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FARMERS' ATTITUDE AND SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS TOWARDS DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is back bone of Indian economy a key sector for India and it will contribute to remain the same in the foreseeable future also. Though India has the highest percentage of land under cultivation in the world, only one-third of the cropped area is actually irrigated and the productivity of agriculture is very low. The post- Independence decades have seen a remarkable shift in agricultural practices such as irrigation, crop rotation, fertilizers, and pesticides in response to new technologies and the development of world markets. water scarcity is the main problem to be faced by many societies and the world in the Twenty -first century. In India, the need for water resources development for overall social and economic development was well recognized from the beginning of the plan period. In the last five decades, a large number of water resources projects (Major, medium and minor) for irrigation have been implemented and several others are under consideration all over the country.

KEYWORDS

irrigation system, farmers's attitude.

INTRODUCTION

In India, it was introduced in the early seventies, and during the last few years this system has started gaining momentum. The adoption of the drip system started in areas having water scarcity, poor quality water, and undulating terrains. The Indian National Commission on Irrigation and Drainage, in its report (INCID, 1994.) has reported that in India, 70,859 ha area are under drip irrigation, which is 3.97 per cent of the area irrigated by drip irrigation systems worldwide.

Drip is the most heavily promoted form of irrigation due to its economic benefits such as low cost of operation and maintenance, high water application efficiency, usage in uneven terrain etc., compared to overhead sprinkler and other permanent irrigation systems. This study, therefore, intends to examine the attitude and satisfaction of the farmers at Thondamuthur Block, in Coimbatore district towards drip irrigation system.

NEED FOR IRRIGATION IN INDIA

- About 80 per cent of the total annual rainfall of India occurs only during four months, i.e. from mid-June to mid-October and hence, it is essential during the rest of the eight months.
- As monsoons are uncertain, irrigation is necessary to protect crops from drought as a result of uncertain rainfall.
- The irrigation is necessary for agriculture in less rainfall areas.
- Sandy and loamy soils cannot retain water like the alluvial soil and the black soil. This is one of the major reasons for using the irrigation for farming in the areas having sandy and loamy soils and along the slopes of hillsides.
- Extensive irrigation is necessary for more production as about 70 per cent of people depend on agriculture.

TYPES OF IRRIGATION

Various types of irrigation techniques differ in how the water obtained from the source is distributed within the field. In general, the goal is to supply the entire field uniformly with water, so that each plant has the required amount of water. The modern methods are efficient to achieve this goal. Surface irrigation, Localized Irrigation, Sprinkler Irrigation, Center Pivot Irrigation, Lateral Move (Side Roll, wheel Line), Sub-Irrigation, Manual Using Buckets or Watering Cans, Automatic, Non-Electric Using Buckets and Ropes, Drip Irrigation, etc.,

STATE-WISE AREA UNDER DRIP METHOD OF IRRIGATION

The area under drip irrigation has tremendously increased from 1991-92 to 2010-11 in all states except Orissa. However, during the four-time period, the percentage growth in area under drip irrigation was high only during 2000 – 01, except, in the states namely Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, and other states.

COMPONENTS OF DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM

The following are some of the components of Drip Irrigation System:

Pump or pressurized water source, water Filter - Filtration Systems: Sand Separator like Hydro-Cyclone, Screen filters, Media Filters, Disc Filters, Fertigation Systems and Chemigation Equipment, Backwash Controller, Pressure Control Valve, Main Line, Hand-operated, electronic, or hydraulic Control Valves and Safety Valves, Smaller diameter polytube, Poly fittings and Accessories, Emitting Devices at plants. The major components of Drip Irrigation are shown in Appendix B.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DRIP IRRIGATION SYSTEM

Drip irrigation can be helpful if water is scarce or expensive. Because evaporation, runoff, and deep percolation are reduced and irrigation uniformity is improved, it is not necessary to "over-water" parts of a field to adequately irrigate the more difficult parts. Drip systems work well where other irrigation systems are inefficient because parts of the field have excessive infiltration, water paddling, or runoff. Precise application of nutrients is possible using drip irrigation. Fertilizer costs and nitrate losses can be reduced. Nutrient applications can be better timed to meet plant needs.

PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA – COIMBATORE DISTRICT

Tamil Nadu, in India, has been divided into five agricultural zones based on the agro climatic conditions and soil profile. Coimbatore district falls under Zone II, where Coimbatore is the third largest city in the state, and is popularly known as textile capital of south India. It is situated on the banks of the river Noyyal.

THONDAMUTHUR BLOCK IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

Thondamuthur is a panchayat town in Coimbatore District in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu. Thondamuthur is located in Narasipuram Road, approximately 15 km from Coimbatore City, and its economy is on the rise, being its proximity to Coimbatore. Totally nineteen villages

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the socio-economic status of the sample farmers.
2. To examine the attitude of the farmers towards drip irrigation system.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Zulfikar Rahman M. et al., (1999)¹ have discussed about the attitude of farmers towards environment and sustainability issues of agricultural development. Field work was conducted in Nakano block of Iwami town, and data were collected from the farmers through personal interviews. Findings revealed that most of the farmers confronted low levels of environmental problems. The issues mostly confronted were the reduction of necessary aquatic life and beneficial insects in nature due to the use of agro-chemicals. Cultivation of high yielding varieties of crops with proper management practices, use of low toxicity pesticides and care in handling were the matters mostly suggested by farmers to combat environmental degradation.

Ayars J. E. et al., (1999)² have, in their article, described that the subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) research had been conducted by scientists at the Water Management Research Laboratory over a period of 15 years. Data are presented by irrigation and fertilization management on tomato, cotton, sweet corn, alfalfa and cantaloupe for both plot and field applications. Results from these studies demonstrated significant yield and water use efficiency in all crops. Use of high frequency irrigation resulted in reduced deep percolation and increased use of water from shallow ground water when crops were grown in high water table areas.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

SOURCES OF DATA

The study is mainly based on primary data, which are collected from farmers through Interview Schedule consisting of 42 questions, of which, 11 questions were related to the personal profile of the respondents, 8 questions were related to Agricultural Profile and the rest were related to Irrigation Profile of the respondents. The secondary data needed for the study were collected from the Department of Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu, Suppliers of drippers and online sources, apart from the related journals, articles, and books.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The primary data were collected from 395 farmers in Thondamuthur block of Coimbatore, District, in Tamil Nadu. Thondamuthur block was chosen for the study due to the fact that drip irrigation is adopted by the farmers to cultivate both perennial and orchard crops such as coconut, arecanut, banana, grapes, etc. According to the report of Department of Agriculture.

FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

The primary data collected were analyzed by using the following statistical tools. Apart from the descriptive statistical analysis, the tools like Chi-Square Test, Five - Point Scaling, Average Score Analysis, Regression Analysis ANOVA, and Crosstab Analysis have been used in the present study.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The necessary precautions were taken by the researcher to prevent shortcomings. In spite of that, the present study is subject to the following limitations. First, the results of the present study may not be applicable to other blocks having different socio – economic conditions.

HYPOTHESES

Ho1: Demographic factors have no significant difference on attitude score.

Ho2: Agricultural profile has no significant difference on attitude score.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

ANOVA: DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND ATTITUDE SCORE

Attitude score was computed from the respondent's perception towards drip irrigation. The observed attitude score confirms the level of acceptance towards its reliability in a practical condition. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to measure whether the respondent's attitude has any significant difference among the demographic characteristics of the respondents. For this purpose, the following null hypothesis is formulated and the ANOVA results are shown in Table 1.

Ho₁: Demographic Factors have no significant difference on Attitude Score

TABLE 1 ANOVA: DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AND ATTITUDE SCORE

Demographic Factors		N	Mean	SD	F – Value	P – Value
Gender	Male	351	11.86	2.12	1.626	.105
	Female	44	12.41	1.90		
Marital Status	Single	16	10.31	12.57	.3.164	.002
	Married	379	11.99	2.06		
Age	Below 25 years	3	9.00	1.00	6.604	.000
	26 – 35 years	69	11.22	2.27		
	36 – 45 years	154	12.32	1.87		
	Above 45 years	169	11.90	2.14		
Educational Qualification	SSLC/HSC	187	11.88	2.23	14.061	0.000
	Under Graduation	60	10.92	2.12		
	Post-Graduation	8	9.38	2.62		
	Others	140	12.56	1.56		
Occupation	Farmer	386	11.93	2.16	1.218	.303
	Govt. Employee	1	14.00	-		
	Private Employee	6	10.67	.82		
	Business	2	13.00	1.41		
No. of. Earning Members	One	141	11.52	2.14	6.216	0.002
	Two	251	12.18	2.03		
	Three & More	3	9.67	2.89		
Annual Income	Below Rs. 1 lakh	19	11.11	1.91	18.334	.000
	Rs. 1 lakh – Rs. 3 lakhs	283	12.26	1.90		
	Rs. 3 lakhs – Rs. 6 lakhs	78	11.54	2.29		
	Above Rs. 6 lakhs	15	8.67	1.91		
Annual Agriculture Income	Below Rs. 0.5 lakh	26	12.73	1.28	8.473	.000
	Rs. 0.5 lakh – Rs. 1.5 lakh	244	12.22	1.95		
	Rs. 1.5 lakh – Rs. 3 lakh	84	11.20	2.10		
	Above Rs. 3 lakh	41	11.15	2.78		
Type of Residence	Own House	205	12.37	1.99	14.987	.000
	Rental House	17	10.00	2.34		
	Farm House	173	11.58	2.05		

- It is evident from the ANOVA results that gender and occupation have no significant difference on attitude score towards drip irrigation and hence the null hypothesis that 'Demographic factors have no significant difference on attitude score' is accepted with the above mentioned factors.

ANOVA: AGRICULTURAL PROFILE AND ATTITUDE SCORE

The analysis of variances was carried out to measure whether the respondents' attitude has any significant difference among agricultural profile of the. For this purpose, the following null hypothesis is formulated and the ANOVA results are shown in Table 2.

Ho₂: Agricultural profile have no significant difference on Attitude Score

TABLE 2: ANOVA: AGRICULTURAL PROFILE AND ATTITUDE SCORE

Agriculture Attributes		N	Mean	SD	F – Value	P – Value
Farmers' Involvement in Agriculture	By tradition	252	12.09	1.99	1.933	.124
	Nature of Job	18	12.17	2.33		
	Self Interest	52	11.67	2.49		
	Income Potential	73	11.48	2.11		
Type of Farmers	Marginal Farmers	98	10.98	2.35	14.970	.000
	Small Farmers	173	12.37	1.82		
	Big Farmers	124	12.05	2.05		
Experience in Agriculture	Less than 5 years	8	11.88	1.64	5.148	.006
	5 – 10 years	196	12.26	1.93		
	10 – 15 years	191	11.58	2.24		
No. of Members in Agriculture	None	15	11.73	1.91	5.836	.001
	One	345	12.04	2.03		
	Two	29	11.28	2.55		
	More than Two	6	8.83	2.14		
No. of Electric Service	One	361	12.13	1.94	24.927	.000
	Two	27	10.11	2.36		
	More than Two	7	8.29	2.56		
Types of crops Cultivated	Standard Crops	45	12.80	1.50	12.373	.000
	Seasonal Crops	118	12.45	1.78		
	Regular Crops	51	11.02	2.23		
	Standard & Regular Crops	93	11.01	2.33		

It is evident from the ANOVA results that all variables in agricultural profile have significant difference on attitude score towards drip irrigation (except respondents' involvement in agriculture). Hence, the null hypothesis that 'Agricultural profile has no significant difference on attitude score' is rejected with the above mentioned factors.

CONCLUSION

Agricultural development is an integral part of overall economic development. However, the increasing demand for irrigation water, coupled with a rapid decline in net potential of water in recent years, has forced adoption of new methods of irrigation for crop cultivation all over the world. Therefore, the drip irrigation system is in practice for irrigating both perennial and orchard crops in Coimbatore district where water is scarce and expensive.

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