



Perception of Farmers on Information Provided Through Information boards in Adopted Villages and Their Information Source Utilization Pattern

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ABSTRACT

The investigation was conducted in Prakasam District of Andhra Pradesh during the year 2011-12 to study the perception of the farmers on agricultural information provided through information boards and their sources of agricultural information. Almost equal (46.67 and 43.33%) per cent of the farmers had medium and high perception levels; where as only ten per cent of the farmers were found in low perception group. Majority of the farmers perceived that information provided to them is need based, timely, complete, clear, useful, practically feasible, reduced unnecessary costs, gives them right solution, easy to understand and upgrades their knowledge. Further it was also found that their credible sources of information were friends/neighbors, progressive farmers, dealers, television, newspaper, Krishi Vigyan Kendra and village leaders.

Key words : Information boards, Information sources, KVK, Perception.

Information and technology dissemination is a crucial tool for promoting agricultural development. In the fast changing scenario, information plays an immense role in our society and its dissemination through highly perfected communication media contribute a lot to striking development of our time. The present agriculture strategy in India calls for timely dissemination of agricultural information for the clientele. Agricultural productivity depends largely on the extent to which farmers adopt new technologies. It is felt that a large part of gains from new farm technologies still remain to be realized. This is because of lack of awareness and knowledge about these technologies.

Based on this understanding and to boost agricultural production and to cut down unnecessary cost of cultivation, Krishi Vigyan Kendra(KVK), Darsi had established information boards in all twelve adopted villages and timely information was provided to the farmers regularly based on the problems identified during field diagnostic visits. Hence present study was undertaken to analyze the perception of the farmers on the information provided to them through information boards. The authenticity and specialization of the information sources play an important role in acceptance or rejection of

agriculture innovations advocated by the sources, so a need also was felt to study the information sources of farmers and their utilization pattern to acquire latest knowledge which facilitates increased production and productivity. The present study has been undertaken with the following objectives.

1. To study the perception of farmers on the information provided to them through information boards in KVK adopted villages
2. To identify the information source utilization pattern of the farmers in KVK adopted villages.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The investigation was undertaken in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh. Ex-post-facto research design was adopted for the study purpose. Twelve adopted villages of Krishi Vigyan Kendra viz., Aravallipadu, Tellabadu and Vaddipadu villages of Donakonda mandal, Chinarikatla, Pedarikatla and Batchalakurapadu villages of Konakanmitla mandal, Umamaheswarapuram, Marella and Purimetla villages of Mundlamuru mandal and Lakkavaram, Ayyalapalem and Nagambotlapalem villages of Talluru mandal were purposively selected for the study purpose. Ten farmers who regularly see the information boards

were selected from each village. Thus, total sample of 120 respondents constituted population for the study. Data was collected from the sample of farmers by using pre-tested well structured interview schedule.

Twelve statements were used in constructing schedule to study the perception of the farmers. These statements were kept on three point continuum i.e., Agree, Undecided and Disagree. Out of 12 statements 11 were positive and the remaining one is negative. For the positive statements the score of 3, 2 and 1 were assigned respectively and vice versa for negative statements. The overall perception of each individual was the total score obtained for all the statements and respondents were categorized in three categories i.e., low, medium and high based on their perception score using mean and standard deviation as a measure of check. Sources of information utilized by the farmers were studied by asking the farmers to identify their credible sources of information and their utilization pattern among different sources i.e., personal localite source, personal cosmopolite source and mass media source using three point continuum "Frequently", "Occasionally" and "Never".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall perception of the farmers on the information provided to them through information boards

The results of Table 1 indicated that farmers were almost equally distributed in medium and high categories (46.67% and 43.33% respectively), where as only ten per cent of the farmers were under low category of the perception on the information provided. This clearly indicates that farmers had good perception about the information provided through information boards in adopted villages. This may be due to location specific, problem oriented information provided to them in time on regular basis.

Item analysis of the perception of the farmers on the information provided

It could be seen from the Table 2 that great majority of the farmers of adopted villages perceived that information provided on boards useful to the majority of the farmers (85.8%), timely (81.7%),

need based (79.2%), reduced unnecessary cost on fertilizers and pesticides (73.33%), and gave right solution for the problems faced by them (68.33%). Majority of the farmers perceived that the information provided is clear (65.00%), helps the farmers to upgrade their knowledge (62.5%), complete (60.00%), and easy to understand (57.5%). More than fifty per cent of the farmers perceived that the information provided is practically feasible (53.33%), not useful to all farmers as majority of the farmers were illiterate (51.67%). The results of item analysis indicated that farmers were having good perception about the information provided to them through information boards because the information was provided to them for the problems identified in field diagnostic visits. Hence the farmers were able to get timely, need based, useful, complete, clear information in an easily understandable local language.

Sources - wise Information utilization pattern of the farmers of adopted villages

Personal localite sources

Table 3 clearly evinces that great majority (83.33%) of the farmers were using friends/neighbors as the major information source. Hence informal means of farmer to farmer exchange of knowledge and information are considered to be reliable source of information among farmers (Leuwis, 2004; Dutta, 2009). It is also found as seventy per cent of the farmers' fetched information from input dealers, followed by above sixty (63.33%) per cent farmers were contacted progressive farmers frequently for information. Similarly Shriram and Chauhan (2002) had also reported that progressive farmers, neighbors and friends were the major personal localite sources of information. Further nearly sixty per cent of the farmers never used adarsha rythulu as a source of information the reason behind this was they strongly believed that adarsha rythulu were not well experienced and not available to them.

Personal cosmopolite sources

Under this source, Agricultural scientist formed the most important source of information as (43.33 %) farmers consulting this source followed by forty per cent farmers consulting occasionally. The probable reason for this is frequent visits made by

Table 1. Overall perception of the farmers on information provided to them through information boards.

n=120			
S.no	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	12	10.00
2	Medium	56	46.67
3	High	52	43.33
	Total	120	100.00

Table 2. Item analysis of the perception of the farmers on the information provided to them through information boards.

S.No Statement		Perception					
		Agree		Un-decided		Disagree	
		Frq	%	Frq	%	Frq	%
1	The information provided on the boards is need based	95	79.20	10	8.3	15	12.50
2	The information provided on the boards is timely	98	81.70	8	6.7	14	11.60
3	The information provided on the boards is complete	72	60.00	20	16.67	28	23.33
4	The information provided on the boards is clear	78	65.00	8	6.7	34	28.00
5	The information provided on the boards is useful to the majority of the farmers	103	85.80	11	9.2	6	5.00
6	The information provided on the boards is practically feasible	64	53.33	30	25.00	26	21.67
7	The information provided on the boards reduced unnecessary cost on fertilizers and pesticides	88	73.33	12	10.00	20	16.67
8	The information provided on the boards provide right solution for the problems faced by the farmers	82	68.33	22	18.33	16	13.33
9	It is a cost effective measure	46	38.33	43	35.83	31	25.84
10	The information provided on the boards is easy to understand	69	57.50	24	20.00	27	22.50
11	The information provided on the boards helps the farmer to upgrade their knowledge	75	62.50	32	26.70	13	10.80
12	As majority of the farmers are illiterates the information provided is not useful to all farmers	62	51.67	6	5.00	52	43.33

KVK scientists, participation of Agricultural Research Station scientists as resource persons in KVK programmes in adopted villages and information boards maintained at farmers common gathering places of all adopted villages. Mandal Agricultural Officers were found to be next preferred information source as almost one third (32.50%) of the farmers had frequent contact and 27.50 per cent had occasional with them. Next to this source, twenty three per cent of the farmers

were frequently using Agricultural Extension officers, followed by 17.50 per cent farmers using Assistant Director of Agriculture (ADA) as a source of information for getting information on farm related aspects. Almost sixty per cent (56.67%) of the framers frequently contacted banks. Market / Private source of information were found to be the least preferred sources among the farmers in adopted villages and to the extent of three forth (74.17%) of them had never contacted any market/

Table 3. Information sources utilization pattern by the farmers of adopted villages of Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

Source of information	Source utilization pattern							
	Frequently		Occasionally		Never		Total	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Personal localite source								
1. Friends/ Neighbors	100	83.33	15	12.50	5	4.17	120	100.00
2. Progressive farmers	76	63.33	30	25.00	14	11.67	120	100.00
3. Village leaders	52	43.33	38	31.67	30	25.00	120	100.00
4. Adarsha rythulu	40	33.33	12	10.00	68	56.67	120	100.00
5. Input dealers	84	70.00	20	16.67	16	13.33	120	100.00
Personal cosmopolite source								
1. Agricultural Extension Officers	28	23.33	20	16.67	72	60.00	120	100.00
2. Mandal Agricultural Officers	39	32.50	33	27.50	48	40.00	120	100.00
3. Assistant Director of Agriculture	21	17.50	28	23.33	71	59.17	120	100.00
4. Agricultural scientists of KVK/ARS	52	43.33	48	40.00	20	16.67	120	100.00
5. Bank personnel	68	56.67	41	34.16	11	9.17	120	100.00
6. Market/private source	10	8.33	21	17.50	89	74.17	100	120.00
Mass media source								
1. Radio	40	33.33	28	23.33	52	43.33	120	100.00
2. Television	78	65.00	29	24.17	13	10.83	120	100.00
3. Newspaper	56	46.67	36	30.00	28	23.33	120	100.00
4. Agricultural magazines	44	36.67	8	6.67	68	56.66	120	100.00

NGO personnel. These findings were inline with findings reported by Darekar and Gholve (2002).

Mass media sources

Majority of the farmers (65.00%) were using frequently television as a source followed by newspaper (46.67%), agricultural magazines (36.67%) and radio (33.33%). Similar results were reported by Kulkarni and Deosarkar (2009). The results from the study with reference to utilization of mass media sources revealed that television followed by news paper were found to be predominate in the dissemination of farm information to farmers.

The study revealed that farmers of adopted villages perceived that the information provided to them through information boards is valid and they were able to cut down unnecessary costs of their cost of cultivation as the information gives them right solution to their location specific urgent needs in right time. Hence, extension functionaries need

to put efforts to provide the farmers with needy, timely and situation specific information on a regular basis after diagnosing the crop situation instead of giving regular, routine messages.

Based on the study undertaken to find out their key information sources and their utilization pattern, we can infer that the personal localite source of information were the most effective channels for communicating farm findings to the farmers. Friends/neighbors, dealers and progressive farmers have maximum influence on farmers of the rural areas. This may be because the farmers normally interacts and spends more time with peer group and other village people. Farmers in adopted villages had also used agricultural scientists and department of agriculture officials to the possible extent as a source of latest innovations and information which is a sign of sound personnel contacts. Next to this, mass media like television and news paper are quite popular among the farmers. This signifies the spread and influence of these popular media even

deep inside rural India. Hence these media can be effectively used for informing farmers about recent advances in agriculture and cost reduction technologies in cultivation of varied crops which is the need of the hour.

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