

**KNOWLEDGE OF TRIBAL FARMERS TOWARDS ORGANIC FARMING PRACTICES****Neeta Kalasariya<sup>1</sup>, R. M. Naik<sup>2</sup> and Rakesh Karravula<sup>3</sup>**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The present study was conducted in Dangs district of South Gujarat during the year 2020. All of the 3 talukas of the Dangs district were covered under the study. Twelve villages were selected through proportionate random sampling. From each village ten tribal farmers were selected through simple random sampling. Hence, the total respondents were 120. The result was found that tribal farmers had a majority of respondents had medium level of the knowledge of organic farming and extension contact, scientific orientation and mass media exposure were found positively and highly significantly associated at 1 per cent level of probability whereas, education, farm experience, annual income, social participation, economic motivation, risk orientation, management orientation and occupation are positively and significantly associated at 5 per cent level of probability with their knowledge regarding organic farming.*

**Keywords :** *knowledge, tribal farmers, correlation and organic farming*

**INTRODUCTION**

Organic agriculture in India long back in 1900 by Sir Albert Howard, a British agronomist, in local village of North India. Organic farming has become very much popularized and practiced in Southern State of India. Economic status of the people of Indian country mostly depends on agricultural production. Need for economic agricultural production lead to discriminative use to chemical fertilizers, insecticides and pesticides (Jatapara *et al.*, 2021). Organic farming is a production system, which avoids or largely excludes the use of synthetically compounded fertilizers, pesticides, growth regulators and livestock feed additive (Ananthnag *et al.*, 2014). To the maximum extent feasible, organic farming system rely upon crop rotations. Crop residues, animal manures, legumes, green manures, off-farm organic wastes, mechanical cultivation, mineral bearing rocks and aspects of biological pest control to maintain soil productivity and tilth, to supply plant nutrients and to control insects, weeds and other pests. Organic farming which aims at cultivating the land and raising crops in such a way as to keep the soil a live and in good health may be an alternative to the present system of farming solely depending on chemicals. Since the last decade, the organic farming has been getting a big in Gujarat too. Many tribal farmers of the state are practicing organic farming. Once the tribal farmers had adopted the organic farming number of question arises before them for profitable organic farming. Notwithstanding the growing opportunities in the field of organic farming, there has been little effort in research front regarding awareness, knowledge and attitude

of tribal farmers towards organic farming. There is an urgent need to create a data base on various aspects of tribal farmers towards organic farming in order to reorient the research the research agenda and train extension and development workers in organic farming. Keeping the view of the above stated information, organic farming can play an important role for quality production, to save the environment, to improve soil health and even more beneficial human health.

**OBJECTIVES**

- (1) To study the knowledge level of respondents about organic farming in the Dangs district
- (2) To analyse the association between profile with knowledge of respondents towards organic farming

**METHODOLOGY**

An Ex-post-facto research design was used in the present investigation. According to Kerlinger (1976), the study was conducted during February-2020 to March-2020 purposively selected Dangs district of South Gujarat. The main focus of the investigation is on knowledge of tribal farmers towards organic farming tribal farmers in the Dangs District of Gujarat. The total lists of organic farming practices in South Gujarat were prepared from the different sources. To justify the objectives of the study, 120 organic farming tribal farmers were selected from the complete list by using simple random sampling method. In view the objectives of the study, an interview schedule was prepared. Before its actual use, it was pretested, modified and restructured.

The responses were collected from the randomly selected respondents by arranging personal interview at their home or field or other. Sixteen independent and two dependent variables were selected for the study. The different statistical techniques were used to analyse the data. The collected data were analysed by using appropriate statistical methods viz., average, percentage, mean score, standard deviation and correlation coefficient (r).

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Knowledge level of respondents about organic farming in the dangs district**

Knowledge referred as the body of understood information possessed by the respondent about organic farming. It is the cognitive behavior of an individual. The body of knowledge is the product of learning process. Once the knowledge is acquired it produces changes in the thinking process of an individual, which would lead to further changes in attitude and helps the tribal farmers in making rational decisions. It is prerequisite for adoption of any agricultural innovation. With this view the attempt has been made to determine the level of knowledge of tribal farmers about organic farming.

The data regarding extent knowledge are categories viz., (i) low level of knowledge (up to 51.63 score), (ii) medium level of knowledge (between 51.64 to 62.21 score) and (iii) high level of knowledge (above 62.21 score). The data in this regards are presented in table 1.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to the knowledge level regarding organic farming**

(n=120)

Sr. No.	Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	26	21.67
2	Medium	77	64.17
3	High	17	14.16

(Mean= 56.92)

(SD = 5.29)

It can be concluded that the majority (64.17%) of the respondents were found in the medium level of knowledge, followed by 21.67 and 14.16 per cent of the respondents had to low and high level of knowledge, respectively. In general, it could be said that the majority of respondents (85.84%) have medium to low level of knowledge. This might be due to medium level of education and frequent changes in technology. This finding has been supported by the finding of Lakhera and Bagenia (2017).

**Correlation between personal profile of the respondents and their level of knowledge regarding organic farming**

Knowledge about subject is normally referred as an individual’s “awareness about or know how about”. Considering the importance of level of knowledge, the correlation coefficients were calculated to know the relationship between personal profile of the respondents and level of knowledge regarding organic farming. The results of this aspect are presented in table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation between personal profile of the respondents and their level of knowledge regarding organic farming** (n=120)

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	correlation coefficient (r)
X <sub>1</sub>	Age	-0.1134 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>2</sub>	Gender	-0.0686 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>3</sub>	Education	0.1433*
X <sub>4</sub>	Size of family	-0.0960 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>5</sub>	Farm experience	0.1915*
X <sub>6</sub>	Land holding	-0.0239 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>7</sub>	Annual income	0.1956*
X <sub>8</sub>	Herd size	0.0438 <sup>NS</sup>
X <sub>9</sub>	Social participation	0.1342*
X <sub>10</sub>	Extension contact	0.2448**
X <sub>11</sub>	Economic motivation	0.1245*
X <sub>12</sub>	Scientific orientation	0.2380**
X <sub>13</sub>	Risk orientation	0.1482*
X <sub>14</sub>	Management orientation	0.1177*
X <sub>15</sub>	Mass media exposure	0.2857**
X <sub>16</sub>	Occupation	0.1166*

NS= Non-significant \* = Significant at 0.05 level

\*\* = Significant at 0.01 level

It can be revealed that extension contact (0.2448\*\*), scientific orientation (0.2380\*\*) and mass media exposure (0.2857\*\*) were found positively and highly significantly associated at 1 per cent level of probability whereas, education (0.1433\*), farm experience (0.1915\*), annual income (0.1956\*), social participation (0.1342\*), economic motivation (0.1245\*), risk orientation (0.1482\*), management orientation (0.1177\*) and occupation (0.1166\*) are positively and significantly associated at 5 per cent level of probability while, age (-0.1134), gender (-0.0686), size of family (-0.0960) and land holding (-0.0239), are negatively but non-significantly associated with their knowledge regarding organic farming. While herd size (0.0438) are positively but non-significantly associated with their knowledge regarding organic farming. This finding has been supported by the finding of Damor and Khadayata (2017) and Deshmukh (2018).

## CONCLUSION

After completing this study, It can be concluded that the tribal farmers had a majority of respondents had medium level of the knowledge of organic farming. In general, it could be said that the majority of respondents have medium to low level of knowledge. This might be due to medium level of education and frequent changes in technology. The result that found that extension contact, scientific orientation and mass media exposure were found positively and highly significantly associated at 1 per cent level of probability whereas, education, farm experience, annual income, social participation, economic motivation, risk orientation, management orientation and occupation are positively and significantly associated at 5 per cent level of probability while, age, gender, size of family and land holding are negatively but non-significantly associated with their knowledge regarding organic farming.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- (1) The results of this study will facilitate in knowing the characteristics of the tribal farmers in organic farming which would serve as a guideline for the planners, policy maker and implementing agencies related to promote organic farming.
- (2) Findings related to level of knowledge shows that tribal farmers in organic farming had medium level of knowledge among organic farming. It can be said that there is wide scope to increase the level of knowledge among the tribal farmers in organic farming by developing and implementing specific extension strategy.
- (3) Research related to relationship of independent and dependent variable should be considered while planning and implementing the developmental programmes.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors of the paper declare no conflict of interest

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