



A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS, GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ADOPTION OF ORGANIC FARMING IN SATARA DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA

Supriya C. Gaikwad & Dr. Anita Jacob

*Department of Commerce
SNDT Women's University, Mumbai*

Abstract:

In India, organic farming is gaining importance as an alternative agricultural system that supports sustainable agricultural development while maintaining ecological balance. The present study aims to examine the influence of economic, social, marketing, and government policy factors on farmers' decisions to adopt organic farming practices in Satara District of Maharashtra and to assess the extent and effectiveness of financial support provided by government agencies to farmers practicing organic farming.

The study indicate that economic conditions, social awareness, market access, and government policies play an important role in influencing farmers' decisions to adopt organic farming practices. Several government schemes provide financial assistance for organic farming, many farmers face challenges such as limited awareness, procedural complexities, and inadequate access to institutional support.

Keywords: *Organic Farming, Sustainable Agriculture, Government Support, Socio-Economic Characteristics.*

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Introduction:

Agriculture plays a vital role in the Indian economy and continues to be the primary source of livelihood for a large proportion of the population. In India, organic farming is gaining increasing attention due to its potential to improve farmers' income, promote sustainable agriculture, and meet the rising demand for chemical-free food products. Various government initiatives and policies have been introduced to promote organic farming through financial assistance, training programs, certification support, and market development. However, despite these efforts, the adoption of organic farming practices among farmers

remains limited in many regions due to economic constraints, lack of awareness, marketing challenges, and policy-related issues.

Maharashtra, particularly the Satara District, possesses favorable agro-climatic conditions and a strong agricultural base that can support the expansion of organic farming. However, several factors influence farmers' decisions to adopt organic farming practices, including economic viability, social awareness, marketing opportunities, and government support mechanisms. Understanding these factors is essential for promoting the sustainable growth of organic agriculture in the region.



Therefore, the present study attempts to examine the influence of economic, social, marketing, and government policy factors on farmers' decisions to adopt organic farming in Satara District of Maharashtra. The study also seeks to assess the extent and effectiveness of financial support provided by government agencies to farmers practicing organic farming.

Review of Literature:

1. Padma Annakamu.S (2014) In his thesis, he has explained socio-economic characteristics of organic and inorganic farmers, efficiency of organic and inorganic farming system by technical, scale, cost. He has revealed that the variables such as expenditure on labour, land, livestock, machinery, plant protection and irrigation were significant which indicated that these variables had 10 higher discriminating power between organic and inorganic farming system.

2. Tanaji Namdeo Ghagare (2019), His research work focused on economics of Organic farming in Satara district, Maharashtra. Application of organic farming has better economic and environmental benefits to farmers for enhancement of their standard of life as compared to inorganic farming. As he suggested, it is necessities to formulate and implements of various policies, programmes and strategies for promote organic agriculture in order to realise its full potential.

Objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between the level of education of cultivators and the level of adoption of organic farming in the study area.

2. To analyze the association between the level of income of cultivators and the level of adoption of organic farming in the study area.

Hypothesis:

Hypothesis (H₁₁): There is statistically significant association between level of education of cultivators and level of adoption of organic farming in study area.

Hypothesis (H₁₂): There is statistically significant association between level of income of cultivators and level of adoption of organic farming in study area.

Sources of Data:

Primary Data: The primary data for the study will collect by using *structured questionnaires* administered to both *organic farmers* and *consumers of organic food products*. For consumers, the questionnaire capture information related to awareness, perception, purchase behavior, frequency of consumption, and opinions on pricing and availability. For organic farmers, the tool will focus on identifying key agricultural challenges such as pest management, certification difficulties, market access, and input costs. The questionnaires will be carefully designed, pre-tested, and refined to ensure clarity, reliability, and relevance to the study objectives. Responses will be gathering through personal interviews and field visits, enabling the researcher to obtain accurate and first-hand information.

Secondary Data: In addition to primary data, the study will also utilizes *secondary data* to support and enrich the research findings. Secondary information will source from a wide range of *published and credible materials*, including *research papers, doctoral theses, books, journal articles, government reports, and official websites* of institutions related to agriculture and organic farming.

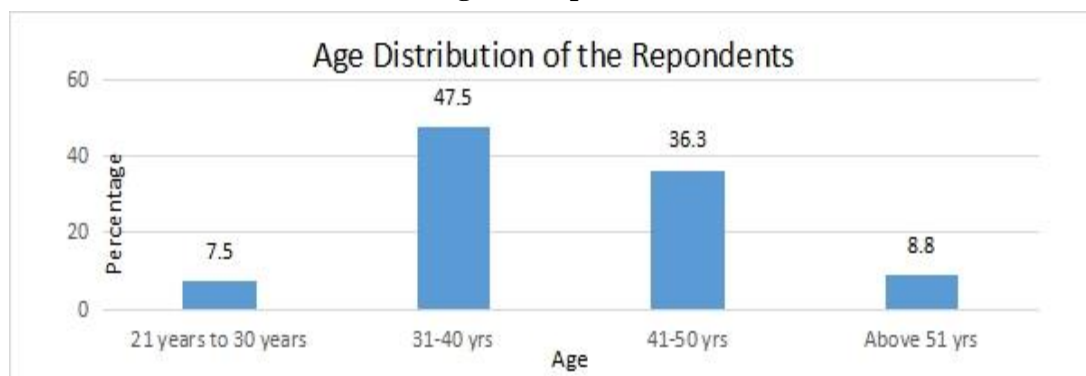


In order to determine the sample size, the farmers are divided from 11 Taluka's of Satara District.

Sr. No.	Taluka Name	No. of Farmers
1	Jaoli	4
2	Karad	7
3	Khandala	4
4	Khatav	7
5	Koregaon	10
6	Mahableshwar	9
7	Man	16
8	Patan	2
9	Phaltan	4
10	Satara	4
11	Wai	13
Total		80

Sampling Techniques: Sampling Design for the study was based on stratified sampling and random sampling techniques to ensure comprehensive and representative selection of participants.

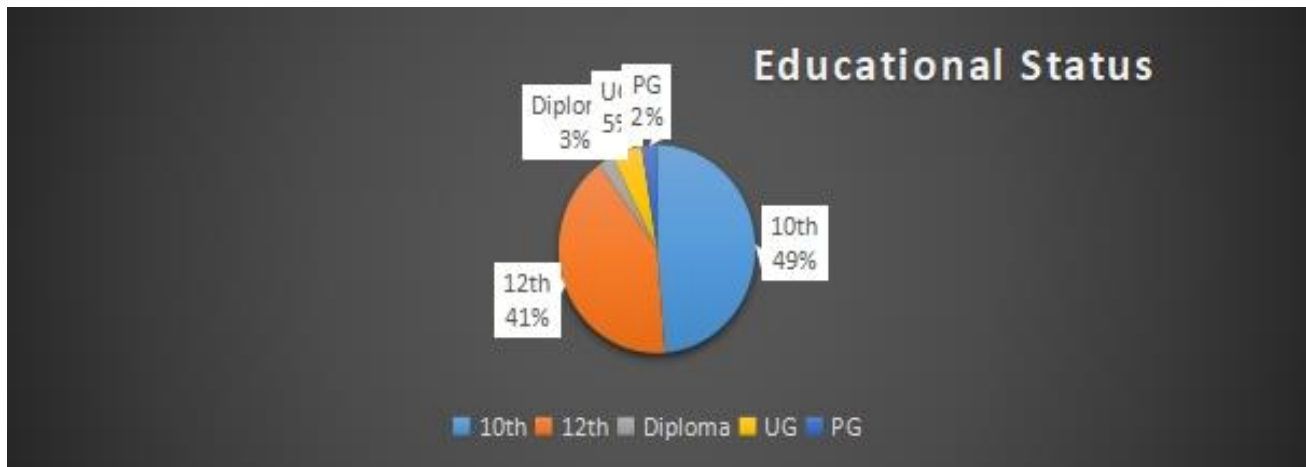
Age of Respondent



Age was considered as a factor, since it reveals the ability of an individual to take positive decisions for achieving his needs and it influences the farmer to choose and to adopt a particular technology.

Educational Status of the Respondents

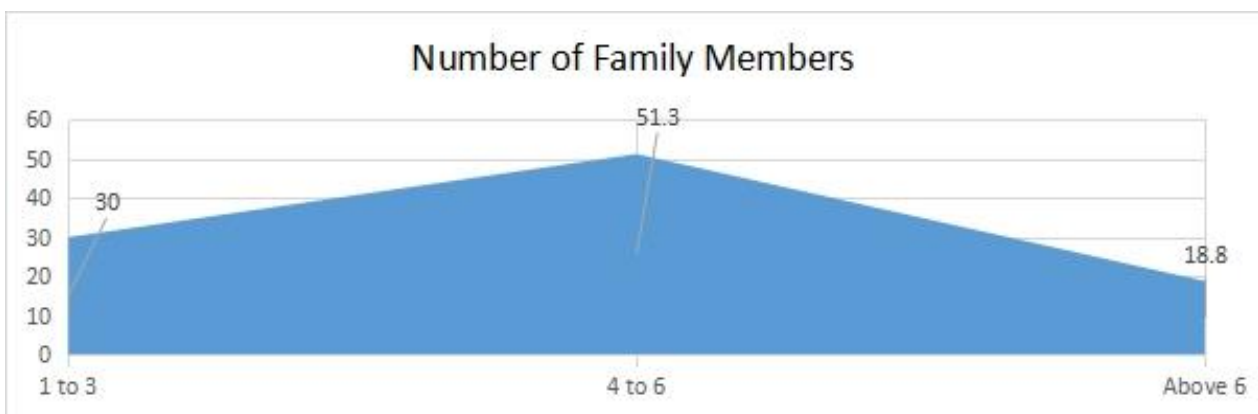
Sr.No.	Details of Educational Status of the Respondent	Percentage
1	10 th	48.8
2	12 th	41.3
3	Diploma	2.5
4	UG	5.0
5	PG	2.5



Education is the production of desirable changes in human behavior in knowledge (things known), attitude (things felt) and skills (things done). The data shows that, in study area, few numbers of farmers have completed post-graduation. In study area of Satara district, number of secondary education completed farmers is highest.

Number of Family Members of the Respondents

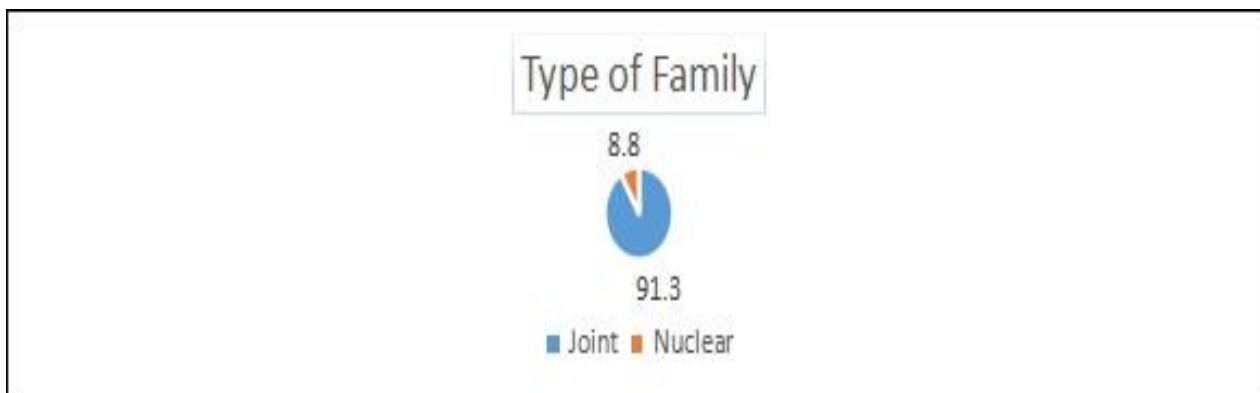
Sr No	Number of Family Members of the Respondent	Percentage
1	1-3	30.0
2	4-6	51.3
3	Above 6	18.8



Majority of respondents (51.3%) belong to medium-sized families, with 4 to 6 members. 30% of respondents live in small families (1 to 3 members). 18.8% live in large families (more than 6 members).

Type of Family

Sr. No.	Type of Family	Percentage
1	Joint	91.3
2	Nuclear	8.8



In study area, found that, 73 respondents belongs to joint family constituting 91.3 percent of the total respondents and rest 7 respondents belongs to nuclear family constituting 8.8 percent of the total respondents. It means that, maximum farmer of farmers have been living in joint family system.

Annual Income

Sr.No.	Details of Annual Income	Percentage
1	1-2 lakh	51.3
2	2.1-3 lakh	27.5
3	3.1-4 lakh	16.3
4	Above 4 lakh	5.0

The distribution of respondents based on their annual income reflects significant economic stratification within the surveyed population.

Type of Ownership of Firm

Sr.No.	Details of Ownership of Firm	Percentage
1	Own	83
2	Lease	14
3	Both	3

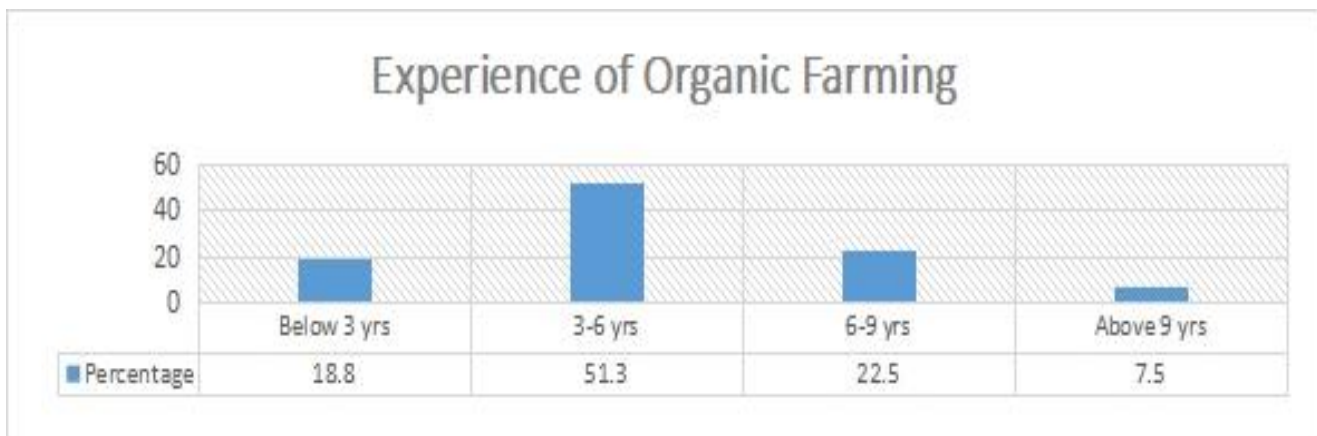




The data concerning the *ownership status of farms* among respondents reveals a dominant trend toward proprietorship. A substantial majority, **83%** of the respondents, reported that they *own* the farm they operate. In contrast, **14%** of the respondents operate under a *lease-based model*.

Experience in Organic Farming

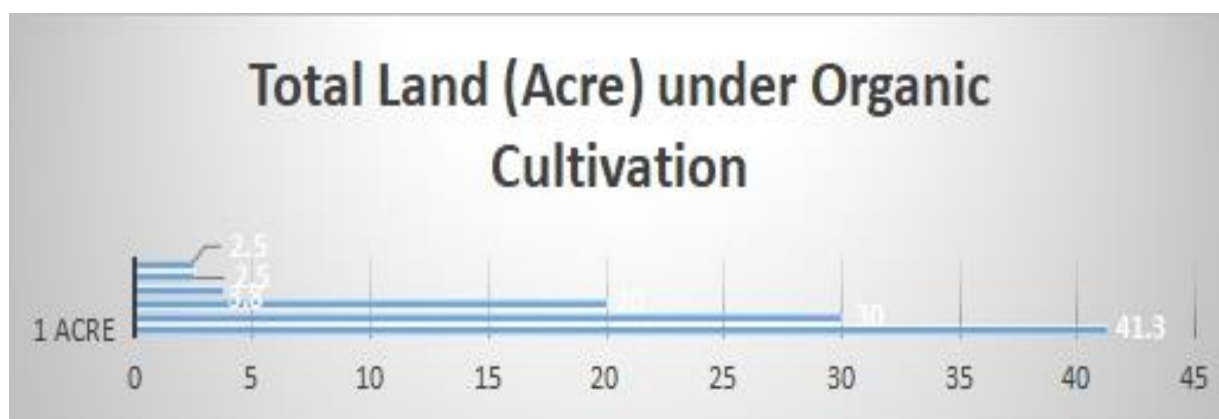
Sr.No.	Details of Organic Farming Experience	Percentage
1	Below 3 years	18.8
2	3-6 years	51.3
3	6-9 years	22.5
4	Above 9 years	7.5



Organic farming is a *growing*. The concentration of experience in the **3–6 year range** indicates a *transitional phase*, where many farmers are shifting toward sustainable practices but still require *institutional backing and continuous knowledge enhancement*. A smaller group of **18.8%** falls under the **Below 3 years** category, indicating a *recent wave of new adopters*. Only **7.5%** of respondents have more than **9 years of experience** in organic farming.

Total Land (Acre) under Organic Cultivation

Sr.No.	Total Land (Acre) under Organic Cultivation	Percentage
1	1 acre	41.3
2	1-2 acre	30.0
3	1-3 acre	20.0
4	1-4 acre	3.8
5	1-5 acre	2.5
6	1-6 acre	2.5



The data on the area under organic cultivation shows that a *large proportion of respondents (41.3%)* are engaged in organic farming on *1 acre of land*, indicating that small-scale organic farming is the dominant practice in the study area. Another *30.0%* of respondents cultivate organic crops on *1–2 acres*, and *20.0%* reported having *1–3 acres* under organic farming. These figures collectively reinforce that the majority of organic farmers operate on small holdings, typically ranging from *1 to 3 acres*. Only a very small fraction of respondents reported larger organic farming areas: *3.8%* on 1–4 acres & *2.5% each* on 1–5 and 1–6 acres.

Subsidy Received for getting Certified

Sr.No.	Details of subsidy received for certified	%
1	No Subsidy	10.0
2	Below 50000	53.8
3	50000 – 1 lakh	28.8
4	1 – 1.5 lakh	3.8
5	Aove 1.5 lakh	3.8

The data indicates that the *majority of respondents (53.8%)* have received a subsidy amount of *below ₹50,000*, suggesting that most organic farmers in the study area benefit from small-scale financial support to assist with their farming activities. *10.0% of respondents* reported receiving *no subsidy at all*, indicating that not all farmers benefit from or access subsidy schemes, which could reflect gaps in outreach, eligibility, or awareness of government support progra

Source of Borrowing

Sr.No.	Details of source of borrowing	Percentage
1	Cooperative society	21.3
2	Nationalized bank	68.7
3	Friends and relatives	5
4	Private money lenders	5



The table provides insights into the primary sources of credit utilized by respondents for agricultural or related purposes. The data show that a significant majority, 68.7%, rely on nationalized banks as their main source of financial support. This suggests a relatively high level of formal financial inclusion, potentially driven by targeted government schemes, interest subsidies, or accessible rural banking infrastructure. The low dependence on informal credit sources indicates a positive shift toward institutional lending, reducing the risk of exploitative interest rates and informal debt cycles.

Hypothesis (H₁₁): There is statistically significant association between level of education of cultivators and level of adoption of organic farming in study area.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
education * Adoption	80	100.0%	0	0.0%	80	100.0%

Education * Adoption Crosstabulation

Count

		Adoption			Total
		No adoption	Partial adoption	Full adoption	
education	10	15	11	13	39
	12	10	9	14	33
	Diploma	0	1	1	2
	UG	1	1	2	4
	PG	0	2	0	2
Total		26	24	30	80

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.929 ^a	8	.544
Likelihood Ratio	7.646	8	.469
Linear-by-Linear Association	.783	1	.376
N of Valid Cases	80		



A Pearson's chi-square test of independence was conducted to examine the association between the level of education of the cultivators and level of adoption of organic farming, and the results indicated no statistically significant association, $\chi^2(8, N = 80) = 6.93, p = 0.544$. Because the p-value exceeds the standard alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, suggesting that the observed distribution of frequencies across the categories does not differ significantly from what would be expected by chance. Despite the sample size of $N = 80$, the relatively high significance value confirms that any apparent patterns in the data are likely due to random variation rather than a systematic relationship between the factors.

Hypothesis (H₁₂): There is statistically significant association between level of income of cultivators and level of adoption of organic farming in study area.

Case Processing Summary

	Cases					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
income * Adoption	80	100.0%	0	0.0%	80	100.0%

Income * Adoption Crosstabulation

Count

		Adoption			Total
		No adoption	Partial adoption	Full adoption	
income	Less Than 2 lakhs	15	10	16	41
	2 to 3 lakhs	3	10	9	22
	3 to 4 lakhs	6	4	3	13
	More than 4 lakhs	2	0	2	4
Total		26	24	30	80

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.107 ^a	6	.230
Likelihood Ratio	9.725	6	.137
Linear-by-Linear Association	.196	1	.658
N of Valid Cases	80		

A Pearson's chi-square test of independence was conducted to examine the association between the level of income of the cultivators and level of adoption of organic farming, and the results indicated no statistically significant association, $\chi^2(6, N = 80) = 8.11, p = 0.230$. Because the p-value exceeds the standard alpha level of 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected, suggesting that the observed distribution of frequencies across the categories does not differ significantly from what would be expected by chance. Despite the sample size of $N = 80$, the relatively high significance value confirms that any apparent patterns in the data are likely due to random variation rather than a systematic relationship between the factors.



Conclusion:

The present study comprehensively examined the socio-economic profile, farming practices, and challenges faced by organic farmers, along with the awareness, behavior, and perceptions of consumers towards organic food products in the Satara district. The findings underscore that organic farming in the region is largely practiced by middle-aged, moderately educated farmers operating on small landholdings. While the majority of farmers possess secure land ownership and demonstrate a strong inclination towards organic principles, several constraints such as limited access to formal training, lack of group participation, modest income levels, and restricted digital access hinder the full realization of organic farming potential.

Systemic challenges such as weak market linkages, insufficient training infrastructure, and affordability barriers persist. Bridging this gap requires a multidimensional approach that includes policy support, institutional training, digital integration,

cooperative farming models, and consumer awareness campaigns.

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