*Plant Archives* Vol. 20, Supplement 2, 2020 pp. 3770-3772 **e-ISSN:2581-6063 (online), ISSN:0972-5210**

# SOCIO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF AMLA GROWERS - A CASE STUDY IN DINDIGUL DISTRICT OF TAMIL NADU, INDIA

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## Abstract

The study was carried out in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu covering one block with eight purposively selected villages and 120 randomly selected respondents to analyze the socio economic impact of amla growers. It was found that amla cultivation was the main source of income for livelihood of the respondents. Data was collected using structured schedule for quantifying socioeconomic status of amla growers. The data revealed that more than half of the respondents (53.33 per cent) were medium landholders, more than one-third of respondents had high school (37.5 per cent) education, nearly two third (66.67 per cent) of the respondents were having pakka house, majority (70.83 per cent) of the respondents were belonged to OBC category, majority (93.33 per cent) of the farmers had small family and Cent percent of the respondents were following agriculture as their main occupation. The Department of Horticulture, Government of Tamil Nadu needs to take up intensive efforts to educate the amla growers on improved amla cultivation practices.
***Keywords*:** Amla growers, socio economic impact.

## Introduction

Amla is commonly known as an Indian gooseberry or Nelli. It is known for its high medicinal properties. Its fruits are used for preparing various drugs. Drugs prepared from amla used for treatment of anemia, sores, diarrhea, toothache, and fever. Fruits are the rich source of Vitamin-C. The green fruits of amla are also used in making pickles. Many products such as shampoo, hair oil, dye, tooth powder and face creams are made from amla. It is a branching tree with average height of 8 to18 m with glabrous branches. In any social science, it is essential to analyze the characteristics of farmers, which would give a basic and clear understanding about the background of the farmers. At the end of this research we look at the socio economic impact of the amla growers. This will enable experts to formulate plans in this area.

## Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu, since the district had highest, production and productivity. Hence, the study was conducted in Vedachandur taluk of Dindigul district. Snowball sampling procedure was followed to select the respondents of the study. The study was an expost-facto survey research. The impact was assessed adopting with-without approach. Standardized data collection tools were utilized to collect the data from farmers (interview schedule), key informants (interview schedule). The responses were coded, tabulated and subjected to descriptive statistical analysis comprising percentage analysis

## Results and discussion

The following table describes the overall socio-economic situation of Amla growers. Overall, this suggests that they are looking forward to improvement in their lives.

**Table 1 :** Overall percentage of Socio-economic status of farmers (n=120)

| Category | Number | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Low | 38 | 31.67 |
| Medium | 50 | 41.67 |
| High | 32 | 26.67 |
| Total | 120 | 100.00 |

Table 1 shows that more than two-fifth of the farmers (41.67 per cent)had medium level of socio-economic status followed by low level of socio economic status (31.67 per cent) and remaining respondents (26.67 per cent) had low level of socio economic status. The Table 2 next shows the characteristics wise socio-economic status of amla growers.

**Table 2 :** Socio economic characteristics of farmers(n-120)

| Sl. No | Dimensions | Category | Number | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **Land Holding** | < 5 acres | 50 | 41.67 |
| | | 5 – 10 acres | 64 | 53.33 |
| | | >10 acres | 6 | 5.00 |
| 2 | **Education** | Illiterate | 2 | 1.67 |
| | | Primary School | 6 | 5.00 |
| | | Middle School | 25 | 20.83 |
| | | High School | 45 | 37.50 |
| | | Higher Secondary | 29 | 24.17 |
| | | Degree | 13 | 10.83 |
| | | Post graduate | -- | -- |
| 3 | **Home** | Hut | -- | -- |
| | | Kachha house | 40 | 33.33 |
| | | Pakka House | 80 | 66.67 |
| 4 | **Occupation** | Agriculture | 120 | 100.00 |
| | | Non- Agriculture | -- | -- |
| 5 | **Caste** | SC/ST | 35 | 29.17 |
| | | OBC | 85 | 70.83 |
| | | Others | -- | -- |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | **Farm Power** | Draught animals | 18 | 15.00 |
| | | Power tiller | 2 | 1.67 |
| | | Tractor | -- | -- |
| 7 | **Agricultural Implements** | Wooden Plough | 46 | 38.33 |
| | | M.B. Plough | 71 | 59.16 |
| | | Seed Cum Fertilizer Drill | 20 | 16.67 |
| | | Sprayer | 27 | 22.50 |
| | | Bullock cart | 2 | 1.67 |
| | | Tractor | -- | -- |
| 8 | **Family Size** | Size up to 5 | 112 | 93.33 |
| | | More than 5 | 8 | 6.66 |

**(a) Land holding**

Table 2 revealed that more than half of the respondents (50 per cent) were medium landholders, followed by only 41.67 per cent in small land holders category whereas big land holdings was observed to the least extent of only 5.00 per cent. The possible reasons that could be attributed to this result were those who had agriculture as the main occupation almost depend on their land for their lively hood. So they always try to possess more acres of land. It could also be their ancestor's property. The results were in line with the others findings (Hanumanaikar, 1995). On this aspect, the views of earlier researcher was in contradiction with the present study (Parvathamma, 2006).

**(b) Education**

It was observed that more than one-third (37.50 per cent) of the respondents had high school education followed by higher secondary(24.17 per cent) and middle school (20.83 per cent). 10.83 per cent of the respondents had college level education and 5.00 per cent of the respondents had primary school of education. Illiterates were noticed to the extent of 1.67 per cent but there were no post Graduate respondents were noticed. This indicated that more educated farmers visualize the farmers had high level of socio economic impact towards the recommended cultivation practices.

**(c) Home**

The perusal of data indicated that majority (66.67 per cent) of the respondents were having pakka house followed by kachha house (33.33 per cent). However, none of the respondents were living in the huts. The reasons behind these results may be majority of the respondents were having sufficient income which help them to construct a pakka house.

**(d) Occupation**

It is evident from the Table 2 that all the 120 respondents were following agriculture as their main occupation for their livelihood. It is needless to say that farmers had Agriculture as the major occupation since ages. Further, it is also true that the farmers major bread earning is only through agriculture by cultivating field (Uma, 2007)

**(e) Caste**

Majority (70.83 per cent) of the respondents belonged to OBC category and rest (29.17 per cent) were belonged to SC/ST category. This might help in narrowing down the gap that may create among the different sections of the society (Umashankar, 2004).

**(f) Farm power**

Fifteen per cent of the respondents were having draught animals as farm power followed by 1.67 per cent) of farmers were having power tiller. And none of the respondents were noticed having tractor as their source of farm power. The observations in the earlier tables revealed that majority of the respondents were small farmers who cannot afford tractor with high investment. Under such circumstances, the only alternative for them is to have draft animals for farm operations.

**(g) Agricultural implements**

Table 2 reveals the farm implements possessed by the farmers. Pooled data depicts that majority of the farmers (59.16 per cent) owned the M.B. plough, 38.33 per cent of the farmers possessed wooden plough, sprayer was owned by the 22.50 per cent of the farmers and 16.67 per cent of the farmers had seed cum fertilizer drill. Least percentage of farmers (1.67 per cent) possessed Bullock cart and none of the farmers possessed Tractor. It is not surprising to note that majority of the farmers possess all the materials required for farming. Hence, it is quite essential to own and use the farm implements for quality production.

**(h) Family size**

The results indicated that majority (93.33 per cent) of the farmers had nuclear family of less than five members. And only 6.66 percent of the respondents had big family of more than five members. The information on size of the family showed that majority of the farmers had nuclear family. Only few of them had large family size. This shows that the concept of joint family approach is slowly eroding in the villages; instead people started become independent due to fragmentation. This trend is not supportive to agriculture development. This might also be due to their increased social awareness on family planning efforts made by the Governments to check the population growth. Further, the education levels of the respondents might have also made them to incline towards the small family. It is also true that the families in the villages are in the verge of disintegration because of urban influence and fragmentation. Further, the families with very few earning members may not able to get the required facilities (Dorairaj, 2006).

## Conclusion

The data revealed that more than half of the respondents (53.33 per cent) were medium landholders, more than one-third of respondents had high school (37.5 per cent) education, nearly two third (66.67 per cent) of the respondents were having pakka house, Majority (70.83 per cent) of the respondents were belonged to OBC category, majority (93.33 per cent) of the farmers had small family (less than five members) and Cent percent of the respondents were following agriculture as their main occupation. This shows that the majority of the farmers had high socio economic status towards the cultivation practices of amla growers.

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