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Profile Characteristics Among the Tribal Farmers Oriented Towards Ethno Agriculture and Veterinary Practices in Kalrayan Hills of Tamil Nadu

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Ethno agricultural knowledge is an accumulation of information and behavioural attitude to use the land and agricultural practices without disturbance of natural resources. Ethno agriculture and veterinary practices are usually adapted to natural ecological environment by the tribal society to enhance social and cultural beliefs. It is not static but evolves in response to changing ecological, economic and socio-political circumstances based on the creativity and innovation of tribal members which result from the influences of other cultures and outside technologies [1].

The tribal farmer's work with their ethno knowledge in agriculture and veterinary is continuously found with the linkages associated with ecological stability and productivity under natural resources. Agriculture and animal husbandry are the backbone of the tribal people of Tamil Nadu. More than 80 per cent of the tribal population of Tamil Nadu state depends on agriculture and its allied activities for their livelihood. The Tamil Nadu State offers many scopes for cultivation of a local variety of crops and experienced traditional knowledge to cure the animal husbandry disease because of highly diversified topography, altitude and climate condition. In the field of agriculture, Kalrayan hill is one of the predominant places where ethno knowledge is extensively used for the cultivation of local varieties. Kalrayan hill is one of the historical places, where immense use of ethno knowledge is widely seen in agriculture and its allied activities.

The Kallakurichi District of Tamil Nadu in Kalrayan hills was purposively selected for the study considering the availability of tribals farmers engaged in ethno agriculture and veterinary practices. Among fifty revenue villages, ten villages were selected based on the maximum numbers of

tribal farmers engaged in ethno agriculture and veterinary practices in traditional familiarity. Among the ten villages, 300 respondents were selected by using a proportionate random sampling method from the above statement. A well-structured interview schedule was used for the collection of data from the respondents. The Data were analysed by using appropriate statistical tools to interpret the results.

The data in (Table 1), revealed that more than fifty per cent of the respondents (52.33 per cent) were middle aged, followed by old age (32.67 per cent) and young age (15.00 per cent). This might be due to younger generation migrated to urban areas for better employment purpose and economic development of the family welfare and mostly old age generation engaged in agriculture and its allied activities [2-3]. Majority of the respondents (55.00 per cent) were Illiterate, followed by the categories viz., primary school education (27.50 per cent), secondary school level (11.67 per cent) and higher school level education (05.83 per cent) respectively. None of the respondents were collegiate level. Hence, it could be concluded that majority of the respondents were Illiterate. This is due to most of the respondents come under old age and absence of educational intuitions during their young age [4]. Most of the respondent (90.67 per cent) were founded that agriculture and allied activities as their primary occupation. The respondent's secondary occupation constituted only a limited proportion (09.33 per cent). It could be concluded that majority of the farmers depend only on agriculture and allied actives for a better way of improving their livelihood in the tribal tract. In the village, a tribal hamlet not possessed any basic infrastructure facilities in the study area, Hence, there was no option to join in secondary occupation. Due to the reason, the majority of them participate agriculture and its allied activates, as their primary occupation [5]. Nearly three-fifth of the respondents (70.67 per cent) possessed low level of annual income, followed by medium level (26.00 per cent) of annual income and the rest of them possessed high level of annual income (03.33 per cent) respectively. This is because majority of the respondents were only engaged in farming as their traditional culture and less education shows

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that they never practice the innovative technologies from agriculture and veterinary. This might show the low-income level [6].

Table 1 Profile characteristics of tribal respondents (n=300)

Category	Number	Per cent
Age		
Young	45	15.00
Middle	157	52.33
Old	98	32.67
Total	300	100.00
Educational status		
Illiterate	165	55.00
Primary school level	33	27.50
Secondary school level	14	11.67
High level	07	05.83
Collegiate level	00	00.00
Total	300	100.00
Occupational status		
Agriculture and allied activities	272	90.67
Secondary occupation	28	09.33
Total	300	100.00
Annual income		
Low	212	70.67
Medium	78	26.00
High	10	3.33
Total	300	100.00
Nature of family		
Nuclear family	66	22.00
Joint family	234	78.00
Total	300	100.00
Farm size		
Small farmer	208	69.33
Medium farmer	74	24.67
Big farmer	18	06.00
Total	300	100.00
Farming experience		
Low	57	19.00
Medium	77	25.67
High	166	55.33
Total	300	100.00
Social participation		
Low	257	85.67
Medium	39	13.00
High	04	01.33
Total	300	100.00
Extension agency contact		
Low	199	66.33
Medium	66	22.00
High	35	11.00
Total	300	100.00
Achievement motivation		
Low	12	04.00
Medium	76	25.33
High	212	70.67
Total	300	100.00
Socio economic status		
Low	186	62.00
Medium	90	30.00
High	24	08.00
Total	300	100.00
Cosmopoliteness		
Low	178	59.33
Medium	69	23.00
High	53	17.67

Total	300	100.00
Mass media exposure		
Low	021	07.00
Medium	212	70.67
High	067	22.33
Total	300	100.00
Information source utilization		
Low	167	55.67
Medium	123	41.00
High	010	03.33
Total	300	100.00
Fatalism		
Low	12	04.00
Medium	76	25.33
High	212	70.67
Total	300	100.00

From the result, that majority of the respondents belonged to joint family (78.00 per cent) and the remaining (22.00 per cent) of the respondents belonged to nuclear family type. This may probably due to the fact that tribal communities do not deviate from the traditional culture in their joint family system [7]. More than half of the tribal respondents (69.33 per cent) were belonged to small farming, followed by medium level of farming (24.67 per cent) and the rest of them comes under big farm size (06.00 per cent). It is interesting to note from the result all the landholding is in control of government as per the rules and regulations. The government distributed the land each to each tribal farmers in less landholding. Thus, the result may show that majority of them possess small size landholding [8]. More than half proportion of them (53.33 per cent) had high level of farming experience, followed by (25.67 per cent) of the respondents with a medium level of experience (19.00 per cent) and low level of farming experience. This is since the existence of tribal respondents comes under old age group with high traditional culture and fatalism [9]. Majority of the respondents (85.67 per cent) with low level of social participation, followed by medium level of participation (13.00 per cent). Only 01.33 per cent of them belonged to high level of social participation category. This may be due to the lack of awareness about social organization and lack of time to exchange ideas in the study area. Hence the result develops that majority of the tribal farmers also falling under old age group may also the possible reason for less social participation due to strongly agree with the culture of habits [10].

It was evident from (Table 1), that majority of the respondents (66.33 per cent) had low level of extension agency contact, followed by medium (22.00 per cent) and high (11.67 per cent) levels of extension agency contact. The probable reason is may be due to the lack of awareness about the activity of extension agencies and irregular contact of extension officials of the study area may attribute the existing value is indicate low level of extension agency contact among the tribal respondents [8]. Among them 74.67 per cent had low level of achievement motivation. The level of achievement motivation indicated the medium level (18.33 per cent) and high (07.00 per cent) respectively. The probable reason is that the respondents have no other diversified jobs and enterprises other than farming and livestock keeping. Thus, the related employing farming and allied activities is only opportunity improving their socio-economic status. This is the probable reason that majority of them fall under low achievement motivation [12]. Majority

of the respondents belonged to low level of socio-economic status (62.00 per cent) followed by (30.00 per cent) of the respondents who belonged to medium level of socio-economic status. Only 08.00 per cent of them belonged to high level of socio-economic status. Thus, a majority of the tribal farmers possess a few animals as their material possession and utilizing into farm power possession. This might be the probable reason of such high percentage comes under low level of socio-economic status [13]. The data further revealed that more than half proportionate (59.33 per cent) of them possessed low level of cosmopolites, followed by of them had a medium level (23.00 per cent) and low level (17.67 per cent) of cosmopolites. This might be due to the prevailing cultural restrictions preventing people from mobilization out of their village and making poor contact with urban society [14]. Data depicted in (Table 1), majority of them had medium level (70.67 per cent) of mass media exposure, followed high level (22.33 per cent) of mass media exposure and the rest of them came under low level (07.00 per cent) exposure towards mass media exposure. The majority of the respondents possess less education and majority of the respondents engaged in farming in restricted exposure may show less value in mass media exposure [15]. It could be observed from the above table that above half proportionate (55.67 per cent) of them possessed a low level of information source utilization, followed by (41.00 per cent) had a medium level and (03.33 per cent) high level of information source utilization respectively. The probable reason may be a lack of frequent contact with the personal cosmopolite sources to the interest of progressive farmers encouraging the tribal people in matters of giving new

information about farming and other related practices. The respondents do not have any exposure to impersonal cosmopolite sources like film shows, wall paintings and agriculture exhibitions. The respondents can afford to listen the radio and watching television rarely. The unavailability of the latest technological and new instruments has rendered them to fall in low category of information source utilization [16]. The majority of the farmers (70.67 per cent) had a high level of fatalism, followed by medium level (25.33 per cent) and low level (04.00 per cent) of fatalism. It may be observed that high level of fatalism may be due to the fact that tribal farmers are conventional in nature and believe their own traditional activities in the cultural behavior of the tribal society [17].

SUMMARY

The conclusion vividly resulted that majority of them belonged to middle age category, illiterate, agriculture as the primary occupation, joint family, farming experience and fatalism. The results also concluded that the respondents possessed medium level of annual income, social participation, extension agency contact and socio-economic status, cosmopolitanism, information source utilization and achievement motivation. However, a result indicated that majority of the respondents belonged to low level of and farm category and mass media exposure. This concluded result enhances the policymakers, government officials, programmers to enhance more development activities in the tribal track to improve the socio-economic status and welfare of the tribal family livelihood.

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