagination and improvement. A creative farmer is likely to participate in income-generating activities and obtain more knowledge on improved practices and implement them on his farm, which in turn contributes to a high level of livelihood security. The present finding is in line with the research work of Umunnakwe (2014). Similarly the relationship between extension contact and livelihood security was found to be positively significant ( $r = 0.374$ ). The interaction with the various extension agencies will increase the flexibility of the individual for upgrading of knowledge and skills which has made farmers more conscious of how to make their livelihoods stronger, more diverse and more competitive by acquiring more and more information. The present finding is in line with the research work of Pal et al., (2017) and Ramya et al., (2017).

In case of Social participation, there was a positively significant relationship (0.449) between Social participation and livelihood security. Increase in social participation offers more opportunities to gather and process the information and it has also played a significant role on the extent of adoption (Kumar et al., 2017). Their habit of frequent participation with different social organizations may have helped to improve their livelihood security. The present finding is in line with the work of Kaur and Talukdar (2007) and Ramya et al., (2017). Mass media exposure has shown positively significant relationship (0.396) with livelihood security of small farmers. Farmers who have greater exposure to mass media may be able to update their latest practices by innovative approaches. The mass media provided information on the experiences of successful farmers across a variety of platforms, which strengthens the trust of farmers to participate in similar activities or to try out innovation in their farms. The present finding is in line with the research work Ramya et al., (2017). A positively significant relationship ( $r = 0.530$ )

**Table 1.** Correlation analysis of selected socio-economic attributes of farmers with livelihood security

Independent variables	Livelihood security 'r'
Age	-0.636**
Education	0.537**
Farming experience	0.137 <sup>NS</sup>
Annual income	0.385**
Family type	-0.276**
Family size	-0.163 <sup>NS</sup>
Innovativeness	0.587**
Extension contact	0.374**
Social participation	0.449**
Mass media exposure	0.396**
Economic orientation	0.530**
Risk orientation	0.430**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 level of probability, NS –Non-Significant

was observed between economic orientation and livelihood security of small farmers. A farmer with a strong economic orientation may be expecting high returns from his source of income. High economic orientation may be the creation of a sense of productive and efficient use of earned income. Enthusiasm for more and higher income would automatically push farmers to know and follow more profitable practices to increase their living standards (Chigadolli et al., 2020). The present finding is in line with the research work Sunanda et al. (2014); Mahadik and Sawant (2012) & Ramya et al., (2017). The relationship between risk orientation and livelihood security of small farmers was found to be positively significant ( $r = 0.430$ ). High risk orientation among farmers may explore them to various sources of income and ways of growing. Risk can be attributed to the amount of hard efforts made by farmers to achieve greater success than others. As a result, the risk orientation of farmers has dramatically affected their livelihood security. The present finding is in line with the research work of Ramya et al., (2017).

### CONCLUSION

It is to be concluded on the basis of the findings that a higher percentage of the small farmers belonged to the middle age group were educated up to middle school level had medium mass media exposure, medium economic orientation and had medium risk orientation. In the study area, majority of the farmers were having 5 to 7 members in their family and having moderate innovativeness. More than half of the respondents were having low income belonged to the joint family had medium extension contact and low social participation. As per the report, majority of selected respondents had low level of income. They confronted that they don't bear loan from any financial institution earn low level of income from their farming. A majority of the respondents were not aware of the importance of mass media in improvising knowledge towards new technology. Every effort should be made to ensure effectively delivery of extension services. There is greater responsibility for extension functionaries to provide technical assistance, appropriate technologies, and encouraging farmers to adopt the new technology. However, the majority of the farmers had low social participation. They participate in social organizations like panchayat and Samiti when they needed. They need to be organized into small cooperatives societies for promoting different agricultural practices. It also reported that education, land holding, annual income, innovativeness, extension contact, social participation, mass media exposure, economic orientation and risk orientation found to have positive and significant correlation with livelihood security of respondents. While farming experience was found to be positive and non-significantly correlated with livelihood security of respondents. However, age and family type had negative and significant correlation with livelihood security of respondents while family size was negative and non-significantly correlated with livelihood security of respondent farmers. To make livelihood security stronger, secured and sustainable, proper training should given to farmer regarding farming practices through which they can derive their income to meet their household needs and creating awareness among the farmer about the new technology and alternative sources of income.

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