

# Socioeconomic Profile of Dairy Farmers in Maharashtra: A Case Study of Latur District

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## ABSTRACT

If we look at the state's population growth patterns, milk and milk products must be used to ensure both food security and nutritional security. Another possibility is that the populace expresses various concerns like food insecurity, perceived insecurity, unemployment, etc., and the government responds by taking quick and effective action to address these concerns. The current study examines various facets of dairy farming and the current state of milk production, consumption, and sales. The city of Latur was deliberately chosen for the investigation. Two tehsils were randomly chosen from the zone, and two blocks were randomly chosen from each tehsil. Each block has two villages drawn at random. 10% of dairy producers were chosen proportionately and randomly from among all the households in each community. Dairying was the primary occupation of 12.81% of the respondents, whereas the major occupations of 8.75%, 7.18%, and 4.68% of the respondents were business, labour, and services, respectively. In contrast, the majority of respondents (64.68%) chose dairying as their secondary occupation, followed by agriculture (22.81%) with 20.00% of the respondents. The respondents stipulated that at the time of the inquiry, dairy farmers had to have at least one lactating dairy animal. The majority of respondents (45.93%) sold 4 liters to 7 liters of milk per day, followed by 40.31% and 13.75% of respondents who sold less than 4 liters and more than 7 liters of milk, respectively. In the study region, agriculture was the main industry and dairying was the secondary one. As increased milk production was the farmers' primary goal, respondents had more crossbred cattle and buffalo than native livestock. Farmers often sell their milk in cooperative societies, while some also sell in independent shops.

**Keywords:** Dairy farmers; Socioeconomic profile; Occupation; Rural development; Cooperative societies

## INTRODUCTION

India is primarily an agricultural country, with animal husbandry serving as the foundation of the economy. Next to agriculture, the dairy industry not only boosts family nutrition standards and continuously generates cash, but it also partially lowers unemployment [1]. More than 80 percent of all agricultural workers are employed in the dairy sector. Dairy farming is currently a significant source of livelihood in India, giving farmers a steady stream of cash and eventually assisting in improving the socioeconomic situation of rural people. The socioeconomic makeup of the dairy producers reflects the way the local social dynamics shape the economic activities. As a result, it is seen as a crucial prerequisite for making decisions

that eventually have an impact on the profitability of any economic organization [2]. For small farmers, marginal farmers, and agricultural laborers in the state, dairy production is a significant source of supplemental revenue. For low and moderate income households, dairy farming plays a significant part in both commercial and subsistence farming. The dairy industry has a lot of promise for improving the socioeconomic circumstances of small, marginal farmers and agricultural employees since it produces more and makes profits faster than other businesses. In a shorter amount of time, it has increased the state's income, the creation of jobs, and the labor force. In Latur, dairy farmers raise lactating animals to generate income that is complementary to crop farming. If we look at the state's population growth patterns, milk and milk products must be

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used to ensure both food security and nutritional security. Another possibility is that the populace expresses various concerns like food insecurity, perceived insecurity, unemployment, etc., and the government responds by taking quick and effective action to address these concerns [3]. His paper depicts the socio-economic profile of dairy farmers and the constraints experienced by them during dairy farming in the Latur district of Maharashtra.

### Study area

Latur district is in the Marathwada region in Maharashtra in India, located between 17°52' to 18°50' latitudes North and between the 76°18' to 79°12' longitudes East in the Deccan plateau. The district is situated on the Maharashtra Karnataka boundary on the Eastern side of the Latur is Bidder district of Karnataka, whereas Nanded is on the Northeast, Parbhani on the Northern side, and Beed on the Northwest and Osmanabad on the Western and Southern side. The entire district of Latur is situated on the Balaghat Plateau, 540 mts to 638 mts from the mean sea level.

### Objectives

- To study the socioeconomic and personal characteristics of dairy farmers.
- To find out the knowledge of improved dairy management practices.
- To highlight facilitating factors that could help promote dairy development to improve.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of the study was to investigate the various facets of dairy farming as well as the utilization and sales of milk. The

Latur district was purposefully chosen for the study. Two tehsils were randomly chosen from the zone, and four blocks were chosen at random from the tehsil. Each block has two villages drawn at random. Out of all the farmers in each community, 10% of them were dairy producers, chosen proportionately and randomly. Thus, 320 samples were taken in total. According to the requirements of the responders, dairy farmers must have at least one dairy cow that is nursing at the time of the research. A structured interview schedule that was created for this purpose served as the main method of data collecting. Age, education, family size, herd size, operational land holding, annual income, dairying experience, milk output, milk use, milk sale, social participation, one-on-one interaction, personal cosmopolite, and media exposure were among the study's variables. Utilizing straightforward statistical tools like frequency and percentage, the acquired data was examined.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Age

Results in Table 1 show that the majority of the dairy farmers belonged to the middle age group (50.93%), and 26.87 percent of farmers have the old age group. The remaining 22.18 percent of farmers have young age. These results indicate that middle-aged farmers take up dairying as income generating activity as they are more capable physically and could shoulder more family responsibilities. Almost similar findings were observed by Rahul Choudhary, who found that the majority of the respondents belong to medium age group [4].

**Table 1:** Socioeconomic and communication respondent (n=320).

Category		Frequency	percentage
Age	Young age (up to 35)	71	22.18
	Middle age (36-50)	163	50.93
	Old age (above 50)	86	26.87
Family size	Small (<5)	69	21.56
	Medium (5 to 7)	154	48.12
	Large (>7)	97	30.31
Education	Illiterate	14	4.37
	Primary	47	14.68
	Middle	78	24.37
	Secondary	95	29.68
	Intermediate	53	16.56

	Graduate and above	33	10.31
<b>Occupation</b>			
Primary	Agriculture	213	66.56
	Dairying	41	12.81
	Service	23	7.18
	Business	28	8.75
	Labor	15	4.68
Secondary	Agriculture	73	22.81
	Dairying	207	64.68
	Business	19	5.93
	Labor	21	6.56
Herd size	Small (<3)	96	30
	Medium (3 to 4)	187	58.43
	Large (>4)	37	11.56
Operational land holding	Landless (0 ha)	27	8.43
	Marginal	136	42.5
	Small 1-2 ha	99	30.93
	Semi-medium 2.1-4 ha	36	11.25
	Medium 4.1-10 ha	22	6.87
	Large >10 ha	0	0
Annual income	Low (<0.75 lakh)	76	1.87
	Medium (0.75 to 1.5 lakh)	183	57.18
	High (>1.5 lakh)	61	19.06
Milk production	Low (<5)	87	27.18
	Medium (5 to 9)	134	41.87
	High (>9)	99	30.93
Milk consumption	Low (<2)	112	35
	Medium (2 to 3)	165	51.56
	High (>3)	43	13.43
Social participation	Low (<3)	121	37.81
	Medium (3 to 5)	167	52.18

	medium (>5)	32	10
Milk sale	Low (<4)	129	40.31
	Medium (4 to 7)	147	45.93
	High (>7)	44	13.75
Mass media exposure	Low (<7)	118	36.87
	Medium (7 to 8)	157	49.06
	High (>8)	45	14.06

### Family size

According to the distribution of respondents, it was observed that most (48.12 %) of the respondents belonged to the medium family size (5-7 members), followed by small family size (less than 5 members), accounting for 21.56 percent and lastly large family size (>7 members), accounting for 30.31 percent of respondents. These findings are in agreement with the findings of Subhash Kumar Saurav, as they also reported that the majority of the respondents belonged to medium family size [5].

### Education

When evaluating dairy farmers' knowledge and capacity to adopt sound farming practices, their educational background is a crucial factor. Table 1 perusal revealed that the bulk of respondents (24.37%) had completed middle-level education, while 29.68 percent had completed secondary education. In addition, it was discovered that 16.56% and 14.68%, respectively, of the respondents, had degrees from secondary and primary education levels. 10.31 percent of respondents, or more than one-tenth, had graduated from high school or above. 4.37%, respectively, of the respondents, fell into the illiteracy category. The study found that the majority (68.75%) of dairy farmers had a high school diploma or more, followed by intermediate (16.56%) and middle school (24.37%) [6].

### Occupation

The occupations of the respondents were divided into primary and secondary occupations wherein the primary occupations, contributes to more than 50 percent of the annual income of the respondents.

### Primary occupation

From Table 1, it was observed that 66.56 percent of respondents practiced agriculture as their primary occupation, followed by business accounting for 8.75 percent, service accounting for 7.18 percent; dairy accounting for 12.81 percent respondents, lastly, 4.68 percent of respondents practiced labor as their primary occupation. This trend could be due to the limited job opportunities in the area [7].

### Secondary occupation

From Table 1, it was found that the majority (64.68%) of respondents practiced dairy farming as their secondary occupation, followed by agriculture accounting for 22.81 percent, labor accounting for 6.56 percent, business accounting for 5.93 percent and lastly. These findings were similar to the findings of, who also reported that majority of the respondents practiced dairy as their secondary occupation [8].

### Herd size

From Table 1, it was found that 30.00 percent respondents were in the small herd size category (up to 3 animals), followed by medium herd size (3 animals to 4 animals), accounting for 58.43 percent and lastly, large herd size (above 6 animals) accounting for 11.56 percent of respondents. This trend could be due to the lower annual income of the respondents and dairy farming is the secondary source of income for most of the respondents. These findings are similar to the findings of who also reported that the majority of the respondents had small herd sizes [9].

### Operational Land Holding (OLH)

In this research the actual land possessed by the respondent was indicated. Perusal of Table 1 found that the majority of the respondents (42.05%) were marginal land holders which were followed by 30.93 percent and 11.25 percent of the respondents who were small and landholders respectively? A very less proportion of the respondents (6.87%) had medium land holding followed by 8.43 percent of the respondents who were land less. None of the respondents had land holding. Rajadurai et al., observed that maximum number of respondents were landless (71.40%), while small farmers (17.70%) [10].

### Annual income

According to Table 1, the majority of respondents (57.18%) had medium income levels between 0.75 and 1.5 lakhs, followed by respondents with low-income levels of less than 0.75 lakhs and respondents with high income levels of more than 1.5 lakhs at 1.87 % and 19.06 %, respectively [11].

## Milk production

Milk production was calculated in terms of the amount of milk produced in litre per day basis from the lactating animals. In Table 1 it was found that majority (41.87%) of the respondents had lactating animals that produce 5 liters to 9 liters of milk per day. Dairying on a small scale basis followed by 27.18% and 30.93% of the respondents had lactating animals that produce more than 9 liters and less than 5 liters of milk respectively. Revealed that the average milk yield of cattle was 69.00%.

## Milk consumption

The amount of milk drank by the household of the sampler, expressed in liters, and was used to calculate consumption. Each respondent's daily basis. Table 1 analysis revealed that just over half (51.56%) of the respondents drank 2 to 3 liters of milk per day, which was followed by respondents who drank less than 2 liters and more than 3 liters of milk on a daily basis for household consumption, respectively, by 35.00 percent and 13.43 percent of the respondents.

## Milk sale

Milk sale was presented as the amount of milk being sold by the respondents on daily basis. A glance at Table 1 was found that majority (45.93%) of the respondents sold 4 liters to 7 liters of milk per day followed by 40.31 per cent and 13.75 per cent of the respondents who sold less than 5 liters and more than 8 litres of milk respectively. Koli et al., revealed that majority of the respondents (82.50%) had medium level of milk sale category.

## Social participation

According to Table 1 majority (52.18%) of the respondents had a medium level of social participation followed by 37.18 percent and 10 percent of the respondents who had low and high social participation respectively. Social participation of the respondents was satisfactory because some farmers engaged in cooperative society as a member. Sachan, reported that the majority (68.00%) of the respondents had a low level of social participation, followed by 27.00 percent medium level.

## Mass media exposure

A glance at Table 1 was found that near about half of the respondents (49.06%) had medium mass media exposure followed by 36.87 percent and 14.06 percent of the respondents who had low and high mass media exposure respectively because most of the farmers having smartphone's, internet connection, television etc. in his study observed that majority (62.00%) of the respondents belonged to medium mass media exposure [12].

## CONCLUSION

In Latur, small and marginal farmers rely heavily on the money generated by the dairy industry. The majority of responders had a medium level of age, according to the survey. In the study region, agriculture was the main industry and dairying was the secondary one. As increased milk production was the farmers' primary goal, respondents had more crossbred cattle and buffalo than native livestock. Farmers often sell their milk in cooperative societies, while some also sell in independent shops. Respondents had a moderate amount of exposure to the media because the majority of farmers had smartphones, internet connections, televisions, etc. Respondents' social participation was good because some farmers were members of cooperative societies.

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