

PERCEPTION OF TRIBAL FARM MEN AND WOMEN TOWARDS AGRICULTURE

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken during October 2021 to November 2022. Four tribal dominated districts of Assam were purposively selected from four Agro climatic zones to analyze the perception of tribal men and women farmers towards agriculture. Three hundred and twenty respondents consisting of both tribal men and women farmers of a household constitute the final sample size of the present study. Measurement of perception was done by including some relevant statements which were grouped into five broad areas namely: Economic dimension, Social dimension, Technology dimension, Work environment dimension and other dimension. A total of 33 statements were taken and the responses were obtained in a five-point continuum of agreement representing 'Strongly agree' 'Agree', 'Undecided', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' assigning a score of 5,4,3, 2, and 1 respectively for the positive statements and reverse scoring pattern for the negative statements. The results revealed that there existed significant differences in the perception between men and women respondents. Less than two third (64.38%) number of women respondents had medium to high level of perception while in men, it was observed that 51.88% belonged to the medium level towards agriculture. The finding of the study will be helpful to the extension agency, policymaker and administrators in developing appropriate extension strategy for the tribal farming community to develop more favorable perception towards agriculture for its sustainability.

Keywords: agriculture perception, farmers, tribal

INTRODUCTION

In India, more than half of the country's population is directly and indirectly dependent upon agriculture (Onima *et al.*, 2017; Vinaya and Shivamurthy, 2021; Chuadhari *et al.*, 2022; Devi, and Bariya, 2022). In additions to providing food and raw material, agriculture also provides employment opportunities to a very large percentage of population. About 58.00 % of the Indian population depends on agriculture for their livelihood. Since 1991, it is losing more than 2,000 farmers every single day and the overall number of farmers has dropped by 15 million. This noble profession of agriculture is taking the back seat among different sources of farmer's income due to decreasing profit when compared with total cost of production. On the basis of last few years studies, it has been observed that only 20% of rural families are directly engaged in the agriculture as a source of employment, which is an indicator of grim situation of agriculture in future. Decreasing size of land holding, increasing population, decreasing profit, want of better living standard are the important factors responsible for taking away from agriculture profession.

Assam has 12.45 % of tribal population. They are highly dependent on agriculture for their food security and

income. For a variety of reasons, agricultural development has been constrained in the tribal dominated areas. It is urgent need to take crucial reform measures in agriculture sector at ground level to make profession of agriculture a profitable venture so that tribal farmers may adopt agriculture as a source of employment. If their talents and abilities are properly nurtured and systematically guided, agriculture can attain sustained growth and can bring prosperity to the country. It is very important for both tribal man and women to have a clear understanding and a correct perception about agriculture.

In the present study perception is referred to as the feelings and interpretation of tribal farm women and men towards farming. It is essential to know how the tribal farm women and men perceive agriculture. The sustainability of farming is very much dependent on their perception.

OBJECTIVE

To analyze the perception of tribal men and women farmers towards agriculture

METHODOLOGY

The research study was conducted in Assam

covering four agro climatic zones. From each zone, one district was selected purposively that makes a total of four districts namely Jorhat, Morigaon, Baksa and Dhemaji. One block from each district viz. Titabor block, Mayong block, Goreswar block and Sisiborgaon block from the districts of Jorhat, Morigaon, Baksa and Dhemaji respectively were included purposively in the study. Then two tribal dominated villages from each block were selected randomly. From each village, 20 tribal farm households were selected randomly with a total of 160 households. The study included husband and wife of a house as the respondents. Thus, 320 respondents constitute the final sample size of the present study. Based on the objective of the study; a structured schedule was prepared with a set of variables. Measurement was done by including some relevant statements which were grouped into five broad areas namely: Economic dimension, Social dimension, Technology dimension, Work environment dimension and other dimension. A total of 33 statements were taken and the responses were obtained in a five-point continuum of agreement representing 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Undecided', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' assigning a score of 5,4,3, 2, and 1 respectively for the positive statements and reverse scoring pattern for the negative statements. Appropriate statistical techniques like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and two sample Z test were used for analysis and interpretation of data. The hypotheses tested in the present study included that there is no significant difference between women and men farmers in their perception towards agriculture.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Perception of the tribal farm women and men were studied under five dimensions namely Economic dimension,

Social dimension, Technology dimension, Work environment dimension and other dimension which are discussed in details as hereunder-

The perception of the respondents under *Economic dimension* are presented in Table 1 (a). It was observed that a large number of farm women (51.88%) provided response simply in agree category for the statement that farming facilitates food security. A total of (49.37%) expressed in the agreed category that agriculture is the most profitable occupation and had scope to upgrade their livelihood. Also, forty five percent agreed that agriculture brings overall community development (45.00%) and (40.00%) chose agreed response that greater economic prosperity through agriculture can be achieved. Some of them also strongly agreed for the indicators like farming facilitates food security (18.12%), scope to upgrade livelihood (16.25%), greater economic prosperity through agriculture (13.12%) and a few had strongly agreed for overall community development (8.75%). These findings are in line with the findings of Nataraju *et al.* (2019) who found that farmers were found to have a good perception towards rice farming as rice farming would help them in maintaining economic sustainability.

Also, majority of women (53.75%) strongly agreed for the negative statements such as difficult to get good price of farm produce, farming alone is not enough to feed family (35.00%) and fewer opportunities for career development in agriculture (30.63%). Batra (2020) also in the study observed that most of the farmers (97.00%) did not want to inherit and continue farming by their future generations and Bodake *et al.* (2019) in their study observed that rural youth were in low level perception category towards agriculture as an occupation.

Table 1 (a): Distribution of respondents according to their perception towards agriculture (Economic dimension)

(n=320)

Sr. No	Statement/ Indicators	Women (n=160)					Men (n=160)				
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Agriculture is the most profitable than any other occupation	0 (0.00)	79 (49.37)	68 (42.50)	13 (8.13)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	43 (26.87)	64 (40.00)	46 (28.75)	7 (4.38)
2	Agriculture brings an overall development of the community	14 (8.75)	72 (45.00)	46 (28.75)	28 (17.50)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	51 (31.88)	47 (29.38)	31 (19.37)	31 (19.37)
3	There is a scope for upgrading livelihood in agriculture	26 (16.25)	79 (49.37)	26 (16.25)	29 (18.13)	0 (0.00)	13 (8.12)	54 (33.75)	49 (30.63)	44 (27.50)	0 (0.00)
4	Practicing farming facilitates food security	29 (18.12)	83 (51.88)	33 (20.63)	15 (9.37)	0 (0.00)	23 (14.37)	69 (43.13)	36 (22.50)	32 (20.00)	0 (0.00)

Sr. No	Statement/ Indicators	Women (n=160)					Men (n=160)				
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	SA	A	UD	D	SD
5	Greater economic prosperity can be achieved in agriculture	21 (13.12)	64 (40.00)	51 (31.88)	24 (15.00)	0 (0.00)	22 (13.75)	68 (42.50)	44 (27.50)	26 (16.50)	0 (0.00)
6	There are less opportunities in agriculture for career development (-)	49 (30.63)	43 (26.87)	36 (22.50)	32 (20.00)	0 (0.00)	38 (23.75)	41 (25.63)	50 (31.25)	31 (19.37)	0 (0.00)
7	Farming alone is not enough to feed the family (-)	56 (35.00)	53 (33.13)	39 (24.37)	12 (7.50)	0 (0.00)	51 (31.87)	67 (41.88)	34 (21.25)	08 (5.00)	0 (0.00)
8	It is difficult to get a good price of farm produce (-)	86 (53.75)	69 (43.13)	05 (3.12)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	82 (51.25)	66 (41.25)	12 (7.50)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage) SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly disagree

While, it was observed that (43.13%) of farm men under *economic dimension* agreed that farming facilitate food security. Agreed responses were also noticed under the indicators such as greater economic prosperity in agriculture (42.50%), livelihood upgradation (33.75%), overall community development (31.88%) and agriculture as the most profitable occupation (26.87%). A few of them (19.37%) disagreed for less opportunities of career development in agriculture and five percent disagreed that farming alone was not enough to feed family.

Regarding *social dimension* as indicated in Table 1(b), it was found that a total of (44.38%) women respondents strongly agreed that owning farm land and livestock is a matter of pride. This was followed by the statements such as feeling proud being a member of farm family (27.50%), agriculture could be practiced by all (26.25%) and agriculture helps to acquire a unique position in the society (21.50%). Moreover (45.63%) of them agreed for the statement that they were feeling proud of being a member of farm family, followed by thirty five percent who agreed that agriculture helps to acquire a unique position in the society, agriculture could be practiced by all (30.62%) and agriculture gives freedom to do one's own work accordingly (28.75%).

In case of men respondents under the *social dimension*, it was seen that slightly less than half (49.37%) of them agreed that owing farm land and livestock farming is a matter of pride. Zinzala *et al.* (2018) noticed in their study that an overwhelming number (70.00%) of the farmers had a good perception about livestock farming. Also (33.75%) agreed that agriculture gives freedom to do one's own work accordingly which was followed by the indicators namely agriculture helps to acquire a unique position in the society (30.62%), feel proud being a member of farm family (28.75%), and agriculture could be practiced by all (23.13%). Strongly agreed by men (46.88%) was also observed for the statement of owing farm land and livestock is a matter of pride. Also strongly agreed response was expressed by (19.37%) that agriculture could be practiced by all. This was followed by (16.25%) who strongly agreed that agriculture helps to acquire a unique position in the society, (12.50%) men feel proud being a member of farm family and very less (7.50%) strongly agreed that agriculture gives freedom to do one's own work. For the negative statements, forty percent farm men disagreed that women are considered as invisible contributor in farming followed by (21.88%) who opined disagreement for the statement that everyone recognize farming, but not the farmers.

Table 1 (b): Distribution of respondents according to their perception towards agriculture (Social dimension)**(n=320)**

Sr. No.	Statements/ Indicators	Women (n=160)					Men (n=160)				
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Agriculture could be practiced by all	42 (26.25)	49 (30.61)	51 (31.88)	12 (7.50)	06 (3.75)	31 (19.37)	37 (23.13)	68 (42.50)	22 (13.75)	02 (1.25)
2	Owing farm land and livestock is a matter of pride	71 (44.38)	73 (45.63)	16 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	75 (46.88)	79 (49.37)	06 (3.75)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)
3	Agriculture gives freedom to do one's own work accordingly	0 (0.00)	46 (28.75)	75 (46.88)	31 (19.37)	08 (5.00)	12 (7.50)	54 (33.75)	62 (38.75)	28 (17.50)	04 (2.50)
4	Agriculture helps to acquire a unique position in the society	34 (21.50)	56 (35.00)	62 (38.75)	06 (3.75)	02 (1.25)	26 (16.25)	49 (30.62)	71 (44.38)	14 (8.75)	0 (0.00)
5	One should feel proud being a member of farm family	44 (27.50)	73 (45.63)	41 (25.62)	02 (1.25)	0 (0.00)	20 (12.50)	46 (28.75)	74 (46.25)	18 (11.25)	2 (1.25)
6	Everybody recognizes farming, but not the farmers (-)	33 (20.62)	59 (36.88)	46 (28.75)	21 (13.12)	01 (0.63)	21 (13.12)	42 (26.25)	36 (22.50)	35 (21.88)	26 (16.25)
7	Farm women are considered as invisible contributor in farming (-)	58 (36.25)	69 (43.13)	21 (13.12)	12 (7.50)	0 (0.00)	16 (10.00)	29 (18.12)	23 (14.38)	64 (40.00)	28 (17.50)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage) SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly disagree

The perception of farm women and men towards agriculture under technology dimension is depicted in Table 1 (c). It was found that 44.38% and above fifty percent women provided strongly agree responses and simply agree responses respectively for the statement women friendly tools and equipment will reduce the drudgery of farm women. Twenty percent were also found to have strongly agreed for these statements namely appropriate skill training will improve the participation of farmers in agriculture, followed by agriculture has scope to transform into agro based industry (19.38%), readiness is essential to introduce innovations in farming (18.13%) and improved methods of farming give

better results (13.12%). Moreover, agreed responses of farm women was also noticed for the statements such as agriculture has scope to transform into agro based industry (42.50 %), followed by readiness is essential to introduce innovations in farming (36.25%) and appropriate skill training will improve the participation of farmers in agriculture (31.88%). The same findings were found by Soni *et al.* (2022) & Meena and Punjabi (2012) who observed that perception of farmers regarding farm inputs and improved technologies was comparatively high. For the negative statements, only (1.25%) of them disagreed that timely supply of inputs is not readily available.

Whereas, in case of men under *technology dimension*, above thirty percent strongly agreed that women friendly tools and equipment will reduce the drudgery of farm women and (29.37%) of them strongly agreed that agriculture has scope to transform into agro based industry. This is in line with the findings of Parmar *et al.* (2012) and Parmar *et al.* (2013). Most of them (45.63%) agreed that agriculture has scope to transform into agro based industry. This was

followed by (32.50%) who agreed that women friendly tools and equipment will reduce the drudgery of farm women and (29.38%) also gave agreed responses for the statement that readiness is essential to introduce innovations in farming. Patel *et al.* (2011) in their study observed that 62.50 per cent of the farmers perceived the transfer of technology system as useful for introducing innovations in farming.

Table 1 (c): Distribution of respondents according to their perception towards agriculture (Technology dimension)

(n=320)

Sr. No.	Statements/ Indicators	Women (n=160)					Men (n=160)				
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Improved methods of farming give better results as compared to traditional one	21 (13.12)	47 (29.38)	59 (36.87)	13 (8.13)	20 (12.50)	17 (10.62)	36 (22.50)	71 (44.38)	13 (8.12)	23 (14.38)
2	Appropriate skill training will improve the participation of farmers in agriculture	32 (20.00)	51 (31.88)	62 (38.75)	15 (9.37)	0 (0.00)	31 (19.38)	49 (30.62)	66 (41.25)	14 (8.75)	0 (0.00)
3	Women friendly tools and equipment will reduce the drudgery of farm women	71 (44.38)	81 (50.62)	08 (5.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	49 (30.63)	52 (32.50)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	05 (3.12)
4	Agriculture has scope to transform into agro based industry	31 (19.38)	67 (41.87)	51 (31.88)	07 (4.37)	04 (2.50)	47 (29.37)	73 (45.63)	37 (23.13)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)
5	It is essential to show readiness to introduce innovations in farming	29 (18.13)	58 (36.25)	39 (24.37)	13 (8.12)	21 (13.13)	14 (8.75)	47 (29.38)	74 (46.25)	17 (10.62)	08 (5.00)
6	It is difficult to avail agricultural credit and subsidies (-)	82 (51.25)	75 (46.88)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	54 (33.75)	63 (39.38)	24 (15.00)	19 (11.87)	0 (0.00)
7	Timely supply of inputs are not readily available (-)	52 (32.50)	69 (43.12)	37 (23.13)	02 (1.25)	0 (0.00)	49 (30.63)	56 (35.00)	33 (20.62)	19 (11.88)	03 (1.87)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage) SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly disagree

In regard to the *work environment dimension*, it was evident from the Table 1 (d) that 55.00 % women had agreed for the statement agriculture develop a close relationship with nature, followed by forty percent who got satisfaction in farming and (38.75%) agreed farming as the most appealing job. A few of them (16.25%) strongly agreed for the statements namely agriculture develop a close relationship with nature, agriculture gives satisfaction (11.25%), farming is the most appealing job (7.50%) and a meager (1.25%) of them responded in strongly agreed category that agriculture work is not stressful, rather charming. Nearly twelve per cent and (1.87%) strongly disagreed for the negative statements that the workload in agriculture is high and high risk is involved in agriculture respectively.

While in men under the work environment dimension, it was found that 63.75% expressed agreed response for the statements like agriculture develop close relationship with nature, followed by farming is the most appealing job (24.37%). Twenty percent of them agreed that agriculture gives satisfaction and only 8.12% agreed that agriculture work is charming. Strongly agreed by a few men respondents were observed in the statements such as a close relationship developed in agriculture (11.87%), agriculture gives satisfaction (3.75%) and farming is the most appealing job (2.50%). A total of (13.13%) and (1.87%) disagreed that workload in agriculture is high and high risk is involved in agriculture respectively.

Table 1 (d) : Distribution of respondents according to their perception towards agriculture (Work environment dimension) (n=320)

Sr. No.	Statements/ Indicators	Women					Men				
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	Farming is the most appealing job	12 (7.50)	62 (38.75)	57 (35.63)	25 (15.62)	04 (2.50)	04 (2.50)	39 (24.37)	48 (30.00)	49 (30.63)	20 (12.50)
2	Agriculture provides an opportunity to develop a close relationship with nature	26 (16.25)	88 (55.00)	22 (13.75)	14 (8.75)	10 (6.25)	19 (11.87)	102 (63.75)	31 (19.38)	08 (5.00)	0 (0.00)
3	Agriculture work is not stressful, rather charming	02 (1.25)	22 (13.75)	74 (46.25)	36 (22.50)	26 (16.25)	0 (0.00)	13 (8.12)	64 (40.00)	62 (38.75)	21 (13.13)
4	Being engaged in agriculture gives satisfaction	18 (11.25)	64 (40.00)	46 (28.75)	29 (18.13)	03 (1.87)	06 (3.75)	32 (20.00)	57 (35.63)	55 (34.37)	10 (6.25)
5	The workload in agriculture is high (-)	33 (20.62)	55 (34.38)	49 (30.63)	19 (11.87)	04 (2.50)	41 (25.62)	59 (36.88)	33 (20.62)	21 (13.13)	06 (3.75)
6	High risk is involved in agriculture sector (-)	23 (14.38)	46 (28.75)	72 (45.00)	03 (1.87)	16 (10.00)	39 (24.38)	52 (32.50)	66 (41.25)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage) SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly disagree

With respect to *other dimension*, as indicated in Table 1 (e), strongly agreed responses were provided by women for the statements such as agriculture is a way of life (42.50%), it is better to attract others in farming (36.25%), it is a privilege to sustain in agriculture (28.75%), one should have passion towards agriculture to practice it (24.37%) and only (14.37%). strongly agreed that risk bearing people are successful in agriculture Whereas, in men, it was seen that a total of 19.38%, 13.75%, 11.25%, 10.00%, and 8.12% had strongly felt that agriculture is a way of life, it is better

to attract others in farming, risk bearing people could be successful in farming, a privilege to sustain in agriculture and a passion should be there to practice farming respectively. However, a large number of men farmers were undecided about the indicators such as a privilege to sustain in agriculture (51.25%), risk bearing people are successful in farming (48.12%), it is better to attract others in farming (41.25%), one should have passion towards agriculture (39.38%) and agriculture is not an occupation but a way of life (29.39%).

Table 1 (e): Distribution of respondents according to their perception towards agriculture (Other Dimension)

(n=320)

Sr. No.	Statements/ Indicators	Women (n=160)					Men (n=160)				
		SA	A	UD	D	SD	SA	A	UD	D	SD
1	People who are able to bear risk in agriculture are successful	23 (14.37)	42 (26.25)	59 (36.88)	32 (20.00)	04 (2.50)	18 (11.25)	29 (18.13)	77 (48.12)	31 (19.38)	05 (3.12)
2	It is better to attract others to be engaged in farming	58 (36.25)	67 (41.88)	32 (20.00)	03 (1.87)	0 (0.00)	22 (13.75)	34 (21.25)	66 (41.25)	38 (23.75)	0 (0.00)
3	One should have passion towards agriculture to practice it	39 (24.37)	46 (28.75)	71 (44.38)	04 (2.50)	0 (0.00)	13 (8.12)	22 (13.75)	63 (39.38)	42 (26.25)	20 (12.50)
4	It is a privilege to sustain in agriculture	46 (28.75)	79 (49.38)	35 (21.87)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	16 (10.00)	44 (27.50)	82 (51.25)	13 (8.13)	05 (3.12)
5	Agriculture is a way of life, not just an occupation	68 (42.50)	77 (48.13)	15 (9.37)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	31 (19.38)	55 (34.37)	47 (29.38)	18 (11.25)	09 (5.62)

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage) SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, UD= Undecided, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly disagree

Thus, it could be inferred from the results of all the above-mentioned tables that overall perception of the tribal farm men and women is not very much pleasant towards agriculture. This might be due to their preoccupied notion about agriculture to be less rewarding. Other probable reasons might be harder labour, environment dependence, lack of awareness on recent technological advances, small and fragmented farm holding, unavailability of suitable market channel etc. The situation demands motivational support and all sorts of relevant assistance from the government, extension specialists and NGOs. For example, the support system may help them realize that even their traditional agriculture has a

great organic market. However, findings indicated that tribal farm women had slightly better perception as compared to men which might be due to the fact that the tribal farm women are more active in farm and household operations, playing a central role in running family affairs. Furthermore, they work in groups and know value addition of farm products to cater market needs. They might have visualized the prospects of agriculture vividly in the years to come. Also, women might have belief that indulging in agriculture would pave the route for their empowerment. As the farm women realized that they could manage and sustain their family through agriculture and allied activities, their perception is more insightful.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their level of perception towards agriculture

(n=320)

Sr. No.	Women (n=160)				Men (n=160)			
	Category	Frequency (%)	Mean	S.D	Category	Frequency (%)	Mean	S.D.
1	Low (Below 95.58)	23 (14.37)	122.81	27.23	Low (Below 94.13)	42 (26.25)	112.34	18.21
2	Medium (95.58-150.05)	103 (64.38)			Medium (94.13-130.55)	83 (51.88)		
3	High (Above 150.05)	34 (21.25)			High (Above 130.55)	35 (21.87)		

(Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage)

A perusal of data in the Table 2 showed that majority (64.38%) of the women respondents had medium level of perception followed by (21.25%) high level of perception towards agriculture and only (14.37%) had low level of perception in it. In men, it was observed that 51.88% belonged to the medium level. This was followed by 26.25% and 21.87% who had low and high level of perception towards agriculture respectively. The finding of the study conforms to the finding of Preethi and Lakshminarayan (2019) that more than fifty percent farm youth had medium level of perception towards farming. Similar finding was also reported by Laveti *et al.* (2022) who found that majority of the agricultural graduates had medium to high level of perception towards agriculture as a profession.

The probable reasons of having medium level of perception by women and men respondents might be that they lack the motivation to practice farming, or might have faced various farm related problems like excessive dependency on vagaries of nature, less timely supply of input, poor access to farm credit, lack of viable market, no

irrigation facilities, poor extension contact, lack of suitable technology, labour problem etc. They might have considered agriculture as risk and non- profitable occupation. As the finding of the study found a large number of respondents in young age group, so it is of utmost importance to develop in them an interest in farming. Measures have to be taken to make farming attractive and profit oriented that may help to retain the rural population in agriculture. They need to be realized that farming is the worthy occupation and necessary support have to be provided to transform this sector into a business industry through the process of commercialization. Else the day is not too far where all the farm land becomes concrete jungle and we all have to face starvation.

Though a large number of farm women and men belonged to the medium level of perception but the mean of women (122.81) and men (112.34) indicated that comparatively women had better perception than men towards agriculture. This implied that women have been gradually taking more responsibilities because men might have opted for other alternatives.

Two sample Z-test of perception of the respondents towards agriculture

A Z-test of perception of women and men respondents was employed to assess whether there was any difference between two population mean in the perception towards agriculture. The Table 3 depicted the Z-value of tribal women and men farmers with the mean and sample variance

Table 3: Z- test of significance on perception of the respondents towards agriculture

(n=320)

Perception	Mean		Sample Variance		Z- calculated value	Z- table value (Two tailed)
	Women	Men	Women	Men		
Perception towards agriculture	122.81	112.34	741.60	883.06	3.28*	1.96

* Denotes significance at 5% level of probability

CONCLUSION

Agriculture is the engine of growth for country like India and one of the most effective ways to alleviate hunger and poverty. But the issue of the interest among rural tribal population in taking up farming for sustainability continues to be a major question. Therefore, the present study was intended to measure the perception of tribal men and women towards agriculture in the state of Assam and it was found that that majority (64.38%) of the women respondents had medium to high level of perception towards agriculture and in men, it was observed that 51.88% belonged to the medium level. So, this is need of the hour to make farming more attractive and income generating opportunity for tribal men and women. Efforts should be made for arrangement of required resources, capacity-building programmes by extension agencies and administrators towards change in perception of them towards agriculture.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings, the study provides the following recommendations:

- Empowering tribal farming community by equipping them with the improved agricultural skills and innovative knowledge to enable them to adopt new technologies, technical packages and to create viable options for those who remain.
- More emphasis should be given by state government, SAUs and reputed NGOs, ICAR for promotion of agriculture technology among farming community in the tribal areas.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

This is to declare that there is “No conflict of interest” among researcher.

and it was found that there are significant differences between women and men in their perception towards agriculture. Thus, the null hypothesis which was set that there was no significant relationship in the perception between women and men towards agriculture may be rejected. Hence, in this regard, the alternate hypothesis stating there were significant differences between women and men in their perceptions towards agriculture should be accepted.

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