

Research Note

Belief Towards Organic Farming Among Farmers of Ranchi District

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ABSTRACT

Organic farming aims to produce crops using natural inputs and to eliminate toxic substances from farming system to provide healthy and toxicity free food to consumers. Of late, Government of India has promoted the organic farming at a large scale. Organic farming is not a new concept but it is a traditional farming with modern technology. In line with this, three villages of Angara block of Ranchi District have been developed as organic villages. The study was conducted to assess the belief of farmers after implementation of organic inputs on the land and produced organic foods. For the study, two villages of the Ranchi district Budhakocha and Dhurleta were selected. Questionnaire on General, Attitudinal, Practical and Normative Belief of Organic Farming (Hindi) was used along with interview for data collection. Sample size of the study was 30 (15 of each village). The findings of the study showed that 100 per cent farmers believed that organic farming is good while 60 per cent of the population practically belief that organic farming is beneficial of them. 53 per cent of the population agreed with limitations which hindered in persuading organic farming.

Keywords: Attitudinal belief, Control belief, General belief, Organic farming

INTRODUCTION

Organic farming can be defined as a system of farming practice which is based on using natural materials as fertilizer and pesticides in the place of artificial inputs. Organic farming is a part of sustainable farming which focuses on producing healthy products and keeping soil, water and environment safe. India has traditionally been a country of organic agriculture, but the growth of modern scientific, input intensive agriculture has pushed it to wall. With the increasing awareness about the safety and quality of foods, long term sustainability of the system and accumulating evidences of being equally productive, the organic farming has emerged as an alternative system of farming which not only address the quality and

sustainability concerns, but also ensures a debt free, profitable livelihood option for the most vulnerable section of Indian farming community particularly schedule tribes.

Organic agriculture is one among the broad spectrum of production methods that are supportive of the environment and healthy products. The Indian agriculture is traditionally organic and farmers were following organic cultivation till the middle of the last century (1950). The Green revolution was ushered in India during sixties and it has been the corner stone of India's agricultural achievement, transforming the country from the stage of food deficiency to self-sufficiency. The usage of chemical fertilizers on the land has terrible effect on the land and this information broadcast throughout the country. Now,

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due to health awareness in general population, people have a positive attitude regarding organic farming. Farmers of the Jharkhand (Ranchi) generally use organic substances in their agriculture along with some technical assistance. With the expansion of market and owing to the natural resources available in Jharkhand particularly tribal areas there is huge scope of socio-economic upliftment of tribal, small and marginal farmers through organic farming. Keeping this in view KVK Ranchi has made efforts for promotion of organic farming in its area of operation and surroundings. As majority of tribal farmers fall in category of small or marginal farmer and their socio-economic condition does not encourage them to adopt new production technology. Thus local resource based organic farming proved economically viable intervention in tribal villages of Ranchi and surroundings. To buildup confidence among farmers, Divyayan KVK demonstration farm has been fully transformed into an organic farm by adopting scientific technology in combination with traditional organic farming practices since the year 2015-16. With the successful adaption of organic farming at KVK farm, initially two villages Budhakocha and Dhurleta were selected under NABARD sponsored organic cluster development project on the basis of cluster of land and availability of landmass to develop model organic village based on local resources. Villagers were convinced to grow organic produce from their land by organic input. The main theme of present research was to study about current scenario and future aspects of organic farming and its impact on farmers and their families and hence, to assess the belief of farmers after implementing organic inputs on the land and procuring organic foods this study were conducted.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in mainly two villages of Budhakotcha and Dhurleta of Angara block of RANCHI district. For this study the sample was selected according to the delimitations of the study such as income group, gender, and land holdings. For the present study low income group, male members of the villages, small land holders were selected. Purposive sampling method was used to sample selection. 30 villagers (15 from each) were selected from both villages i.e. Budha Kocha and Dhurleta

for the study. Data collection was done through home visits and direct interviewing of farmers. A questionnaire, which was previously used by agricultural agencies of USA in a survey in Syria, was used with few modifications (converted from English to Hindi) as per the situation. Frequency and percentage distribution were used for data analysis. For data collection two villages (Budhakocha and Dhurleta-Tirlakocha) which were prominent in organic farming were selected by Divyayan KVK. The researcher visited villages with a field staff of Divyayan KVK. This research started with PRA in a short meeting with some villagers and after that questionnaire was distributed to them. They answered that questionnaire themselves.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Most of the respondents were below 40 years (64%), a greater section of respondents' (70%) falls under below-matric category and around 30 per cent of this population have done matriculation or intermediate (Table 1). Most of the families of these villages have joint family system means more than 6 family members reside in a family. Around 80 per cent of the total number of respondents were completely dependent on agriculture and allied field for their livelihood and majority (43.33%) of them have experience of farming more than 10 years. 100 per cent of the respondents showed positive attitude towards organic farming.

They believed organic farming practice helped in improving soil health of their field and does not have any adverse effect on farm, environment and their health. Most of the respondents were quite satisfied with the concept that organic farming as it was helping them in increasing their agricultural income and also health of the soil and environment. They believed that consumption of organic products helped in maintaining the health of

Table 1: Distribution of general belief of farmers towards organic

Range	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i> %
High	30	100
Medium	00	00
Low	00	00

the family members. They said their statement that "जो खेत में जाना है, वो पेट में आना है"। Rising awareness of health and environmental issues associated with the intensive use of chemical inputs has led to interest in alternate forms of agriculture in the world. They believed that organic farming is a profitable source of income. People feel that organic farming is more profitable than conventional farming higher production cost. Farmers are engaged in making organic fertilizers by the organic manure. In Jharkhand, farmers are used dairy not only for milk production but also for cow dung. Bharat has a rich history of organic farming and the increasing domestic market of organic food can provide the necessary drive to the organic movement.

Attitudinal Belief towards Organic Farming

Figure 1 represents the attitudinal belief of farmers towards organic farming and it was used to assess farmer's attitude towards organic farming practices. For this information related to investment in organic farming and income generated from organic farming as well as information's about local market availability for their produces were assessed. Figure 1 reveals that majority of population (60%) were contented with the organic farming because of low investments and comparatively high income generation from organic farming. Ecologically and economically sustainable organic farming is the pre-requisite for enabling wider adoptability,

secured livelihoods and ensuring affordability at the producers and consumer's end. Organic farming improves land fertility and it is also boon for environment. But due to less production of organic products it's cost increases which fail to attract the consumer attention. Weed is the major problems for the farmers because weeds are the negative factors which impede the growing rate of organic produces. They also feel problem in pest and disease management and it leads to crop failure. Scarcity of bio resource for compost production that forms a major bottleneck towards large scale organic conversion. Certification is another problem for the farmers. Organic certification takes long time in testing validity and reliability of organic produces. Availability of market for organic produces is also a challenge for the organic growers. Despite efforts from government and other agencies, subsidies and other schemes, organic producer still face various problems. The farmers adopting organic farming face difficulty to survive and market their products. Despite of this, the organic yield gap is also a cause of problem. Krishi Vigyan Kendra tries to cater stated problems and they believe that all problems will be shorted out soon.

Control belief refers to the limitations which hinders organic grower in producing organic products. These limitations are; information related to Organic farming, appropriate and accurate information and timely information. Fertility rate of land (soil testing), land area

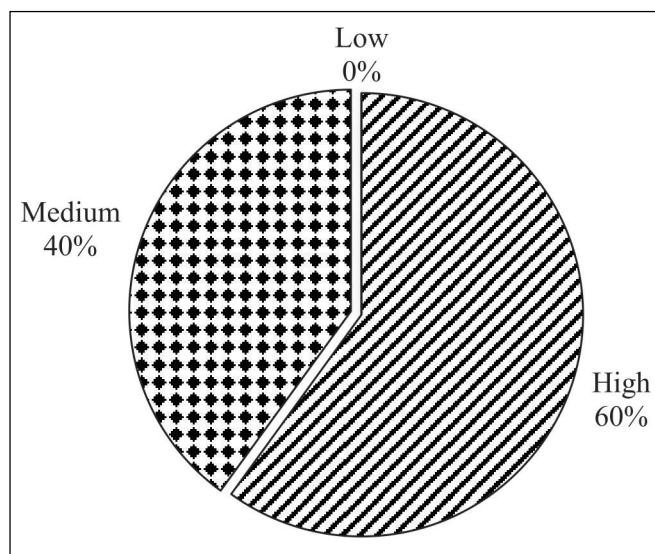


Figure 1: Attitudinal Belief Towards Organic Farming

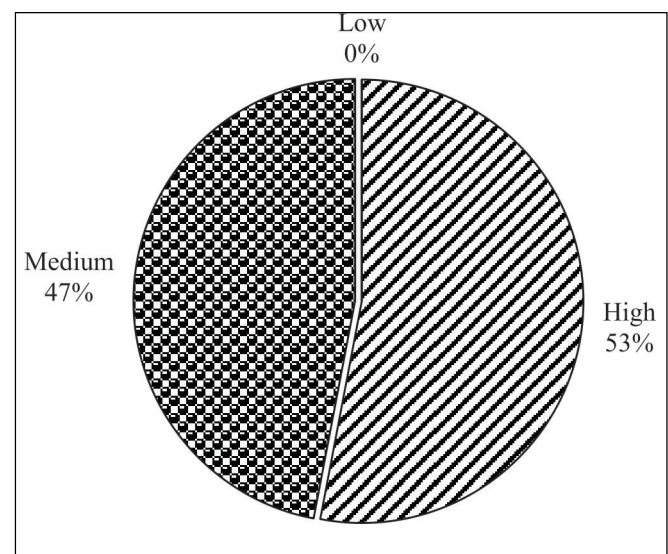


Figure 2: Control Belief towards Organic Farming

(per ha. growing land), possibility of organic farming without using pesticides, certification and marketing. Figure 2 depicts the control belief of farmers towards organic farming. 47 per cent population agreed with the controlling factors which impede their progress in organic farming. Generally farming is meant for the small and marginal farmers who are depressed with the high cost input with lower output. But organic farming gets them benefit because of low cost input. They can avail information regarding organic farming easily and for small scale they can cultivate fruits and vegetables with no trouble at all. Complexity regarding organic certification, high cost as well as time frame (3 years in most cases) are the major constraints for small land holders. There is no Minimum Support Price (MSP) for their products. Though Organic farming is labor intensive yet the price of produce is high and hence, market availability is low with inability to meet the export demand. Lack of storage, transport and organized organic marketing system are major controlling factors. Inadequate agriculture infrastructure and cold storage facility translate to loss of produce due to spoilage. In Ranchi, a plateau region, these problems are prominent. Due to unavailability of a clear guidelines regarding organic farming it's also play a controlling factor for organic farming. Government supportive policy (which is not as good as it should be) is one of the biggest controlling factors which impede the organic farming system.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of result, it is concluded that farmers believed that organic farming based on local resources is good and profitable. It is an alternate form of agriculture which can improve their income. But there is difference in thought and action. Practically they face various problems in which productivity and marketing is the major areas of concerned. Hence government should give more attention towards farmers for achieving their goal of doubling the farmer's income. A direct connection of producers and consumers should be made so that farmers produce their organic crop on the basis of contract given by customers.

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