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Socio-economic analysis of farmers in Rupnagar District, Punjab, India: Challenges and opportunities

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Abstract
An essential component of socioeconomic development is agriculture. About 58% of Indians rely solely on agriculture for their major source of income (IBEF, 2021), while 70% of rural households make this their only source of income. The Indian economy heavily relies on the agriculture sector, which contributes approximately 20% of the country's GDP. With its 20.19 percent GDP contribution, agriculture is a vital sector of the Indian economy (DAC&FW Annual Report, 2020–21). Agriculture and socioeconomic status are closely related to one another. Socioeconomic variables that affect income, education, and resource availability have a big impact on productivity and agricultural methods. The present study focused on the farmers of the three villages of Punjab i.e. Dhainpura, Kakrali, Dhangrali, Khairpur, Dhanauri. The research used a questionnaire-based methodology to collect data from interviews with 100 farmers altogether. The major objective is to examine the socioeconomic factors influencing the employment and living conditions of the farming population in these locations. Significant factors including age, education, landholding, family structure, and information source are chosen in order to assess the socio-profile of the farmers. These observations have major consequences for targeted developmental and educational initiatives and aid in the clarification of the socioeconomic dynamics of the farming community. This study highlights how crucial it is to acknowledge the various socioeconomic backgrounds and interests of farmers in Punjab's Rupnagar area.

Keywords: Socio economic status, farmers, agriculture, farming, education

Introduction
After the green revolution, India has seen significant advancements in agricultural production, which can be attributed to the adoption of new farming methods, the use of high-yielding seeds, the application of fertilizers, the expansion of irrigation facilities, and improved access to electricity. The credit for this accomplishment belongs to the countless small and marginal farmers who have dedicated their physical and mental labor. Indian farmers have a diverse socio-economic profile, with differences in landholding sizes, access to resources, and income levels. The sector includes traditional farming practices and modern, technology-driven approaches, demonstrating the coexistence of different farming paradigms. Around 58% of the population in India is involved in farming, making a substantial impact on the economies of both rural areas and the nation as a whole. Agriculture is more than just a job for many Indian farmers; it is a tradition that has been passed down for generations, closely intertwined with their cultural heritage and relationships within their communities. Nevertheless, the difficulties they encounter - such as unpredictable market prices, climate changes.

Punjab famously referred to as the "land of rivers," can be found in the northwest of India. Punjab, known as the land of five rivers, is one of the most productive regions in the world. In the past twenty years, Punjab State has been given the titles "Food Basket of the Country" and "Granary of India," and has supplied 40% of rice and 50% to 70% of wheat. Punjab being referred to as the "Breadbasket of India". It accounts for approximately 2.4 billion percent of the global paddy production and around 1 percent of the global cotton cultivation. Nearly 82 percent of the state's land was being used for farming, with about 85 percent of the cultivated land dedicated to growing wheat and 73 percent to growing paddy (Gohain, 2018) [4]. Despite only covering 1.54 percent of the country's total geographical area, Punjab state now accounts for 13-

14 percent of the country's total food grain production. State has gained the title of the granary of India by supplying 35-40 percent of rice and 40 to 75 percent of wheat to the central pool in the last 20 years. Agriculture, the foundation of the state's economy, serves as the main support for other key sectors such as agro-processing, transportation, trade, and storage, which rely on it either directly or indirectly. Therefore, the performance of the agricultural sector significantly impacts the extent and speed of growth and job creation in other sectors, as well as the overall economy of the state. However the success has bought the soocio economic challenges.

Smallholders face challenges like limited access to resources, technology, and credit, hindering their productivity and profitability, This disparity can marginalize small farmers, increasing inequity within the agricultural sector. A socio-economic survey is essential because it provides valuable insights into the living conditions. Gaining insight into the social characteristics of those involved in agriculture is important essential for creating specific and efficient agricultural strategies approaches, actions, and plans that consider the variety of perspectives and need show social factors impact farming methods and results. By conducting both qualitative and quantitative analyses, we will delve into various aspects of farmers' lives, such as their economic activities, social structures, resource availability, and the effects of policy changes. This case study aims to offer perspectives that can create awareness, bolster community support structures, and ultimately improve the well-being of farmers in Rupnagar District.

Materials and Methodology

The present research was planned to conduct a socio-economic status of farmers in Dhainpura, Kakrali, dhanauri, Khairpur and Dhangraliof Kurali tehsil district of Rupngar, Punjab, India. The interviews of 120 farmers were recorded. The questionnaire was pre- prepared in a structural way for the survey to collect the data covering the objectives of the survey. we compiled a list of farmers from local agricultural cooperatives and community networks.A mix of smallholder, medium, and large-scale farmers to reflect the diversity of farming practices in the region. Data were collected through door-to-door interviews, which allowed us to engage directly with the farmers in their home environment.

Statistical techniques such as averages, percentage mean, and percentage change are employed in data analysis Percentage (%) = N/ n*100

Where,

N- Total no. of respondents from all the 5 villages i.e., 125 respondents.

N- the no. of respondents from each village.

Results and Discussion

1. Family composition

From the table shown below it was found that only most of the farmers live in joint family making the total of 66 out of 120 i.e 55%.In summary, the survey highlighted that joint families are more common in these villages than nuclear families, with joint families making up a significant portion of the family structures. This reflects a cultural preference for living together with extended family, which often contributes to stronger support networks and shared responsibilities. Meanwhile, nuclear families, while fewer, represent the more modern approach to family living.

Table 1: Family composition

S. NO	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khaipur	Dhanauri	Overall % N= 120
1	Nuclear	7	10	12	6	7	42(35%)
2	Joint	14	12	15	15	10	66(55%)

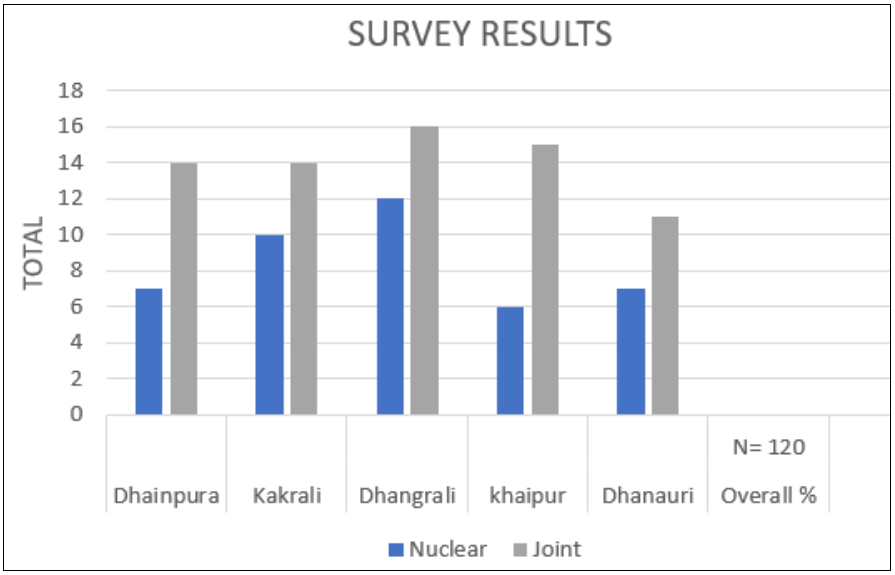

Fig 1: Family composition

2. Mobile Phone and Internet Connectivity

Among 120 farmers 32% of the people use keypad phone whereas, 28% of the farmers use smartphone and 28% of the farmers has the internet facility**.** Each category is slightly different in its entries and total scores, with the internet facility appearing to hold the highest percentage of the total at 18.33%

Table 2: Mobile Phone and Internet Connectivity

S. NO	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	khaipur	Dhanauri	Overall % N= 120
1	Smart Phones	10	5	7	5	6	33(28%)
2	Keypad phones	4	6	9	8	5	32(27%)
3	Internet facility	7	8	6	9	9	39(32%)

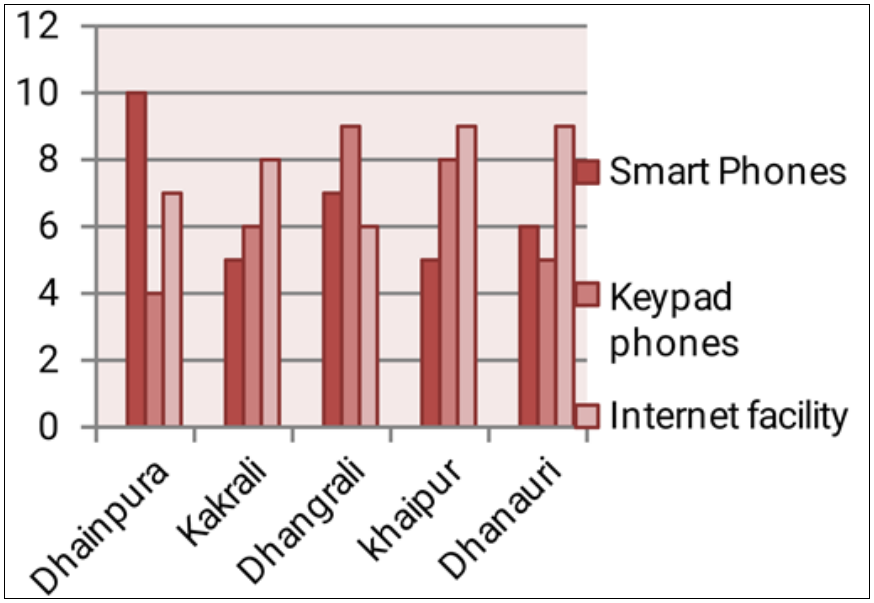

Fig 2: Mobile and internet facility

3. Age of farmers

The data presents the distribution of a population across different age groups in five locations (Dhainpura, Kakrali, Dhangrali, Khaipur, and Dhanauri), and it summarizes the overall percentage of individuals in each age category.

In age group of 15-35 Dhainpura has the highest representation (20 individuals), while Dhanauri has the lowest (10). Around 60% of the total population belongs to this age range, highlighting a youthful demographic

Overall, the data reflects a community that is primarily young to middle-aged, with a notable decline in the older population**.**

Table 3: Age of farmers

S.NO	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khaipur	Dhanauri	Overall % N= 120
1	15-35	20	18	10	15	10	73(60%)
2	35-55	19	15	20	12	18	84(70%)
3	55-75	15	10	10	12	12	59(49%)

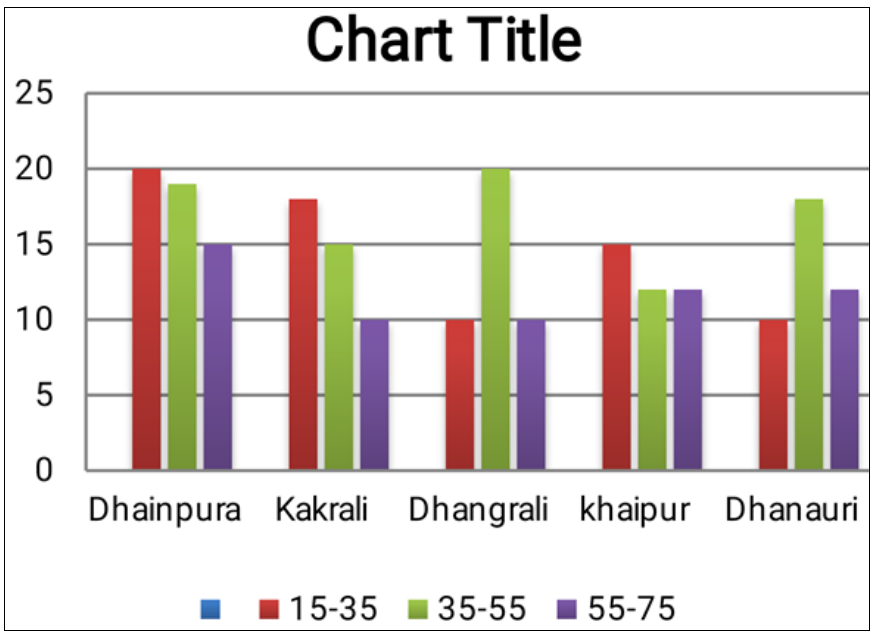

Fig 3: Age of farmer

4. Caste of the famers

A significant majority (76%) of the farmers are from the general category, indicating a relatively uniform representation across the villages sampled. We can see that total of 6% of the population belongs to the SC, obc and others**.** They were engaged in some other occupations such as labours, drivers, shopkeepers.

Table 4: Caste of the farmers

Sr.no	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khairpur	Dhanauri	Overall in 120 farmers
1	general	20	20	18	15	19	92(76%)
2	Schedule caste	0	2	0	2	0	2 (3.33%)
3	obc	0	3	0	1	0	3 (2.5%)

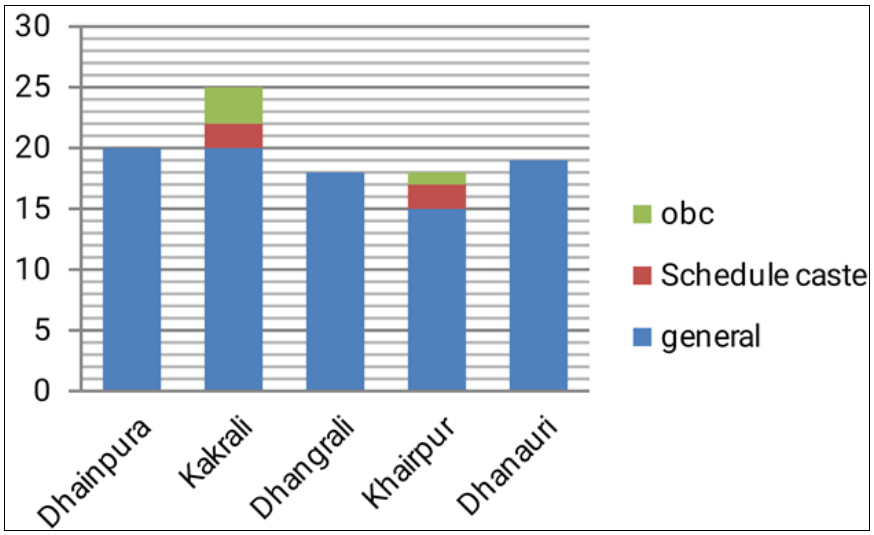

Fig 4: Caste of Farmers

5. Education

This report focuses on the educational qualifications of farmers from five villages: Dhainpura, Kakrali, Dhangrali, Khairpur, and Dhanauri, with an overall insight drawn from 120 farmers with a total of just 36 farmers (30% of the total surveyed) possessing varying levels of education. education levels among farmers in these villages are quite low. The majority have minimal or no formal education, which could impact their farming practices and access to resources

Table 5: Education

Sr. No	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khairpur	Dhanauri	Overall in 120 farmers
1	literate	3	5	5	3	2	18(15%)
2	Primary	3	0	0	3	4	10(9%)
3	Middle	0	2	1	0	1	4 (4%)
4	High	0	1	0	2	0	3 (2.5%)

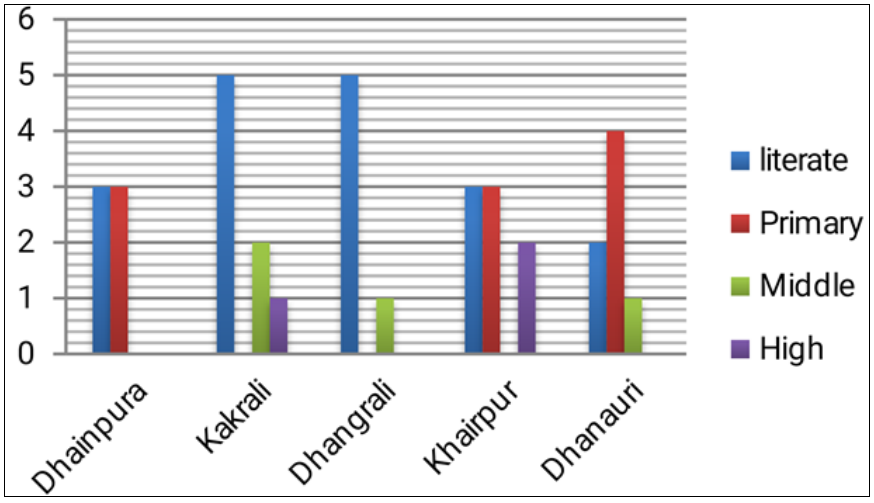

Fig 5: Education Status

6. Land Holding

In table 6 provides an overview of land holdings among farmers in different regions, specifically looking at four categories: small, semi-medium, medium, and large farms.Out of 120

farmers 9% of farmers fall in small farmers who have less than 2.5 acres of land. followed by 36% farmers in semi- medium land Similarly 26% of farmers falls into medium land holding having in between of 5-10 acres of land and lastly large farmers i.e 18% having more than 10 ares of land as shown in fig 6:

Table 6: Land Holding

Sr. No	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khairpur	Dhanauri	Overall in 120 farmers
1	Small	2	4	2	3	0	11(9%)
2	Semi-medium	8	10	6	9	10	43(36%)
3	Medium	5	3	11	8	4	31(26%)
4	large	2	4	2	4	3	21(18%)

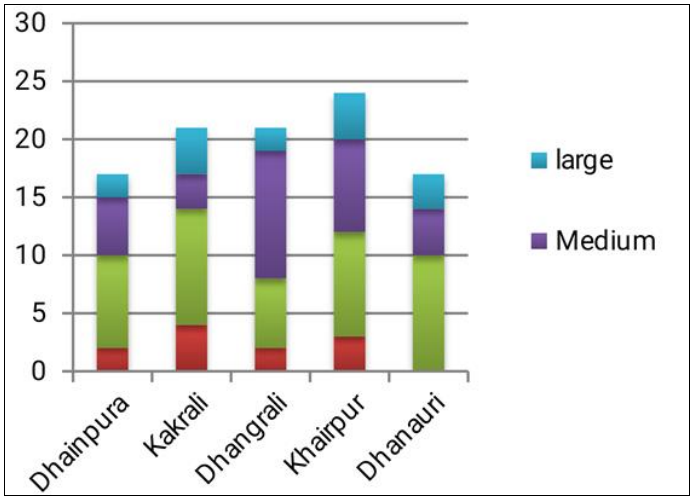

Fig 6: Land holdings

7. Source of information

We found that participants leverage a variety of unique resources to gather information and connect with others for support. Notably, 34% of the participants rely on inputs from dealers to obtain new seeds and agro-chemicals, showcasing a significant dependence on these commercial relationships. Additionally, newspapers serve as a source of information for 4% of farmers, while Kisan melas and field visits play a vital role for 8% of them. Engaging with progressive farmers provides insights for about 3% of participants. Interestingly, the usage of agriculture apps and other modern fields for gathering information remains quite limited among the farmers. These findings highlight the diverse avenues through which farmers seek knowledge and assistance in their agricultural pursuits.

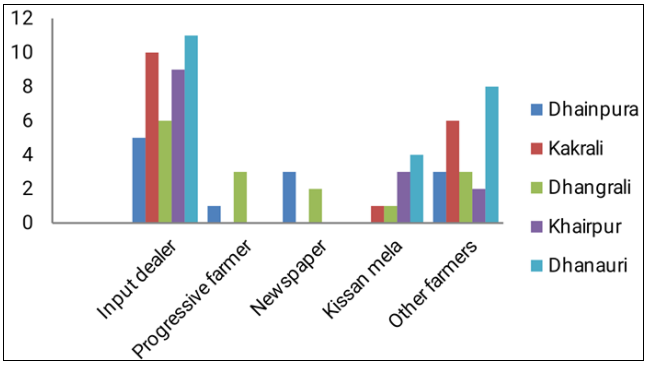

Fig 7: Source of information

Table 7: Source of Information

Sr. No	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khairpur	Dhanauri	Overall in 120 farmers
1	Input dealer	5	10	6	9	11	41(34%)
2	Progressive farmer	1	0	3	0	0	4(3%)
3	Newspaper	3	0	2	0	0	5(4%)
4	Kissan mela	0	1	1	3	4	9(8%)
5	Other farmers	3	6	3	2	8	22(18%)

8. Housing Type

From the below fig:8 we can see that almost all people from different villages live in pakka house where as only few farmers that is 2% live in semi pakka house.

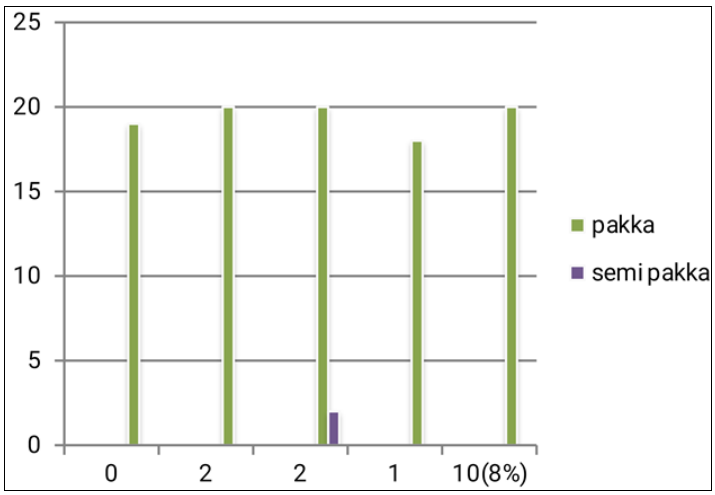

Fig 8: Housing types

9. Machinery and Implementation

In table 9 provides an overview of machinery among farmers in different villages 36% of the farmers have their own machinery followed by 14% of farmer having rented machinery and 8%of farmers having both rented and owned machineries Farmers who Owned machinery like tractors, plows, and seeders allows these farmers full access to their equipment whenever needed, providing them the convenience to till their land, sow seeds, or harvest crops at their pace. Very few farmers owned essential equipment like a seed drill for sowing but rent a larger tractor or harvester during peak seasons for efficiency. This approach enables farmers to balance their operational costs while ensuring they have the right tools for different agricultural tasks.

Table 9: Machinery and Implementation

Sr. No	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khairpur	Dhanauri	Overall in 120 farmers
1	Owned	9	10	12	8	4	43(36%)
2	Rented	0	9	2	5	1	17(14%)
3	Owned+ Rented	5	0	2	2	1	10(8%)

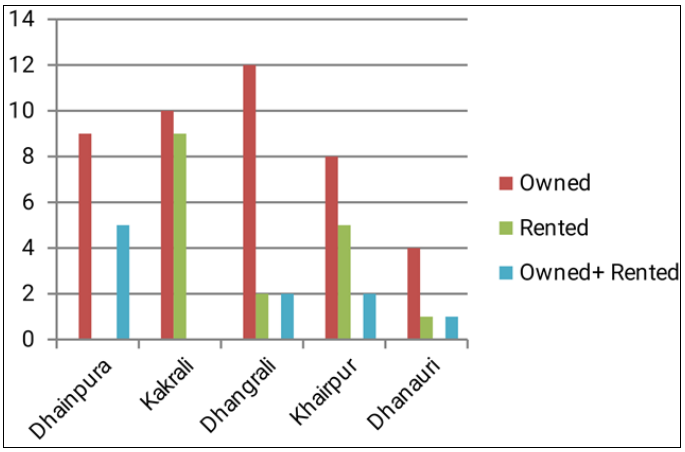

Fig 9: Implementation and Machinery

10. Livestock and Yield

In the villages of Punjab, livestock farming is an integral part of rural life, providing not just food but also livelihoods for many families. Buffaloes are the most popular livestock among these farmers, with a total of 54 buffaloes among the 120 farmers yield between 6 to 10 liters of milk per day, depending on its breed and diet, contributing significantly to the household income. Cows make up 18% of the livestock, with a total of 22 cows across the villages. Giving yield about 4 to 8 liters of milk daily. Similarly goats make up to 8% where farmers only rared them for milk and meat. Poultry only makes 4% making them very few in numbers.

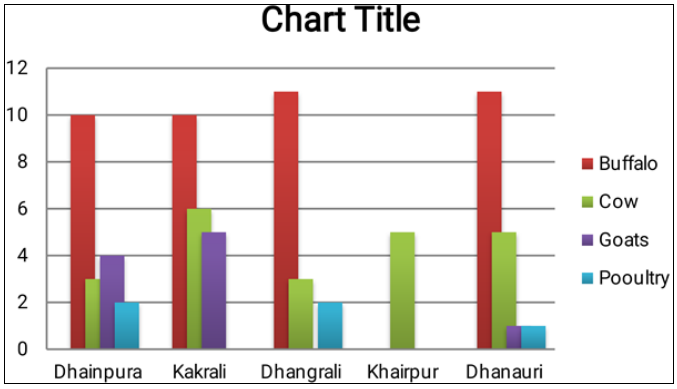

Fig 10: Livestock and Yields

Table 10: Livestock and yield

Sr. No	Parameters	Dhainpura	Kakrali	Dhangrali	Khairpur	Dhanauri	Overall in 120 farmers
1	Buffalo	10	10	11	12`	11	54(45%)
2	Cow	3	6	3	5	5	22(18%)
3	Goats	4	5	0	0	1	10(8.33%)
4	Poultry	2	0	2	0	1	5(4%)

Conclusion

The present research investigated the factors impacting the status of farmers in villages of Dhagrali, Dhanauri, Kakrali, Dhainpura, and Khairpura in Punjab, India. The main source of data for the study was collected. The findings highlight the diverse attributes present in the farming sector, such as variations in social status, family setup, age, schooling, and access to the internet. It is important to note that the majority of farmers come from the general category, live in extended families, and are aged 35 and above. The potential for incorporating technology in agriculture is evident from the number of farmers with smartphones and internet access. There is variation in education levels, with a notable percentage having completed high school. The study indicates that farmers primarily rely on input dealers and agricultural fairs for information regarding new farming programs and technologies. Moreover, the data shows variations in landholding sizes, encompassing a substantial amount of small and marginal farmers. Livestock production, particularly buffalo and cow farming, is a common practice within the agricultural industry. This multifaceted approach to agriculture requires comprehensive support from government initiatives and community-based programs aimed at improving the economic resilience and overall wellbeing of farming households. This comprehensive strategy for agriculture necessitates strong backing from both government efforts and community programs focused on enhancing the economic stability and overall health of farming families. The research mirrors the struggles and hopes of the farming community. Identifying and dealing with these social and economic factors is crucial for creating specific actions that will boost agricultural progress, enhance quality of life, and support long-term growth for the farmers in Rupnagar district of Punjab. This study not only adds to the scholarly knowledge of the socio-economic aspects of farmers but also lays the groundwork for informed policies and interventions to improve the welfare of farming communities in this area. It emphasizes the importance of ongoing research and development to tackle the issues and potential in Punjab's

agricultural sector.

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