

INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF RICE GROWERS

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ABSTRACT

With a view to know the information behavior of the rice growers, the study was undertaken in five villages of Anand district. The study concluded that use of information sources, extension participation, land under rice cultivation and cosmopolitaness were the important independent variables affecting information need of the rice growers. Majority of the respondents expressed plant protection measures, marketing, schedule of water supply by canal, fertilizer management and irrigation management as the important areas of information needs.

INTRODUCTION

Increasing productivity is the vehicle for development of the rice sector. Rice production can be increased either by increasing the area under rice cultivation or by increasing the productivity of current cultivation. Given the pressure on agricultural land and the competition from other, more lucrative crops, it may be difficult to significantly increase the land under rice cultivation. The only solution, therefore, is to increase the productivity of the area currently under cultivation.

Mass dissemination of information may play an important role in view of its larger area coverage. Acquisition of information has always been regarded as a factor playing an important role in molding human behavior leading to decision for adopting of innovation. Thus, Identifying information needs of the users can become solid basis for developing meaningful information warehouse. Keeping in view the significance of the information needs of the rice growers the present study was undertaken with the following objectives:

- 1) To ascertain the information needs of the rice growers.

- 2) To study the relationship between selected personal, social, communicational, economical and psychological characteristics of rice growers and their information needs.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was confined to Anand district of Gujarat state. Anand district comprises of eight talukas. Khambhat is the major rice growing taluka of the district. This taluka was selected purposively because area under rice cultivation is highest among all the eight talukas of district. Five villages viz; Gudel, Galiyana, Naviakhoh, Rohini, and Tamsa were selected randomly from among the list of the major rice growing villages of Khambhat taluka. The lists of rice growers were obtained for each of the selected villages from the gram panchayat office. Twenty respondents from each of the selected villages were randomly selected. Thus, the study was confined to 100 respondents.

The information need of the farmer was measure using three point continuum .The mean score was obtained by the total number of score divided by total number of respondents. Coefficient of Correlation was

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computed to find out the relationship between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Information need of the rice growers

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that major area of information needs expressed by the rice growers in descending order of rank were plant protection measures, marketing, schedule of water supply by canal, fertilizer management, water management, preparation of seedlings, variety, land preparation and sowing, supportive facts, harvesting and post harvesting technology and weed management.

The results are in conformity with the findings of Patel (2004). It means that the rice growers gave highest emphasis on market related information, as this information can help them to a great extent to convert their produce in more money. They were also conscious about information on schedule of water to be supplied by canal as well as plant protection measures. The data also reflects that the rice growers have become more cautious about fertilizer management due to new trend of organic rice framing.

Relationship between independent and dependent variables

The data presented in Table 2 clearly signify that information need of the rice growers had non-significant correlation with their age and education. This may be due to the fact that irrespective level of education, level of the rice growers had information need for rice cultivation remained indifferent. Social participation, size of land holding, annual income and level of economic motivation of the rice growers also had non-significant correlation with their information need.

The information need of the rice growers had significant correlation with their extent of utilization of information sources. It indicates that those rice growers who utilize more information sources to acquire information regarding rice cultivation, have shown higher need for such information. This may be due to the fact that those who were using various sources of information might have understood importance of information regarding rice cultivation.

It is obvious from the results that the information need of the rice growers had significant correlation with their level of extension participation. It means that

Table 1 : Information needs of the rice growers

n = 100

Sr. No.	Areas of information	Mean score	Rank
1	Variety	1.31	V
2	Schedule of water supply by Canal	1.67	II
3	Preparation of Seedlings	1.36	IV
4	Land preparation and sowing	1.22	VII
5	Fertilizer management	1.67	II
6	Weed management	0.71	IX
7	Irrigation management	1.42	III
8	Plant protection measures	1.89	I
9	Harvesting and post harvesting technology	0.88	VIII
10	Marketing	1.89	I
11	Supportive facts	1.21	VII

Table 2 : Correlation between characteristics of rice growers and information need
n = 100

Sr. No.	Personal traits	Correlation coefficient value
1	Age	0.011
2	Education	0.141
3	Use of information sources	0.192 *
4	Social participation	0.134
5	Extension participation	0.281 *
6	Size of land holding	- 0.021
7	Land under rice cultivation	0.481 *
8	Irrigated area to total land	0.052
9	Annual income	- 0.112
10	Cosmopolitaness	0.193 *
11	Economic motivation	- 0.040
12	Market orientation	0.114 *

*Significant at 0.05 per cent level of probability

extension agencies played pivotal role in identifying rice growers' information needs.

Information need of the rice growers had significant correlation with the proportionate land under rice cultivation of their total land; whereas it had non-significant correlation with their proportionate irrigated area to total land. The farmer, who covers big portion of his total land under rice cultivation, transmits more risk for this crop, which leads them to have more information to minimize risk factors. Any increase in irrigated area has no influence over information need of the rice grower. The findings are in line with the findings of Talati (1994).

Information need of the rice growers had significant correlation with their level of cosmopolitaness as well as market orientation. The farmers with high level of cosmopolite ness tend to avail required information, which ultimately leads to less information need. It is also obvious that, all the rice growers want information of rice cultivation, irrespective of their orientation to market.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that majority of the rice growers had expressed plant protection measures, marketing, schedule of water supply by cannal , fertilizer management and irrigation management are the important areas of information needs.

The independent variables like Use of information sources, Extension participation, Land under rice cultivation and Cosmopolite ness were significantly related with their information needs for rice cultivation. Rice growers who had better contact with sources of information, extension personals and more area under rice cultivation as well as high level of cosmopolitaness realized more information on various aspects of rice cultivation.

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