Original Research Paper

Volume - 14 | Issue - 03 | March - 2024 | PRINT ISSN No. 2249 - 555X | DOI : 10.36106/ijar

Agricultural Economics

CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF MILLET AMONG FARMERS IN JHARKHAND

Bimal Sao — M. Tech student, Project Engineering and Management, Jharkhand University of Technology.

Dr Pravir Kumar* — Assistant Professor, Project Engineering and Management, Jharkhand University of Technology. *Corresponding Author

ABSTRACT Millets are the storehouse of many micronutrients. These are dietary staple foods and the main protein source in most tribal households. Millets are very much suited to drought conditions and have great natural biodiversity. They are an excellent fiber and protein source compared to white rice. The present study was taken to learn about consumption patterns of millet among farmers in Jharkhand state.

KEYWORDS : millets, consumption, nutrients, health benefits.

INTRODUCTION

Millets are ancient grains and a rich source of nutrition. India is one of the world's largest producers as well as consumers of millets. Ninety-seven per cent of millet production comes from African and Asian countries. A class of grasses with tiny seeds known as millets is widely cultivated for both human use as grain or cereal and as animal feed. Millets have been cultivated on the Korean Peninsula since the Middle Jeulmun Pottery Period, which occurred between 3,500 and 2,000 BC, according to historical records. The earliest Yajurveda writings in India mention millet, including black finger millet (shyaamaka), foxtail millet (priyangava), and barnyard millet (aanava). This suggests that millet eating was widespread in India before the Indian Bronze Age (4,500 BC). Even until 50 years ago millets were the major grains grown in India. From a staple and integral part of local food cultures, millets have come to be looked down upon by modern urban consumers as "coarse grains" – something that their village ancestors may have lived up to, but they have left behind and exchanged for a more "refined" diet.

Millets are so special due to their short cropping season. They can develop from sowed seeds to mature, ready-to-harvest shops in as little as sixty-five days. This is important in heavily populated areas. The special quality of the grain is the hard-to-condensation external shell which prevents insects and it can fluently last for several times without storehouse installations. It's an ideal food during emergencies, droughts, and floods as it can repel extreme climate and rainfall changes. Compared to other grains similar to rice and wheat that have a short shelf life – typically a time or two – millet can be stored for times without elaborate storehouse arrangements. According to the transnational Crops Research Institute of Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), in the semi-arid tropical regions of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, millet is an important source of chief diet and for profitable returns in generally subsistence cropping systems. Nearly eighty percent of dry land cereals are consumed on farms, furnishing food security for the poorest. It's affordable to buy and costs half the price of wheat or rice, yet with further rich nutrients for health.

Although processing millet grains can be challenging, there are chances to overcome these challenges due to the nutritional and health benefits of millet as well as customer desire for healthful meals. According to Jaybhaye et al. (2014), this shift in consumer preferences and technology will increase the area planted with millet, preserve ecological balance, guarantee food security, reduce hunger, and expand the potential applications for millet grains on an industrial scale.

METHODOLOGY

For the collection of data, a combined approach system was used. The method consists of a review of the relevant literature to gain an understanding of the existing challenges and knowledge gaps. Quantitative survey of farmers and government officials by using structured questionnaires to collect primary data. FGD with farmers to understand their perception regarding millet. Among the 24 districts of Jharkhand (Table 1) Dumka, Gumla, and Khunti districts were selected. The reason behind selecting these districts as the study area was because of its agro-climatic zone and these are the only districts where millets are being cultivated at a large scale. Hence it was selected to study the consumption pattern of millet. The area, production, and productivity of millet are presented in Table 1

Table -1 Area, Production, And Yield Of Millet During 2019-20

S.No	Districts	Area (ha)	Production (Tonnes)	Yield (Tonnes/ha)
1	Gumla	1670	2305	1.38
2	Khunti	1689	1520	0.90
3	Dumka	1065	772	0.72

Source: APEDA (Agricultural and processed food products exports development authority

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The Socio-economic Profile Of The Sample Farmers:

The socio-economic profile of farmer respondents is based on characteristics like age group, literacy status, family size, land holdings, and occupation using the percentage analysis discussed below under different subheadings, it can be observed that the majority (30 %) of the sample farmers belonged to the age group of 35-45 years which was followed by age groups of more than 55 years, 45-55 years, and up to 35 years accounting for 28.33 percent, 25 percent, and 16.66 percent respectively. Concerning the literacy level of the farmers, it was found that the majority (43.33 %) of them had education 8th to 10th class followed by 18.33 percent and 13.33 percent with education up to the 7th class and up to intermediate respectively. About 13.33 percent and 11.66 percent of them were graduates and illiterates. Among the sample farmers, the majority of them belonged to medium (41.66 %) and large size (41.66 %) families while 16.66 percent of farmers having less than 4 members belonged to small size family. Concerning total land holdings of farmers, 38.33 percent of them were small farmers followed by large, medium, and marginal farmers accounted for 26.66 percent, 25 percent, and 10 percent respectively. About the details about the occupation, it revealed that 100 percent of sampled farmers were involved in farming considering it as a primary source of their livelihood.

Reasons For Consumption Of Millet

The millets were consumed traditionally in the area, but with the change of time consumption patterns and consumer perception have changed. Due to the availability of cereals like rice at lower prices through the public distribution system (PDS) consumption of millets has decreased. However, because of the awareness created about the benefits and nutritional importance of millet, the consumption is slowly increasing with time. The analyzed data revealed that, among the respondents who consumed millet, 39 percent of them had a tradition of millet consumption in the family and had been consuming it for more than 10 years. Thirty-eight percent were consuming for a period of 1-5 years, 19 percent were consuming for 5-10 years and 5 percent were consuming for less than one year. Most respondents mentioned that they have stopped consuming millet-based foods for a long time and have gotten back into the habit of consuming millet after realizing their health benefits. The analyzed data revealed that 87 percent of consumers thought that millets are good for health (healthy food) and they benefited by consumption of millets. 8 percent of the respondents mentioned that they are consuming it purely for "economic and subsistence" reasons only. It is interesting to note that 42 percent of farmers consume millets on Magi Puja whereas 20

percent on Fasal Parv and only 0.7 percent on Pahari Puja which are local cultural events.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the high nutrient content and cultivation of millet in rain-fed farming systems, the area under millet production has been shrinking over the last three decades. Millets might disappear from the agrarian landscape of Jharkhand over the next ten years. This will not only be a loss to the district's food and farming systems, but this will also prove to be a loss of civilization and will lead to ecological disaster. Millet-based farming system approach had a significant role to play in addressing two of the world's biggest and most urgent issues: climate change and nutritional security in tribal pockets. The cropping pattern had an enormous capacity to mitigate climate change and nutritional insecurity. The community understood the cultivation of millets had a wealth of production. If the value chain of millet was maintained properly then the farmer's socioeconomic condition will be improved.

REFERENCES:

1. Gowri, M. U. (2020). Millet scenario in India. *Economic Affairs, 65*(3). doi: 10.46852/0424-2513.3.2020.7.
2. Jaybhaye, R.V., Pardeshi, I.L., Vengaiah, P. C., & Srivastah, P.P. (2014). Processing and Technology for Millet based food products: A Review. *Journal of Ready to eat food, 1*(2), 32-48.
3. Michaelraj, P. S. J., & Shanmugam, A. (2013). A study on millets-based cultivation and consumption in India. *International Journal of Marketing, Financial Services and Management Research*, *2*(4), 49–58. http://www.indianresearchjournals.com/pdf/IJMFSMR/2013/April/5.pdf
4. T. C. Roy. (2023). What is the importance of millet in today's scenario in India? - Millet Advisor. Millet Advisor