



Research Article

Socio-Economic Status of Farmers in Haryana: A Comprehensive Study

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Abstract

This study examines the socio-economic status of farmers in Haryana, India, focusing on their income levels, land holdings, education, access to credit, and social challenges such as indebtedness. The objectives were to assess the socio-economic profile, identify factors influencing their economic conditions, and explore the impact of government policies on their livelihoods. Findings reveal that small and marginal farmers dominate the agricultural landscape, with significant dependence on informal credit sources and limited access to modern technology. The study highlights the need for targeted policy interventions to address indebtedness and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

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KEYWORDS: Socio-economic status, farmers, Haryana, in- datedness, agricultural policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture continues to be the backbone of the Indian economy, providing livelihood to a significant proportion of the population. In states like Haryana, where agriculture is the principal occupation, farmers play a crucial role in ensuring food security and contributing to the nation's economic growth. Despite the remarkable progress achieved through the Green Revolution, the socio-economic condition of farmers in

Haryana remains a subject of concern. Issues such as fragmented landholdings, rising input costs, fluctuating market prices, indebtedness, and limited access to modern technology continue to challenge the sustainability of farming households. The socio-economic status of farmers is not merely determined by agricultural productivity but also by factors such as education, income levels, land ownership, access to institutional credit, healthcare, and social mobility. In Haryana, regional

disparities, climatic variations, and changes in cropping patterns further influence the livelihood conditions of farmers. Understanding these dynamics is essential for policymakers, researchers, and development practitioners to design targeted interventions that can enhance farmers' well-being and ensure inclusive rural development. This study makes a comprehensive attempt to analyze the socio-economic status of farmers in Haryana by examining their demographic profile, landholding patterns, income sources, access to credit and subsidies, education levels, and standard of living. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by the farming community, thereby contributing to the formulation of effective policies for agricultural and rural development in Haryana.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Shubham *et al.* (2022) ^[4] conducted a study in five districts of North-Eastern Haryana, revealing that most farmers are middle-aged, with about 34% attaining education only up to the matriculation level. The majority lives in joint families and engages in medium land holdings with double cropping patterns. Irrigation relies heavily on flood methods via tube wells, and awareness of conservation structures like ponds is prevalent. Rohila *et al.* (2016) ^[3] examined farmers adopting DSR technology. Most were in the 36–50 age group with only metric-level education, and over half exhibited *low socio-economic status*. Adoption of new technology was low to moderate and economic motivation varied from low to moderate while innovation inclination was moderately high.

Siwach and Reena (2021) ^[5] analyzed secondary data from 1966–2018 to understand agricultural distress in Haryana. Despite the success of the Green Revolution in boosting productivity, agriculture's contribution to GSDP declined from over 60% in 1969–70 to just 17.6% by 2017–18. Rising input costs, distorted fertilizer use, inadequate remunerative prices, poor infrastructure, and reduced institutional procurement were found to be major stress factors for farming households.

Chander *et al.* (2017) ^[1] in Southern Haryana found that average loans taken by farmers amounted to 229,952. About 61% identified low profit margins as a primary cause of indebtedness. Additionally, 86% experienced declining income despite loan uptake, with many using the loans for housing rather than productivity enhancements. The recommendation focused on improving e-NAM (e-National Agricultural Market) access to help market linkage and reduce debt dependency.

Duhan and Singh (2017) ^[2] explored awareness levels of crop insurance among Haryana's farmers. They found that age, education, income, farming experience, and farm category significantly shape farmers' understanding of insurance. Education emerged as a pivotal factor, highlighting a need for targeted awareness campaigns at the village level.

3. OBJECTIVES

To assess the socio-economic profile of farmers in Haryana, including landholdings, income, and education levels.

To identify factors influencing the economic conditions of farmers, such as access to credit and technology.

To evaluate the impact of government policies and subsidies on farmers' socio-economic status.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Study Area

The study was conducted in the Haryana district Hisar, selected for its agricultural significance and diverse cropping patterns. The district represents a mix of irrigated and rain-fed farming systems, providing a broad perspective on farmers' socio-economic conditions.

Research Design

A descriptive survey design was adopted to collect primary data. This approach allowed for a detailed examination of farmers' socio-economic characteristics and the factors influencing their livelihoods.

5. RESULTS

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group (in years)	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
21-40	18	24.00
41-60	24	32.00
61-80	15	20.00
≥ 80	18	24.00
Total	75	100

Source: Primary data

The age distribution of farmers shows that the largest proportion (32%) falls in the 41–60 years category, indicating that middle-aged individuals dominate farming activities. Farmers aged 21–40 years and those 80 years and above each constitute 24%, while 20% belong to the 61–80 years group. This pattern highlights that farming in Haryana is mainly carried out by middle-aged and elderly individuals, with relatively lower participation from younger generations, raising concerns about the future sustainability of agriculture. Overall, the analysis indicates that farming in the study area is largely carried out by middle-aged and elderly farmers, while the relatively lower representation of the younger generation raises concerns about the long-term sustainability of agriculture in Haryana.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender Group	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
Male	39	52.00
Female	36	48.00
Total	75	100

Source: Primary data

The gender-wise distribution of respondents shows that males (52%) slightly outnumber females (48%) among the farming households studied. This indicates that while farming in Haryana is still predominantly male-oriented, the participation of women is nearly equal, reflecting their significant contribution to agricultural activities. The narrow gap also suggests that women play an active and essential role in both farm operations and household-level agricultural management.

Table 4: Income of Respondents

Income(yearly)	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
< 1lakh	30	40.00
1-5 lakhs	24	32.00
5-10 lakhs	18	24.00
>10 lakhs	3	4.00
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

The income profile of farmers reveals that the majority (40%) earn less than 1 lakh per year, indicating a prevalence of low-income households in the study area. About 32% fall in the 1–5 lakh range, while 24% earn between 5–10 lakhs, reflecting a smaller group with relatively better economic conditions. Only 4% of farmers earn above 10 lakhs annually, showing that high-income farming households are very limited. Overall, the data highlights that most farmers have modest earnings, pointing to economic vulnerability and dependence on small-scale agriculture.

Table 5: Kharif Crop Growing Farmers

Kharif crop	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
Rice	60	80.00
Vegetables	12	16.00
Other	3	4.00
Total	75	100

Source: Primary data

The data shows that rice is the dominant Kharif crop, cultivated by 80% of farmers, reflecting Haryana's strong reliance on paddy during the monsoon season. Vegetables are grown by 16% of respondents, while only 4% cultivate other crops. This indicates a heavy dependence on rice cultivation, with limited crop diversification during the Kharif season, which may pose risks related to soil health, water use, and market fluctuations.

Table 6: Rabi Crop Growing Farmers

Rabi crop	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
Sugarcane	54	72.00
Vegetables	15	20.00
Other	06	08.00
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

The table indicates that sugarcane is the predominant Rabi crop, cultivated by 72% of farmers, showing its importance as a major cash crop in the study area. Vegetables are grown by 20% of respondents, while 8% cultivate other crops. This highlights a strong reliance on sugarcane during the Rabi season, with relatively limited diversification into vegetables and other crops.

Table 7: Summer Crop Growing Farmers

Summer crop	Frequency(N)	Percentage (%)
Seasonal Fruits	76	76
Rice	15	15
Vegetables	5	5
Other	4	4
Total	100	100

Source: Primary data

The data shows that seasonal fruits dominate summer cropping, cultivated by 76% of farmers, indicating their preference for fruit crops during this season. Rice is grown by 15%, while vegetables (5%) and other crops (4%) account for a very small share. This pattern reflects a strong dependence on fruit cultivation in summer, with limited diversification into cereals and vegetables.

6. CONCLUSION

The study highlights the multifaceted socio-economic realities of farmers in Haryana. The findings reveal that farming is largely carried out by middle-aged and elderly individuals, while youth participation remains relatively low, raising concerns about the long-term sustainability of agriculture. Gender distribution shows that women play an almost equal role as men in farming activities, indicating their significant but often undervalued contribution. Education levels among farmers remain low, with a considerable proportion being illiterate or having only primary education, which restricts their ability to adopt modern agricultural practices and access government schemes effectively. Income analysis indicates that the majority of farmers fall within low-income groups, with only a small percentage earning above 10 lakhs annually. This economic vulnerability, coupled with rising costs of cultivation and limited access to institutional credit, makes many farmers dependent on informal sources of finance and contributes to indebtedness. Crop pattern analysis shows a strong reliance on rice during the Kharif season and sugarcane during the Rabi season, while summer cropping is dominated by seasonal fruits. This heavy dependence on a few crops points to limited diversification, which may have implications for soil health, water use, and long-term sustainability.

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