



Original Research

Influence of Socio-Economic Factors on the Knowledge Level of Poultry Entrepreneurs in Ajmer District of Rajasthan

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Abstract

Poultry industry contributes about 0.77% of the national GDP and approximately 10% of the livestock GDP and provides employment to over five million people in the Country. Influence of socio-economic factors like age, education, experience, organizational participation and mass media exposure on the knowledge level of poultry entrepreneur in Ajmer district of Rajasthan state was studied. Most of the poultry farmers belonged to 31-50 years age group (50%), had education level atleast up to 8th standard (64%) and were having poultry farming experience of 10.1 to 15 years (35%). Majority of the poultry entrepreneurs had medium level of organizational participation (71%) and mass media exposure (60%). Knowledge Level of poultry entrepreneurs was found to be medium (65%). Correlation between the factors i.e. education, experience, organizational participation of the poultry entrepreneurs and mass media exposure under study and the knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs was found moderate to high, positive and significant. However, negative correlation was observed between age of the poultry entrepreneurs and their knowledge level.

Key words: Correlation, Poultry Entrepreneurs, Socio-Economic Factor

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Introduction

Poultry, in India, in the pre-independence era were by and large practiced as a backyard venture. Poultry industry contributes about 0.77% of the national GDP and approximately 10% of the livestock GDP and provides employment to over five million people in the country. Ajmer district have highest poultry population in Rajasthan and is most developed district in Rajasthan in regards of poultry entrepreneurship. Ajmer district is situated in the central part of the state of Rajasthan. Poultry population in Rajasthan is 80, 24,424. Ajmer district accounts for 27, 37,842 poultry birds among which 26, 39,518 are available at



commercial farms (19th Livestock census, Dept. of Animal husbandry, Rajasthan). Animal Husbandry sector provides large self-employment opportunities. Twenty five million people are estimated to be employed with the livestock rearing activity. Because of the quite laudable efforts and promotional and new economic policies, poultry enterprises have emerged as a vital and dynamic sector of the economy. It has widened its operational ambit by entering into various non-traditional areas and there will be substantial increase in number of poultry enterprises. As a result of spirited efforts of the Government organizations and N.G.O's, there was phenomenal growth in the number of poultry enterprises state during 2000-2010. The irony of the situations is that a good number of the poultry entrepreneurs, who have set up their small scale enterprises with great optimism, are not able to achieve their aspirations. They have to face a plethora of problems in the course of promotion and development of their units such as lack of financial assistance and accessibility to credits. The state government has designed special packages of additional benefits and incentives to attract and assist poultry entrepreneurs.

With rapid growth in population, providing food security has taken the Government as well as planners in quandary. Increasing production in agriculture front has become a matter of concern for every Government due to limited land availability. In this context, production through poultry sector has become centre stage as means of alternative source protein but for healthy adoption of improved management practices of poultry enterprise, one should have knowledge about it.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Ajmer district of Rajasthan state in the month of June to November, 2014. A sample size (n=100) was equally divided (25 each) among the poultry entrepreneur of Ajmer, Kishangarh, Sarwar and Beawar tehsils of the district. Ex-post-facto research design (Kerlinger, 1976) was used in present investigation. The tool used for study was interview schedule and was pretested for its validity. The interview schedule was prepared by keeping in view the objectives of the study and was common for all respondents. By personal interview method from all the 100 respondents, responses were recorded in the schedule. Frequency and percentage were marked for various items.

The age of respondents is categorized into three groups i.e. young age group (up to 30 years), middle age group (between 31 to 50 years) and old age group (above 50 years). Education level was measured with the help of socio-economic status (SES) scale developed by Pareek and Trivedi (1963) with due modifications. One score was given to each formal level of education of the respondent i.e. illiterate (0), can read and write (1), up to 8th standard (8), 9th to 10th standard (10), up to 12th standard (12), and college level and above education (15). According to their experience in poultry farming, the respondents were classified into four categories as 1 to 5 years, 5.1 to 10 years, 10.1 to 15 years and above 15 years of experience. Organizational participation in the present study was operationalized as the degree to which an individual is associated

with different formal organization and was measured by using SES scale developed by Pareek and Trivedi (1963). The score was given as no membership in any organization (0), Membership in one organization (1), membership in more than one organization (2) and holding position in organization (3). Mass media exposure refers to the frequency of reading newspaper, magazine and other literature relating to the poultry farming as well as use of radio and television, also attending the agricultural exhibition, demonstration and personal visit by the respondents. This variable was quantified by assigning scoring pattern for each medium as Regular using media by respondents (2), occasionally using media by respondents (1) and never using media by respondents (0).

Knowledge about recommended poultry production technology was measured with the help of teacher made knowledge test based on the scale developed by Jha and Singh (1970) and was administrated with slight modifications to suit the present study. The knowledge index was calculated with the help of following formula-

$$\text{Knowledge Index (K}_i\text{)} = [(X_1 + X_2 + \dots + X_n) / N] \times 100$$

Where,

K_i = knowledge index

$X_1 + X_2 + \dots + X_n$ = Total number of correct answers i.e. total score

N = Total number of items in the test

The respondents were grouped into three categories with the help of mean and standard deviation i.e., low knowledge ($< \text{Mean} - \text{S.D}$), medium knowledge ($\text{Mean} \pm \text{S.D}$) and high knowledge ($> \text{Mean} + \text{S.D}$). Relationship between socio-economic characteristics of poultry farmers and their knowledge level regarding recommended poultry farming practices was ascertained by calculating correlation co-efficient (r) by SPSS version 14. The data were tabulated and statistically analyzed.

Results and Discussion

Distribution of the respondents according to their age, education level, experience, organizational participation and mass media exposure in Ajmer district of Rajasthan are shown in Table 1. Result showed that majority (50 per cent) of the poultry entrepreneurs belonged to middle age group followed by old age group (29 per cent) and young age group (21 per cent) in Ajmer district of Rajasthan. The possible reason for this might be that the middle aged respondents had better experience and enough maturity for taking decision for better profitable occupation. Secondly, this occupation might be taken up by entrepreneurs due to unemployment. Old ones were unable to do poultry farming and young ones are more inclined towards jobs. Present findings were similar to those reported by Thorat (2005) and Esiobu (2014).

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age, education level, experience, organizational participation, mass media exposure and knowledge level of poultry entrepreneur in Ajmer district of Rajasthan

Sr. No.	Category	Ajmer	
		Number	Per cent
Age			
1	Young age (up to 30 years)	21	21
2	Middle age (31 to 50 years)	50	50
3	Old age (above 51 years)	29	29
Total		100.00	100.00
Education level			
Sr. No.	Level of education	Ajmer	
		Number	Per cent
1	Illiterate	00	00
2	Can read and write	00	00
3	Up to 8 th std.	64	64
4	9 th to 10 th std.	12	12
5	11 th and 12 th std.	14	14
6	College and above	10	10
Total		100	100
Experience of poultry entrepreneurs			
Sr. No.	Year of experience	Ajmer	
		Number	Per cent
1	1 to 5 years of experience	28	28
2	5.1 to 10 years of experience	21	21
3	10.1 to 15 years of experience	35	35
4	Above 15 years of experience	16	16
Total		100	100
Organizational participation			
Sr. No.	Organizational participation (Ajmer)	Number	Per cent
1	Low level (Below 0.46)	10	10
2	Middle Level (Below 0.46 to 3.59)	71	71
3	High level (Above 3.59)	19	19
Total		110	100
Exposure to Mass Media			
Sr. No.	Mass media exposure (Ajmer)	Number	Per cent
1	Low level (Below 2.34)	15	15
2	Medium level (2.34 to 6.99)	60	60
3	High level (Above 6.99)	25	25
Total		100	100.00
Knowledge level of Poultry entrepreneurs			
Sr. No.	Level of knowledge	Number	Per cent
1.	Low level (Below 7.20 score)	20	20
2.	Medium level (7.20 to 14.41 score)	65	65
3.	High level (Above 14.41 score)	15	15
Total		100	100.00



There were majority of poultry owners around 64 percent who had education level upto 8th standard. 12 per cent of poultry owners were having their education level up to 10th standard. 10 per cent and 14.00 per cent of respondents had their education level up to college or above and up to 12th standard, respectively. From the above fact, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents had education from primary to secondary level of education. Their awareness regarding importance of education to improve their economic condition might be the possible explanation for these findings. Similar line of findings was reported by A. Razzaq (2011), Babalola (2014) and Esiobu (2014).

In respect to experience level of the poultry entrepreneurs, it was found that majority (35 percent) were having 10.1 to 15 years of experience followed by 1 to 5 years and 5.1 to 10 years of experience by 28 percent and 21 percent of respondent, respectively. In Ajmer district 16 percent of the poultry entrepreneurs have more than 15 years of experience. The probable reason for this might be that majority of the poultry owners belonged to middle age group and they might had accepted parental occupation from very young age. Further, road, transport and marketing facilities were already available in the study area which facilitated them for marketing of their product. Olagunju (2011), Babalola (2014), and Esiobu (2014) also reported similar findings. Study on organizational participation of poultry entrepreneur in Ajmer district showed that majority (71 per cent) of poultry farm owners had medium level of organizational participation followed by high and low level of organizational participation by 19 per cent and 10 per cent of poultry entrepreneurs, respectively. Jatto (2012), Babalola (2014) and Esiobu (2014) were in conformity that majority of respondents had middle level of organizational participation.

In Ajmer district, 60 per cent of the poultry entrepreneurs had medium level of mass media exposure followed by 25 percent who had high level of mass media exposure. 15 percent of the poultry entrepreneur in Ajmer district falls under the category of low level mass media exposure, Moreover, it might also be due to availability of mass media and awareness of the respondents regarding programmers broadcasted and telecasted on radio and television and digital media penetration, respectively as well as availability of farm literature published by various agencies. Similar results were reported by Siddhartha (2001), Thorat (2005) and G. J. Botlhoko (2013).

The level of knowledge of poultry entrepreneurs of Ajmer district about poultry management practices was also studied and results revealed that 65.00 per cent of the poultry entrepreneurs had medium level of knowledge followed by 20 and 15 per cent percent of the respondents in the category of low and high knowledge level, respectively. Relationship between various socio-economic factors under study and knowledge level of poultry entrepreneurs about recommended poultry practices is shown in Table 2. Results indicate that all the factors except age had positive and significant relationship with the knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs. Whereas age have negative and non-significant relationship with knowledge level. Range of correlation coefficient was found to be moderate to high. Thus, Young poultry entrepreneurs



were observed superior in planning, organizing, directing, communicating, leading, supervising, controlling and decision making than old aged poultry entrepreneurs. Knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs had high, positive and highly significant correlation with their level of education which indicates that education is an important variable which influences the knowledge regarding poultry management practices. It also shows that as the educational level of the respondents increased, knowledge level also increased. Likewise, poultry farming experience, organizational participation and Mass media exposure were also found to be an important variable which influence knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs. Similar findings were observed by Nimbalkar (1998) and Patel (2005).

Table 2: Relationship between characteristic of poultry farmers and their knowledge level of recommended poultry practices (n=100)

S. No.	Independent Variables	Coefficient of Correlation (Ajmer)	
		('r' value)	
1	Age	-0.038	NS
2	Education	0.689	**
3	Poultry farming experience	0.349	**
4	Organizational participation	0.431	**
5	Exposure to mass media	0.19	*

*Significant at 0.05 level of probability, ** Significant at 0.01 level of probability, NS- non significant

Conclusion

The study concluded that majority of the poultry entrepreneurs in Ajmer district belonged to 31-50 years age group, had education level atleast up to 8th standard and were having experience of 5.1 to 10 years. All the factors were positive and significant relationship with the knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs. Except age, which had negatively and non-significantly correlated with the knowledge level of the poultry entrepreneurs. Highly significant correlation of level of knowledge with different independent variable such as education, poultry farming experience, organizational participation, Exposure to mass media indicates that in Ajmer there is high scope for improvement in poultry rearing. In spite of low education viz. upto 8th standard due to high level of experience and organizational participation there is ample scope for organized development of poultry sector in private sector. These data will be helpful to the policy making agencies of State and Central level and administrators for enhancing the poultry entrepreneur's knowledge about the poultry management practices to get more sustainable livelihood and poultry production in rural areas.

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