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Personal, socio-economic and communication characteristics of private advisory service obtaining farmers in horticulture crops

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Abstract
The present study was conducted with the objective of studying personal, socio-economic and communication status of horticultural crop growers receiving Private Advisory Services (PAS) from the Private Advisory Service Agencies (PASA). The sample consisted of randomly selected 120 farmers from 12 villages of three taluks of Chitradurga district. The results indicated that majority of the Chilli growers, Pomegranate and Papaya growers belonged to the middle age group. Majority (30.00%) of the Onion growers, Chilli growers and Pomegranate growers were educated up to high school level. majority (46.67%) of the Onion growers, Pomegranate growers (43.33%) and Papaya crop growers (40.00%) were small landholders. In case of annual income, it was found that the majority of the Onion growers (43.33%), Chilli growers (56.67%), Pomegranate (46.67%) and Papaya crop growers (50.00%) were belonged to the medium income level category. Majority (73.33%) of the Onion growers, Chilli farmers (56.67%), Pomegranate (80.00%) and Papaya growers (63.33%) sought information from formal sources. Whereas, majority (66.67%) of the Onion growers, Chilli farmers (63.33%), Pomegranate (76.67%) and Papaya growers (60.00%) depended on informal sources for information.

Keywords: agencies, advisory services, management, and technology

Introduction
Indian agriculture is diversifying during the last two decades towards High-Value Commodities (HVCs), mainly the fruits, vegetables, milk, meat and fish products. Karnataka is one of the most progressive states with great potential for horticultural development. The state is gifted with ten different agro-climatic regions suitable for growing variety of fruits and vegetables all around the year. Horticulture generates 40 per cent of the total income of the state. This accounts for 17 per cent of the GDP of the state. Horticulture has taken a front line position in State agriculture and this sector is growing at a rapid pace.

In Chitradurga district the wide array of horticulture crops *viz*., fruits, vegetables, flowers and plantation crops were cultivating. The district was well-known for cultivation of Onion and Pomegranate. Chilli and Papaya were also occupied comparatively more area among horticulture crops. Side by side the many private companies were also involved in providing advisory services to these crop growers. Hence, an attempt was made to study the socio-economic profile of the selected horticultural crop growers.

The main objective of this investigation was to study the personal, socio-economic and communication status of horticultural farmers receiving Private Advisory Services (PAS) from the Private Advisory Service Agencies (PASA).

Materials and Methods
The study was conducted in Chitradurga district of Karnataka state as more dry land horticulture crops are grown in the district. The district comprises six taluks *viz.,* Chitradurga, Challakere, Hiriyur, Hosadurga, Holalkere and Monakalmuru. Among them three taluks were selected, *i.e.,* Chitradurga, Challakere and Hiriyur taluks. The villages selected using the criteria of availability of maximum number of farmers cultivating horticulture crops. Total of 120 respondents were randomly chosen from the selected 12 villages as they were growing horticulture crops and taking the advisory services from private agencies particularly local trained people and private companies. All the respondents were selected based on horticulture crops growing in the three taluks.

The farmers obtaining Private Advisory Services (PAS) from private extension agencies in Chitradurga, Challakere and Hiriyur taluks of Chitradurga district were constituted as population of study.

The two fruit crop growers and two vegetable crop growers were selected for the study i.e. Papaya and Pomegranate in fruit crops, Onion and Chilli growers in vegetable crops. Hence, the farmers who were growing these horticultural crops were considered and also getting advisory services from private agencies during the year 2019-20 purposively constitute population for the study. Thus the total size of the population was 120. Data was collected from the respondents

through a personal interview method by using a structured interview schedule. The collected data was scored and analyzed using suitable statistical tools like frequency and percentage.

Results and Discussion

Personal characteristics of horticultural crop growers

The data presented in Table 1 shows that the majority (46.67%) of the Chilli growers, Pomegranate (43.33%) and Papaya growers (53.33%) belonged to the middle age group. Whereas, nearly half (46.67%) of the Onion growers belonged to the old age group. The probable reason for this may be that middle-aged farmers had more enthusiasm, physical vigor, self-confidence and more responsibility in growing horticulture crops. They adopt new innovations as they have tendency to do new things. In the case of Onion growers, probable reason for the result was that Onion is traditionally grown in the area over the years. Thus old age group farmers might Involved in cultivation of Onion crop.

With respect to educational qualification, it was observed that majority (30.00%) of the Onion growers, Chilli growers (36.67%) and Pomegranate growers (40.00%) were educated up to high school level.

Whereas, majority (43.33%) of the Papaya crop growers studied up to the PUC level. It was noticeable that only a few farmers were illiterates. This says most of the farmers were literates and had basic formal education. There is a growing interest in rural areas to educate their children, education which make them acquire knowledge and skills for better living.

Table 1: Distribution of horticultural crop growers based on their personal characteristics (n=120)

Sl. No.		Personal Characters	Crops							
		Category	Onion (n_1=30)		Chilli (n_2=30)		Pomegranate (n_3=30)		Papaya (n_4=30)	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Age	Young	5	16.67	6	20.00	8	26.67	5	16.67
		Medium	11	36.66	14	46.67	13	43.33	16	53.33
		Old	14	46.67	10	33.33	9	30.00	9	30.00
		Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00
2	Education	Illiterate	3	10.00	1	3.33	0	0.00	1	3.33
		Primary school	2	20.00	3	10.00	2	10.00	1	13.34
		Middle school	5	13.33	7	20.00	3	6.00	4	10.00
		High school	13	30.00	11	36.67	12	40.00	8	26.67
		PUC	6	20.00	9	30.00	10	33.00	13	43.33
		Graduate and above	2	6.67	0	0.00	3	10.00	1	3.33
		Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

f– Frequency, % – Percentage

Social and situational characteristics of horticultural crop growers

The data in Table 2 reveals that the majority (46.67%) of the Onion growers, Pomegranate growers (43.33%) and Papaya crop growers (40.00%) were small landholders. With respect to Chilli growers, the majority 46.67 per cent were marginal landholders. The reason for this might be due to the fragmentation of ancestral holding from generation to generation, which had led to small and marginal landholdings. This may also be due to converting the agricultural lands into non-agricultural purposes like industries, commercial areas, etc., the farmers owned small lands. In case of annual income, it was found that the majority of the Onion growers (43.33%), Chilli growers (56.67%), Pomegranate (46.67%) and Papaya crop growers (50.00%) were belonged to the medium income level category. This might be due to majority of the respondents had small size of land holding, few farmers were practicing subsidiary occupations including other crops/enterprises, more investment on PPCs and reduced yields led to medium income of farmers.

Table 2: Distribution of horticultural crop growers based on their social and situation characteristics n =120

Sl. No.	Social and situational characteristics		Crops							
		category	Onion (n_1=30)		Chilli (n_2=30)		Pomegranate (n_3=30)		Papaya (n_4=30)	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Land holding (acres)	Marginal farmer	12	40.00	14	46.67	10	33.34	9	30.00
		Small farmer	14	46.67	11	36.66	13	43.33	12	40.00
		Medium farmer	3	10.00	5	16.67	4	13.33	7	23.33
		Big farmer	1	3.33	0	0.00	3	10.00	2	6.67
		Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00
2	Annual income per annum	Low	12	40.00	5	16.67	4	13.33	9	30.00
		Medium	13	43.33	17	56.67	14	46.67	15	50.00
		High	5	16.67	8	26.67	12	40.00	6	20.00
		Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

f– Frequency, % – Percentage

Communication characteristics of different horticultural crop growers

Table 3 reveals about different sources of information obtained by the respondents. Majority (73.33%) of the Onion growers, Chilli farmers (56.67%), Pomegranate (80.00%) and Papaya growers (63.33%) sought information from formal sources. Whereas, majority (66.67%) of the Onion growers, Chilli farmers (63.33%), Pomegranate (76.67%) and Papaya growers (60.00%) depended on informal sources for information. However, exact half (50.00%) of the Onion growers, 70.00 per cent of Chilli farmers, nearly half (46.67%) of Pomegranate farmers and 63.33 per cent Papaya growers obtained information from mass media. The probable reason for this might be that, information related to crop production is always required to the farmers. Even the horticulture farmers were also depended on many sources to solve the crop production problems. Hence, the medium level of information-seeking behavior was observed from all the sources. This outcome is in line with the findings of Poshiya (2008) [7] With respect to extension participation, the majority of the respondents' *viz.*, (46.67%) Onion growers, Chilli growers (43.33%), Pomegranate (40.00%) and Papaya growers (53.33%) belonged to the medium extension participation category respectively. The probable reason for medium extension participation of the respondents may be that the farmers got new innovations through extension programs like training programs, demonstrations, Krishimelas, field days, campaigns, etc., Hence, respondents were showed medium level of extension participation. The results are in line with the findings of Rakesh **(**2008) [8].

Table 3: Distribution of horticultural crop growers based on their communication characteristics n =120

Sl. No.	Communication characteristics		Crops							
		category	Onion (n_1=30)		Chilli (n_2=30)		Pomegranate (n_3=30)		Papaya (n_4=30)	
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Information seeking behavior									
a.	Formal sources	Low	5	16.67	6	20.00	3	10.00	6	20.00
		Medium	22	73.33	17	56.67	24	80.00	19	63.33
		High	3	10.00	7	23.33	3	10.00	5	16.67
b.	Informal sources	Low	6	20.00	5	16.67	3	10.00	7	23.33
		Medium	20	66.67	19	63.33	23	76.67	18	60.00
		High	4	13.33	6	20.00	4	13.33	5	16.67
c.	Mass media	Low	7	23.33	5	16.67	7	23.33	7	23.33
		Medium	15	50.00	21	70.00	14	46.67	19	63.33
		High	8	26.67	4	13.33	9	30.00	4	13.33
2	Extension participation	Low	7	23.33	11	36.67	5	16.67	8	26.67
		Medium	14	46.67	13	43.33	12	40.00	16	53.33
		High	9	30.00	6	20.00	13	43.33	6	20.00
		Total	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00	30	100.00

f– Frequency, % – Percentage

Conclusion

The personal socio-economic and communication characteristics that were studied included age, educational status, average size of land holdings, average income and different sources of information obtained by the respondents. It was concluded from the research that the four different horticulture crop growers were small land holders and their education was up to high school level. In Chitradurga, the annual income of the selected horticultural crop Growers ranges between medium to high category. This shows their increasing socio-economic status and technological advancement. Further, horticulture crop growers had medium extension participation where PASA was helped these farmers upto their expectation level. Hence, respondents were showed medium level of extension participation. Even the appropriate efforts being taken by different organizations, pluralism in horticulture need to strengthen. It is essential to increase the Farmers income by enhancing production through adoption of appropriate technologies by different extension agencies. In this regard private advisory services in different crop production technologies should reach needy farmers so as farmers can reduce the burden in the horticulture crop production, the collective farming is enable them do take up better management practices and find appropriate market places, these aspects are probably address timely by private advisory service agencies to improve farmers socio-economic conditions.

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