

SENSITIVITY OF FARMERS TOWARDS JUNAGADH AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT

Sensitivity refers to the capacity of an individual to respond to stimulation. There are three components of sensitivity viz., attitude, awareness and utilization of resources towards Junagadh Agricultural University. Attitude is the degree of positive, negative or natural approach of farmer towards Junagadh Agricultural University. Awareness of agricultural information services flow to farmers within and outside the boundaries of agricultural structures and systems because of their needs. There was positive and highly significant relationship between social participation, extension contact and training received with their sensitivity towards JAU and also had positively and significant relationship between education, experience in farming, farm media exposure, information seeking behavior and scientific orientation with their sensitivity towards JAU. The characteristics of the farmers like annual income, land holding and occupation were non-significant relationship associated with their sensitivity towards JAU and age had a negative and non-significant relationship associated with their sensitivity towards JAU.

Keywords: sensitivity, farmers, information seeking behavior, relationship

INTRODUCTION

India is primarily an agriculture-based country and it is the main source of livelihood for over 80.00 per cent of the rural poor in India. Although, the agriculture sector employs 52.00 per cent of the labour force. Which lead to contributes nearly 20.2 per cent of the Gross Value Added (GVA) in India. Agriculture is the most pivotal sector of Indian economy (DES, 2021).

Junagadh Agricultural University was founded to assist farmers in three areas: education, research and extension education in agriculture, horticulture, agricultural engineering, fisheries science, agricultural information technology, post graduate in agri business management. Agriculture information technology, agricultural engineering technology, food processing technology, agricultural business management and other emerging sciences are included. There are currently five colleges, one postgraduate institute, seven polytechnics, one community radio station “Janvani FM91.2”, and eleven extension education centers. Junagadh, Jamnagar, Porbandar, Gir Somnath, Rajkot, Amreli, Bhavnagar, Morbi, Surendra Nagar, and Devbhumi Dwarka are among the ten districts of Saurashtra that cover 32.74 percent (6.43 million hectares) of the state’s geographic area (19.60 m ha). Apart

from education, the university has developed a number of varieties and technologies for the development of profitable and sustainable production with the help of ten on-campus and twenty-one off-campus research stations, which include multidisciplinary main research stations, sub-centers on various crops, and testing centers to evolve location- specific production technologies (Anon., 2021).

Apart from the mandatory ones like research focus on cereals crops, vegetable crops, fruit crops, forage crops, animal breeding, nutrition and dairy products, etc., JAU’s activities have expanded to span newer commodities and other sectors such as soil health card, plant tissue culture, plant biotechnology, liquid bio-fertilizer, location-specific micronutrient status, pesticide residue, probiotic food, the interface between industry and scientists, distance education, and so on. However, the essence of JAU’s working philosophy is the formation of a partnership between rural people and committed academia as the foundation for long-term rural development. JAU’s overall objective is to support the continual process of development of sustainable growth and economic independence in rural community through its numerous programmes. JAU intends to accomplish this through education, research, and outreach. Thus, JAU works towards the empowerment of the farmers.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To assess the sensitivity of the farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University
- (2) To ascertain the relationship between profile of the farmers and their sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University

METHODOLOGY

Ex-post facto research design was followed for carrying out the study. For drawing the sample for the study multistage purposive random sampling technique was used. The present study was carried out in the jurisdiction of Junagadh Agricultural University. Four districts were selected purposively in the jurisdiction of Junagadh Agricultural University namely Junagadh, Porbandar, Rajkot and Jamnagar. Because, these districts are located near Junagadh Agricultural University.

From the selected four districts on basis of proportionate sampling 8 talukas were selected for the study. From each taluka randomly two villages and from every selected village randomly ten farmers were selected for the study. In all, 160 farmers were selected by the multistage random sampling procedure.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sensitivity of the farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University

The sensitivity of farmers is operationalized as the combination of a body of attitude, awareness, and extent of utilization of resources that an individual possesses to perform a given task effectively and efficiently. To measure the sensitivity of farmers, three components viz; attitude of farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University, awareness of farmers about Junagadh Agricultural University, the extent of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University by farmers were identified. The sensitivity of farmers, was measure with above mentioned three indicators. The facts and findings derived after analysing the information have been presented under the following heads and discussed in succeeding pages.

Overall attitude of the farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University

The data pertaining to overall attitude of the farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University was collected, analysed and presented in Table 1.

Table 1 : Distribution of the farmers according to their attitude towards Junagadh Agricultural University (n=160)

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Per cent
1	Strongly unfavorable (up to 14 score)	00	00.00
2	Unfavorable (14.01 to 28 score)	00	00.00
3	Neutral (28.01 to 42 score)	26	16.25
4	Favorable (42.01 to 56 score)	102	63.75
5	Strongly favorable (above 56.01 score)	32	20.00

The data presented in Table 1 shows that more than three-fifth (63.75 per cent) of the farmers have a favorable attitude towards Junagadh Agricultural University, followed by 20.00 per cent and 16.25 per cent them had strongly favorable and neutral attitude, respectively. While, none of them was found to have an unfavorable and strongly unfavorable attitude towards Junagadh Agricultural University.

The result concluded that majority more than four-fifth (83.75 per cent) of the farmers had favourable to strongly favorable attitudes towards Junagadh Agricultural University. It was observed during a survey that many of the farmers applaud activities carried out by the Junagadh Agricultural University viz, provision of the seed, soil health card, plant tissue culture, plant biotechnology, liquid bio-fertilizer, location-specific micronutrient status, pesticide residue of the food grains, an interface between industry and scientists, distance education, etc., apart from the mandatory ones like research focuses on groundnut, maize, wheat, bajra, vegetable crops, forage crops, animal breeding, etc. Hence, Junagadh Agricultural University has a strong base to cater to the need of the farmers of the state. Thus, JAU work towards the empowerment of the farmers in the region. This might be the possible reason for favorable attitude of the farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University. The finding is related to result of Chaudhari *et al.* (2023), Chaudhari *et al.* (2020), Chitrashree *et al.* (2020) and Neha (2018).

Overall awareness of the farmers about Junagadh Agricultural University

The data pertaining to overall awareness of the farmers about Junagadh Agricultural University was collected, analysed and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of the farmers according to their awareness about Junagadh Agricultural University (n=160)

Sr. No.	Awareness	Frequency (n=160)	Per cent
1	Very low (0 to 2 score)	00	00.00
2	Low (2.01 to 4 score)	10	06.25
3	Medium (4.01 to 6 score)	34	21.25
4	High (6.01 to 8 score)	76	47.50
5	Very high (8.01 to 10 score)	40	25.00

The keen observation in the Table 2 indicates that more than two-fifth (47.50 per cent) of the farmers had a high level of awareness about Junagadh Agricultural University, followed by 25.00 per cent and 21.25 per cent of them had a very high and medium level of awareness, respectively. Only 6.25 per cent of the farmers had a low level of awareness about Junagadh Agricultural University. While, none of them was found to have a very low level of awareness about Junagadh Agricultural University.

The possible explanation of such type of result might be due to the Junagadh Agricultural University believes in harnessing the power of science and innovation for increasing the prosperity of the society since its inception (*i.e.* 2004). Junagadh Agricultural University has played a spectacular role in the area of education, research, and extension, as a result of that JAU is recognized at the state, national as well as international levels. To disseminate the agricultural technologies to the farmers in a time, JAU has organized/participated in different, mega events like *krishi mahotsav*, agricultural fairs, exhibitions, seminars, scientist-farmer interaction and trainings. The publication unit of university regularly proving through literature on the latest technologies is also distributed to the farming community during fairs and exhibitions, through ATIC and location specific intuitional KVK, research stations, training centers etc. The finding is related to result of Swathi and Annamalai (2010).

Overall extent of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University by the farmers

The data pertaining to overall extent of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University by the farmers was collected, analysed and presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Distribution of the farmers according to their extent of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University (n=160)

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency (n=160)	Per cent
1	Very low (0 to 6.00 score)	00	00.00
2	Low (6.01 to 12.00 score)	18	11.25
3	Medium (12.01 to 18.00 score)	49	30.63
4	High (18.01 to 24.00 score)	79	49.38
5	Very high (24.01 to 30.00 score)	14	08.74

It was apparent from Table 3 that slightly less than half (49.38 per cent) of the farmers had a high level of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University, followed by 30.63 and 11.25 per cent of them had a medium and low level, respectively. Only 8.75 per cent of them had a very high level of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University. Whereas, none of them was found to have very low level of utilization of resources of JAU.

The result revealed that great majority (80.01 per cent) of the farmers had a medium to high level of extent of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University. It means that the provision of different input & services, as well as extension activities carried out by Junagadh Agricultural University, was found trustworthy by the majority of the farmers. The JAU provides demonstration, training, publications and inputs to the farmers on long term research basis which might be helpful to improve their farming ultimately leads for better standard of living.

Overall sensitivity of the farmers

The overall sensitivity of farmers was measured by knowing and summing various components *viz;* attitude of farmers towards Junagadh Agricultural University, awareness of farmers about Junagadh Agricultural University and the extent of utilization of resources of Junagadh Agricultural University by farmers. Farmers were categorized into five groups based on the overall sensitivity index shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Distribution of the farmers according to their overall sensitivity (n=160)

Sr. No.	Categories	Frequency (n=160)	Per cent
1	Poor (Up to 20 score)	00	00.00
2	Below average (20.01 to 40 score)	04	02.50
3	Average (40.01 to 60 score)	21	13.13
4	Good (60.01 to 80 score)	108	67.50
5	Excellent (Above 80.01 score)	27	16.87

It is evident from Table 4 indicates that little more than two-third (67.50 per cent) of the farmers had a good level of sensitivity, followed by 16.87 per cent, 13.13 per cent and 2.50 per cent of them had excellent, average and below-average level of sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University, respectively. While it was observed that none of them had a poor level of sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University.

Thus, it was observed that the great majority more than four-fifth (84.37 per cent) of the farmers had a good to an excellent level of sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University. This, trend of results might be due to the farming experience, scientific orientation, social participation, participation in various training programs organized by JAU.

The finding is related to result of Rupapara (2018) and Chitrashree *et al.* (2020).

Relationship between profile of the farmers and their sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University

To ascertain the relationship between personal, economic, socio- communicational and psychological characteristics with the sensitivity of the farmers. The coefficient of correlation was worked out and findings are depicted in Table 5.

The data manifested in table 5 revealed that the social participation, extension contact and training received had positive and highly significant relationship with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University, while education, experience in farming, farm media exposure, information seeking behavior and scientific orientation were positive and significant related with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University, whereas, annual income, land holding and occupation had positive and non-significant relationship

with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University. On the other hand, age was negative and significant related with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University.

Table 5: Relationship between profile of the farmers and their sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University (n=160)

Sr. No.	Independent Variables	(‘r ’value)
X ₁	Age	-0.1684*
X ₂	Education	0.1881*
X ₃	Experience in farming	0.1579*
X ₄	Annual income	0.0275 ^{NS}
X ₅	Land holding	0.1329 ^{NS}
X ₆	Occupation	0.0506 ^{NS}
X ₇	Social participation	0.2411**
X ₈	Farm media exposure	0.1554*
X ₉	Extension contact	0.2241**
X ₁₀	Training received	0.2197**
X ₁₁	Information seeking behavior	0.1746*
X ₁₂	Scientific orientation	0.1745*

* = Significant at 0.05 level, ** = Significant at 0.01 level, NS = Non-significant

The finding is related to result of Patel *et al.* (2018), Chaudhari (2021) and Chitrashree *et al.* (2020).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that data pertaining to assessment of farmers’ sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University indicated that little more than two-third (67.50 per cent) of the farmers had a good level of sensitivity, followed by 16.87 per cent, 13.13 per cent and 2.50 per cent of them had excellent, average and below-average level of sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University, respectively. Out of twelve independent variables, social participation, extension contact and training received had positive and highly significant relationship with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University, while education, experience in farming, farm media exposure, information seeking behavior and scientific orientation were positive and significant related with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University, whereas, annual income, land holding and occupation had positive and non-significant relationship with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University. On the other hand, age were negative and significant related with sensitivity towards Junagadh Agricultural University.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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