

## **Socio-economic status and information utilization pattern of dairy entrepreneurs in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study was conducted on 120 dairy entrepreneurs in Kolhapur district of Maharashtra to find out their socio-economic status. Dairy entrepreneurs who had at least two milch animals with 3-4 years of dairy experience at the time of investigations were selected as respondents. Majority of dairy entrepreneurs belonged to medium socio-economic status and had medium information source utilization pattern. The main source of information was the mobile phones which were frequently used by the dairy entrepreneurs. They had medium extension contact with medium social participation.

**Keywords:** Socio-economic status; dairy entrepreneurs; information

### **INTRODUCTION**

Now a days developing countries are adopting the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in almost all sectors of economy including the livestock sector. This is because the field of information and communication is a very crucial asset in all economic sectors of development in a particular country. ICTs are crucial in facilitating communication and access to information for agricultural, allied sectors and rural development. Since agriculture and animal husbandry is the national priority sector it is one of the potentially beneficial areas for the application of ICTs for economic transformation.

The development of networks and use of low cost ICTs will enhance timely access to accurate and reliable information (Angello and Wema 2010). Keeping this in view the present study was conducted to find out the socio-economic characteristics and information and communication utilization pattern used by the dairy entrepreneurs who were using mobile phones as an ICT tool for information and communication related to animal husbandry activities.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The study was undertaken in purposively selected Kolhapur district of Maharashtra during 2016-2017. Out of twelve blocks, three blocks were selected randomly and 2 villages in each block were selected to draw a sample of 120 dairy entrepreneurs who had at least two milch animals and were having experience of 3 to 4 years in dairying. The data were collected personally with the help of pre-tested structured interview schedule and analysed with the help of frequency, mean, standard deviation, percentage and cumulative square root technique (CSRT). The data included information about socio-economic profile, communication behaviour and utilization pattern of information sources used by dairy entrepreneurs.

### **RESULTS and DISCUSSION**

#### **Socio-economic profile of the respondents (Table 1)**

It was found that 48.34 per cent of the respondents in the study area belonged to the medium age group (35-50 years) followed by 35.84 and 15.82 per cent in young age and old age categories

Table 1. Socio-economic profile of the dairy entrepreneurs (n= 120)

Characteristic	Respondents			
	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
<b>Age (years)</b>			40.01	11.74
Young (up to 35)	43	35.84		
Medium (35-50)	58	48.34		
Old (>50)	19	15.82		
<b>Education</b>			4.46	1.41
Illiterate	3	2.5		
Functionally literate	1	0.83		
Primary	8	6.66		
Middle	10	8.33		
Secondary	35	29.16		
Higher secondary (up to 12 <sup>th</sup> class)	29	24.16		
Graduate and above	34	28.33		
<b>Family size (number of members)</b>			6.78	3.86
Small (>6)	62	51.66		
Medium (6-10)	42	35.00		
Large (<10)	16	13.34		
<b>Herd size (number of animals)</b>			7.89	4.76
Small (<6)	29	24.17		
Medium (6-10)	78	65.00		
Large (>10)	13	10.83		
<b>Milk production (litres/day/household)</b>			34.10	32.31
Low (<34)	89	74.16		
Medium (34-36)	5	4.16		
High (>36)	26	21.68		
<b>Milk consumption (litres/day/household)</b>			2.41	1.86
Low (<3)	83	69.16		
Medium (3-5)	21	17.50		
High (>5)	16	13.34		
<b>Milk sale (litres/day/household)</b>			31.72	31.87
Low (<33)	93	77.50		
Medium (33-62)	14	11.67		
High (>62)	13	10.83		
<b>Duration of milk sale</b>			1.01	0.18
Regular and round the year	119	99.16		
Only during flush period	0	0		
Only when milk is surplus	1	0.84		
<b>Disposal pattern of milk sale</b>			1.01	0.18
Cooperatives	119	99.16		
Middlemen	0	0		
Directly to consumers	1	0.84		
Hotels or Sweetmakers	0	0		
<b>Occupation</b>			4.49	2.33
Agriculture	107	89.16		
Dairying	120	100		
Business	11	9.16		
Labour	5	4.1		
Service	30	25		
<b>Total annual income (from all sources) (Rs)</b>				
Low (<200000)	48	40		
Medium (200000-600000)	56	46.66		
High (<600000)	16	13.34		

respectively. Similar findings were recorded by Dhaka and Chayal (2010). It is evident that 29.16 per cent of the respondents were having secondary education followed by 28.33 per cent graduates. It shows that rural dairy entrepreneurs had appropriate qualification which helped them in dairy business.

Majority (51.66%) of dairy entrepreneurs in the study area belonged to small family size category (>6 members) followed by 35.00 per cent who belonged to medium (6-10 members) and 13.34 per cent to large family size categories (<10 members). Family size influences various dairy activities in terms of family labour availability, per capita milk consumption, annual income of family etc.

Majority (65.00%) of the dairy entrepreneurs belonged to medium herd size (6 to 10 animals) followed by 24.17 per cent and 10.83 per cent who had small (<6 animals) and large (>10 animals) herd sizes respectively. Similar findings were reported by Avad Sharad (2011).

Majority (74.16%) of the dairy entrepreneurs herd fell in small (<34 litres) category of milk production followed by 21.68 and 4.17 per cent under large (>36 litres) and medium (34 to 36 litres) categories of milk production respectively. Majority (69.16%) of the dairy entrepreneurs were in low (<3 litres) category of milk consumption while 17.50 and 13.34 per cent respondents were in medium and high categories of milk consumption respectively.

It was also found that majority (77.50%) of the dairy entrepreneurs sold <33 litres milk daily while

11.67 and 10.83 per cent of the dairy entrepreneurs sold 33 to 62 litres and >62 litres of milk respectively. It was also observed that 99.16 per cent dairy entrepreneurs sold their milk regularly round the year and only 0.84 per cent of them sold during surplus production.

Majority of the dairy entrepreneurs (99.16%) sold their milk to cooperatives regularly.

All dairy entrepreneurs had dairy as their main occupation (100%) followed by 89.16, 25, 9.16 and 4.10 per cent who were involved in agriculture, job, business and labour respectively.

Majority (46.66%) of respondents fell in medium (up to Rs 200000) income category while 46.66 and 13.34 per cent were having low (Rs 200000 to 600000) and high (Rs >600000) annual income respectively.

#### **Information and communication behaviour of dairy entrepreneurs (Table 2)**

The use of mobile phones by dairy entrepreneurs was categorized as 'frequently', 'occasionally' and 'seldom'. It was observed that 98.33 per cent of dairy entrepreneurs had frequent access to mobile phones. Similar results were recorded by Sharma et al (2012) and Kabir (2015).

It was observed that 68.34 per cent dairy entrepreneurs had medium level of extension contact while 16.67 and 15.50 per cent had low and high levels of extension contact respectively. Dairy entrepreneurs frequently used to contact livestock supervisors, block

Table 2. Information and communication behaviour of the dairy entrepreneurs (n= 120)

Characteristics	Respondents			
	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	SD
<b>Extension contact</b>			11.72	4.05
Low (<9)	20	16.67		
Medium (9-15)	80	68.34		
High (>9)	18	15.50		
<b>Social participation</b>			2.25	0.66
Low (<2)	0	0		
Medium (2-3)	115	87.50		
High (>3)	15	12.50		
<b>Accessibility of mobile phone</b>				
Frequently	118	98.32		
Occasionally	1	0.84		
Seldom	1	0.84		

development officers, friends, other dairy entrepreneurs, relatives and neighbours as compared to stockmen, scientists and Gram Sevaks. It was observed that use of mobile phones by dairy entrepreneurs was beneficial than traditional communication. Similar findings were reported by Verma et al (2012).

Majority (87.50%) of dairy entrepreneurs had medium level of social participation followed by 12.50 per cent having high participation. None of the dairy entrepreneurs had low participation which shows that entrepreneurs of the study area were socially very active regarding accessing information and communication.

### Information utilization pattern of dairy entrepreneurs (Table 3)

It was observed that majority of the respondents (71.66%) used information source to medium extent whereas 13.33 per cent used at high and only 15.00 per cent at low levels. The mean score of information sources utilization pattern was found to be 45.9. Present findings are in the line with those of Raut (2009). It can be concluded that majority of the dairy entrepreneurs had good level of extension contact, information seeking, processing and sharing behaviour.

Table 3. Distribution of respondents according to utilization of information sources (n= 120)

Category	Respondents	
	Frequency	Percentage
Low (>36)	18	15.00
Medium (36 to 56)	86	71.66
High (>56)	16	13.33

Mean= 45.9, SD= 14.4

### CONCLUSION

Majority of the dairy entrepreneurs had small family size, medium herd size and dairying as their main

occupation with medium annual income. Majority of them had low milk production, milk consumption and milk sale. Milk sale was regular and round the year to the dairy cooperatives. The prime source of information and communication was mobile phone. The entrepreneurs were members of various organisations such as milk cooperative societies and were of medium age. Dairy entrepreneurs of the study area were socially and digitally active and mainly accessing information through the use of mobile phones.

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