

A STUDY ON CONSTRAINTS FACED BY FARMERS IN ADOPTION OF PIG FARMING

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ABSTRACT

Pig farming is emerging as a profitable venture among small farmers in Punjab due to declining returns from traditional agriculture. Pigs have small gestation period, give good litter size with two litters in a year, high feed conversion efficiency, good carcass yield (90 percent as compared to 70 percent in poultry) and pig meat is good source of protein. However, because of the social stigma and other taboos attached with pig rearing, these farmers face many constraints and shortcomings in adoption. In order to find a solution to these constraints, the following study was carried out in Muktsar district of Punjab. Twenty four pig farmers were surveyed through personal interview for the purpose. The results revealed that most serious constraints faced were poor socio-economic parameters, insufficient swill feed availability for feeding pigs (75.00 percent cases), non-availability of slaughter houses (41.67 percent) and value addition, lack of proper marketing facilities (29.17 percent) along with poor institutional credit (66.67 percent). In addition to these major problems, there were other constraints also affecting the efficient management and sustainability of pig farms.

Keywords: Constraints, Pig farming, Poor institutional credit, Punjab

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In Punjab, pig farming has long been considered the occupation of socially and economically backward and ignorant people. However due to profitable returns, pig farming is increasingly becoming popular especially among small farmers with land below 5 acres (Bhadauria *et al.*, 2019). Government is also encouraging diversification in agriculture with subsidiary occupations. Growing demand for pork resulting from the growth of hospitality sector and the proliferation of fast food chains in the country has prompted farmers in Punjab to take up pig farming (Bhadauria *et al.*, 2019). Pig farming provides employment opportunities to seasonally employed rural farmers and supplement income to improve their living standards (Ramesh *et al.*, 2014). Animal husbandry department in Punjab is encouraging rearing of superior breeds like Large White Yorkshire and is also importing good quality semen to raise yields.

With the establishment of Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Science University (GADVASU) at Ludhiana, dedicated scientists have encouraged pig farmers by forming Progressive pig farmers associations which conducts regular meetings every month. New developments in piggery and new schemes for encouraging farmers are discussed on a wider platform to widen their exposure. Majority of the pig farmers encounter problems in the availability of swill feed due to poor social contacts and so many farmers have to purchase costly industrial feed. This raises the costs incurred and erodes the profits of the farmer. In addition the social stigma attached with piggery discourage many potential entrepreneurial youth from

venturing into it. Non-availability of a proper slaughter house and value addition for the by-products of pigs is a major worry. There are no proper markets in the state where farmers can get marginal price. Awareness, as well as subsidy for the popular products from pigs like pickle, meat burger patty, pork sauces, meat walls, meat nuggets, ham is not provided. In the light of the aforesaid facts, the present study was undertaken to critically analyse the constraints perceived by pig farmers of Muktsar district in Punjab.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In Muktsar District, twenty four farmers were identified through field functionaries (Veterinary Inspectors) of animal husbandry department. Out of these, 18 were from urban and 6 from rural areas. Data were collected personally through a structured interview schedule which consisted of fourteen possible constraints in pig farming enumerated after reviewing related literature, consultation with university specialists and field veterinarians. The perceived constraints like lack of proper health management and veterinary care, low awareness of scientific management practices and marketing constraints have been further analysed. Simple frequency analyses have been used to interpret the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-personal and communication profile of pig farmers:

A perusal of Table 1 revealed that majority of the pig farmers (62.5 percent) belonged to middle age group of 30-46 years and more than half were educated up to high school. Majority of the pig farmers had piggery as

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subsidiary occupation (91.67 percent) with medium herd size of 51-200 animals (62.5 percent) and had low annual income (58.33 percent).

Seventy five percent of the respondents were small farmers with land holding of less than 5 acres and had experience of 3-4 years. About 33.33 percent of the pig farmers had low extension contact and mass media exposure. However, 16.67 percent of farmers with successfully running farms had high level of innovativeness and scientific temper while 66.67 percent had high level of economic motivation.

Constraints encountered by pig farmers:

Table 2 enumerates several constraints that impede the successful operation of a pig farm. Insufficient availability of swill feed is the most serious drawback felt by farmers in 75.00 percent cases because traditional industrial feeds are costly and lowers the profit. The pig farms normally depend upon marriage palaces, hotels, restaurants and post harvest damaged fruits from orchards. However due to low extension contact and mass media exposure, this availability was limited. These finding agreed with Ezeibe (2010), Ogunniyi and Omoteso (2011).

Lack of institutional credit facility was another big problem faced by 66.67 percent pig farmers. Banks are not as liberal with pig framers as they are with dairy or poultry units. Similar finding were observed by Ashalatha and Prabhakar (2010), Lavanya *et al.* (2014).

There is certainly a big social stigma attached with pig rearing in Punjab specially in the close knit rural society. They are not easily accepted and it was also observed in many cases that lands in the vicinity of pig farms became cheaper with nobody interested in its purchase. This social unacceptance is a discouraging factor for potential progressive entrepreneurs.

In 45.83 percent cases, farmers also felt that veterinary services were not as forthcoming in piggery as in dairy or goat units. Non-availability of subsidized vaccines for piggery in civil veterinary hospitals along with low awareness of health management practices added to the problem. Ogunniyi and Omoteso (2011) also reported similarly in their study.

Lack of demand for dressed pork in both rural and urban areas in Muktsar is another drawback. Farmers prefer to sell live animals and that too to entrepreneurs from Delhi and adjoining areas. These finding matched with Meganathan *et al.*, 2010 and Lavanya *et al.*, 2014.

Lack of local marketing facilities pose transport problems for many pig farmers. For those running a joint venture, labour was not a problem as family members were roped in turns, however for others retaining labour was a serious constraint. Maganathan *et al.*, 2010 gave similar

Table 1. Socio-personal characteristics of pig farmers (n=24)

Variable	Categories	No. of farmers	Percentage of farmers
Age status	Young (upto 30 years)	4	16.67
	Middle age (31-46 years)	15	62.5
	Old (more than 46 years)	5	20.83
Educational qualification	Illiterate	0	0.00
	Upto high school	13	54.16
	Graduate	11	45.83
Occupation status	Piggery as main	2	8.33
	Piggery as subsidiary	22	91.67
Annual income of farmer	Low (below 4 lakhs)	14	58.33
	Medium (4.1 to 10 lakh)	10	41.67
	High (more than 10 lakh)	0	0.00
Land holding size	Landless (no land)	6	25.00
	Small (1-5 acres)	18	75.00
	Medium (5.1-10 acres)	0	0
	Large (>10 acres)	0	0
No. of pigs (herd size)	Small (0-50 animals)	0	0.00
	Medium (51-200 animals)	15	62.50
	Large (>200 animals)	9	37.50
Contact with extension functionaries	Low	8	33.33
	Medium	12	50.00
	High	4	16.67
Mass media exposure	Low	8	33.33
	Medium	12	50.00
	High	4	16.67
Level of innovation	Low	12	50.00
	Medium	8	33.33
	High	4	16.67
Economic motivation	Low	0	0.00
	Medium	8	33.33
	High	16	66.67
Scientific temper	Low	8	33.33
	Medium	12	50.00
	High	4	16.67

observations. Initial investment on shed is essential for pig rearing for safety and health maintenance of animals. This point was also stressed upon by Ogunniyi and Omoteso (2011). Here also those in a joint venture could share losses and profits and this provided a buffer against damage.

Scientific management practices followed by Pig farmers

Detailed analysis (Table 3) showed that farmers lacked awareness in control of ectoparasites (25.00 percent), vaccination (8.33 percent) and castration (8.33 percent) due to lack of training facilities from veterinary specialists. However, sanitation (75.00 percent) and waste disposal (83.33 percent) along with deworming (62.5 percent) and iron injection (54.16 percent) were scientifically followed by majority of respondents. Also pigs were mainly reared or meat and were disposed at nine to eleven month of age, hence the farmers were least concerned about preventive measures for diseases.

Table 2. Constraint analysis

Sr.No. Constraint	N=24	Percentage of farmers
1. Non availability of swill feed in sufficient quantity	18	75.00
2. Lack of credit facilities	16	66.67
3. Social stigma attached	13	54.16
4. Lack of proper health management and veterinary care	11	45.83
5. Non- availability of a proper slaughter house	10	41.67
6. No value addition for the byproducts of pigs	9	37.5
7. Lack of demand for dressed pork in local areas	8	33.33
8. Low awareness about scientific rearing of pigs	8	33.33
9. Limited availability of good quality breeding stock	8	33.33
10. Lack of proper markets in the state	7	29.17
11. No subsidy for the popular products from pigs	6	25.00
12. Labour retention problem	6	25.00
13. High initial investment	4	16.67
14. High cost of piglets	4	16.67

Table 3. Analysis of awareness of scientific management practices among Pig farmers

Sr.No.	Adoption of scientific practices	N=24	Percentage of farmers
1.	Deworming	15	62.5
2.	Vaccination	2	8.33
3.	Iron injection	13	54.16
4.	Sanitation	18	75.00
5.	Spraying ectoparasiticide	6	25.00
6.	Waste disposal	20	83.33
7.	Castration	2	8.33

Table 4. Analysis of health management practices among pig farmers

Sr. No	Occurrence of disease type	N=24	Percentage of farmers
1.	Digestive disorder	15	62.5
2.	Skin problem	7	29.17
3.	Respiratory disease	4	16.67
4.	Deficiency disorder	5	20.83
5.	Sudden death	2	8.33
Reasons for piglet mortality			
1.	Scour	17	70.83
2.	Crushing	11	45.83
3.	Anemia	3	12.5
Seeking treatment from whom			
1.	Veterinary surgeon	2	8.33
2.	Experienced farmer	13	54.16
3.	Selftrained	7	29.17

Table 5. Marketing constraints identified

Sr. No.	Constraint	N=24	Percentage of farmers
1	Low prices	12	50.00
2.	Lack of extension services	16	66.67
3.	Lack of buyers	8	33.33
4.	No problem	7	29.17

Heath management practices known to pig farmers

Detailed assessment (Table 4) reveals that digestive disorder was the most prevalent (62.5 percent) followed by skin problem and deficiency disorder (20.83 percent).

Marketing constraints

Table 5 indicates the marketing constraints faced by farmers. In urban areas things were a little more favourable for farmers as extension contacts and customer competition was more. Another factor which was observed in the survey areas is that farmers who sold live pigs did not own vehicles for transportation, so they had to use services of other transporters and this lowered their profit margin.

CONCLUSION

Insufficient availability of swill feed and low credit facilities were the major constraints identified. High cost of industrial feeds and problem in transportation of live pigs were also serious individual constraints. Government policies towards establishing more breeding farms to supply upgraded piglets in remote areas will certainly motivate farmers. Establishment of a feed mill unit and a system to identify non-conventional feed resources for cost effective pig husbandry is essential for pig farming to gain fancy of farmers.

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