



Attitude of Farmers Towards Sustainability of Vegetable Cultivation

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ABSTRACT

Study was conducted in two community development blocks from Kullu district, viz., Kullu and Manali, selected purposively sampling with the purpose that these blocks have maximum area in the vegetables cultivation. From each selected block, ten villages were selected randomly. Over all twenty villages were and 30 vegetable growers from each village were selected randomly. Thus, a total number of 600 farmers were selected for the study. The mean attitude score of the farmers towards sustainability was 58.25 which indicated the midpoint of the scale. Farmers' attitude was more favourable in relation to the items which were related to 'natural resources conservation' component. Non-availability of organic manures in required quantities might be the major reason for the farmers to take this pragmatic attitudinal position on few items of scale. This suggested that there is continuing ambiguity about the concept among farmers, which prevented them from polarizing their attitude clearly. Therefore, extension organizations should take measures to educate and convince the farmers about the prospects of sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION

The production and consumption of vegetables are most important to human diet for better health, because they possess high nutritive value and are rich source of carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and minerals. Selection of research area in Kullu Valley of Himachal Pradesh was due to the very good conditions for temperate vegetable production *as well as their seeds*. Hence the area was suitable for the vegetable production of temperate vegetables. Mild summer of Kullu valley is suitable for many sub-tropical vegetables. In spite of this the vegetable production is low, because improved vegetable production technologies are not fully adopted by the farmers at their own fields (Suman, 2008). Marketing of produce arises when production is more. Therefore, this research programme was aimed to find out the attitude of the farmers towards sustainability of vegetable cultivation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was conducted in two community

development blocks, viz., Kullu and Manali, selected purposively since these blocks have maximum area in the vegetables cultivation. From each selected block, ten villages were selected randomly. So, a total of twenty villages were selected. The list of vegetable growers was prepared for each village and 30 vegetable growers were selected randomly. Thus, a total number of 600 farmers were selected as a sample for the study. Data were collected with the help of pre tested questionnaire through personal interview and analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical tools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attitude of Farmers Towards Sustainability

The farmers were categorized into classes of attitude level ranging from highly un-favourable to highly favourable. The data in Table 1 revealed that the mean attitude score of the farmers towards sustainability was 58.25 which indicated a neutral attitude. It indicated that the farmers were not fully convinced about sustainability. In all, 47 per cent farmers had either favourable or

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highly favourable attitude towards sustainability followed by favourable (35 per cent). Nine per cent were not having a favourable attitude towards sustainability as applied to vegetable cultivation and only six per cent farmers had highly unfavourable attitude towards sustainable application of rice cultivation. Therefore, the constituency for extreme conservation farming strategies like organic farming is really limited and is confined to three per cent. Few farmers (6%) had highly un-favourable attitude towards sustainability. The results of farmers' attitude towards sustainability of vegetable cultivation were in line with the results of Dahlberg (1986) and Cohen (1977).

to general misconception that sustainable agriculture resulted in lower production as well as lower economic returns.

On the items related to 'natural resource conservation', majority of the farmers had an attitudinal disposition in favour of sustainable agriculture. In fact, these dimensions had direct impact on their lives and surroundings and they were experiencing the hazards of environmental degradation. So they favoured sustainable agriculture on these dimensions as an alternative to conventional agriculture. In case of 'high input use and related problems', it seemed that the majority of the farmers were not convinced about the potential of substitutes of high inputs use in

Table 1: Distribution of farmers' attitude towards sustainability as applied to rice cultivation

| Attitude | Range of attitude score | Frequency (in per cent) N = 600 |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Highly un-favourable | 18.0 - 32.4 | 6 |
| Un-favourable | 32.5 - 46.8 | 9 |
| Neutral | 46.9 - 61.2 | 47 |
| Favourable | 61.3 - 75.6 | 35 |
| Highly favourable | 75.7 - 90.0 | 3 |
| Farmers' mean score = 58.25 | | CV = 15.33 SD = 8.11 |

Response of Farmers on Different Components of Attitude Scale

As seen from table 2 in case of 'natural resource conservation' component, majority of farmers (71) fell in 'agree' category whereas in case of 'farming efficiency' and 'profitability' component, about half of the farmers (48 per cent and 54 per cent, respectively) fell in the 'agree' category. Only 55 per cent farmers fell in the 'agree' category in the case of high input use and related problems. It indicated that farmers' attitude was more

actual farming situations. For instance the non availability of organic manures in required quantities might be the major reason for the farmers to take this pragmatic attitudinal position on few items of scale. The results of farmer's response on different components of attitude towards sustainability scale were in conformity with the results of Beus and Dunlap (1991), Berry (2000) and Shivrain and yadav (2006).

CONCLUSION

Almost half of the farmers had their level of

Table 2: Farmers' response to different components of attitude towards sustainability N=600

| Sl. No. | Components | Level of agreement in per centage | | |
|---------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------|----------|
| | | Agree | Undecided | Disagree |
| I | Natural resource conservation | 71 | 5 | 24 |
| II | High input use and related problems | 55 | 9 | 36 |
| III | Farming efficiency | 48 | 15 | 37 |
| IV | Profitability | 54 | 14 | 32 |
| Overall | | 57.00 | 10.75 | 32.25 |

favourable in relation to these items which were related to 'natural resources conservation' component, it was lowest level of agreement in relation to those items which were related to 'high input use and related problems' component. Same was the case with 'profitability' and 'farming efficiency' components. This could be attributed

attitude at the midpoint of the scale. In all, 47 per cent farmers had either favourable or highly favourable attitude towards sustainability followed by favourable (35 per cent). Nine per cent were not having a favourable attitude towards sustainability as applied to vegetable cultivation and only six per cent farmers had highly

unfavourable attitude towards sustainable application of rice cultivation. In the case of 'natural resource conservation' component, majority of farmers (71) falls in 'agree' category whereas in the case of 'farming efficiency' and 'profitability' component, about half of the farmers (48 per cent and 54 per cent, respectively) fell in the 'agree' category. Only 55 per cent farmers fell in the 'agree' category in the case of high input use and related problems. For instance the non availability of organic manures in required quantities might be the major reason for the farmers to take this pragmatic attitudinal position on few items of scale. This suggested that there is continuing ambiguity about the concept among farmers, which prevented them from polarising their attitude clearly. Therefore, extension organizations should take measures to educate and convince the farmers about the prospects of sustainability.

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