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INFORMATION NEED OF THE FARMERS ABOUT GROUNDNUT PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract

When information is packaged or used for understanding or doing something, it is known as knowledge. The present investigation was conducted in Ranapur block of Jhabau district (Madhya Pradesh), India. The total sample was consisted of 120 farmers. In this study, policy information, market information, technological information and others were included as information need of the farmers. Most of the farmers (38.33%) belonged to high information need category about recommended production technology of groundnut.

Correlation coefficients in respect of - education, social participation, size of land holding, farming experience, annual income, risk preference, source of information, knowledge about groundnut production technology, adoption behavior of groundnut production technology were found positively significant with information need whereas size of family, was found no significant relationship. Training programme should be organized for need based information' was the major suggestion suggested by 75.00 per cent respondents.

Key words : Information Need, Groundnut Production Technology

Introduction

Civilization began with agriculture. When our nomadic ancestors began to settle and grow their own food, human society was forever changed. Not only did villages, towns and cities begin to flourish, but so did knowledge, the arts and the technological sciences. And for most of history, society's connection to the land was intimate. Human communities, no matter how sophisticated, could not ignore the importance of agriculture. To be far from dependable sources of food was to risk malnutrition and starvation. In modern times, however, many in the urban world have forgotten this fundamental connection. Insulated by the apparent abundance of food that has come from new technologies for the growing, transportation and storage of food, humanity's fundamental dependence on agriculture is often overlooked.

Public agricultural extension systems often fail due to inadequate consultation of farmers about their information needs and poor understanding of their information search strategies. In discussing and implementing extension programs and advisory services, the following questions need to be addressed: What information do the farmers need? How and where do they search for information? What factors determine their search behavior? How much are they willing to pay for information? While the first two questions are addressed fairly well in the literature, the latter two have not yet been dealt with in the context of developing countries.

The effectiveness depends to large extent on the identification of needs of farmers. As a matter of fact, it is the most important aspects of whole assessing exercise. However, the fact remains that everyone speaks of the importance of information, skill, knowledge and training in agriculture, but very little efforts have gone into identification of needs of farmers. Needs assessment is a process for determining and addressing needs, or "gaps" between current conditions and desired conditions, often used for improvement in individuals, education/training, organizations, or communities. The need can be a desire to improve current performance or to correct a deficiency. The idea of needs assessment, as part of the planning process, has been used under different names for a long time. In the past 50 years, it has been an essential element

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22 of educational planning. The information brings out the required change in the individuals behavior for improving his performance. The investigation is taken with the following specific objectives :

- To study the information need of the farmers about groundnut production technology.
- To analyze the relationship between information need of the farmers about groundnut production technology and their profile.
- To suggest the strategies for fulfillment of the needs of farmers about groundnut production technology.

Materials and Methods

The Jhabau district consists of six blocks *viz*. Meghnagar, Petlawad, Rama, Ranapur, Thandla and Jhabua. Out of these blocks, Ranapur block was selected purposively due to maximum acreage covered under groundnut cultivation. The selected block comprises of 149 villages. A list of groundnut growing village was prepared with help of extension officials. Out of these 10 villages were selected randomly by using the random sampling method for the study. After the selection of the villages, a village wise list of groundnut growers was prepared and 12 farmers from each village will be randomly selected. Thus, the total sample was consisted of 120 farmers. The data were collected with the help of a pre-tested interview schedule from the respondents who were benefited by the programme. The secondary data were collected from the official records and other sources.

Results and Discussion

Different type's information need of the farmers about groundnut production technology

The data in table 1 refers that about policy information, the higher percentage 40.83 per cent of respondents was found medium level of information need followed by 37.50 and 21.66 per cent of the respondents were high and low level of information need.

With regards to market information, high percentage (42.50%) of respondents were found high level of information need followed by 38.33 per cent were in medium information need while only 19.16 per cent of the respondents were low level of information need. The above finding is in accordance with the findings of Zhao (1998).

Table 1 : Type of information needed by groundnut growers in survey.

S. no.	Name of area	Information need					
		Low		Medium		High	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Policy information	26	21.66	49	40.83	45	37.50
2.	Market information	23	19.16	46	38.33	51	42.50
3.	Technological information	22	18.33	35	29.16	63	52.50
4.	Other information	53	44.16	42	35.00	25	20.83

Table 2 : Frequency distribution of respondents according to their overall information need about groundnut production technology.

S. no.	Information need	Respondents (n = 110)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low	31	25.83
2.	Medium	43	35.83
3.	High	46	38.33
	Overall total	**120**	**100.00**

Table 3 : Relationship between independent and dependent variables of farmers.

S. no.	Characteristics	Correlation coefficient (r)	t value
1.	Education	0.457**	
2.	Size of family	0.017^{NS}	
3.	Social participation	0.328**	
4.	Size of land holding	0.355**	
5.	Farming experience	0.351**	
6.	Annual income	0.320**	
7.	Risk preference	0.314**	
8.	Source of information	0.251*	
9.	Information seeking behavior	0.247*	
10.	Knowledge about mustard production technology	0.438**	
11.	Adoption behavior of mustard production technology	0.389**	

** Significant at 1 % level of probability.
* Significant at 5 % level of probability.

Regarding technology information, the majority 52.50 per cent of respondents were found high level of information need followed by 29.16 per cent were in medium information need while only 18.33 per cent of the respondents were low level of information need.

While, in case of other information, the majority 44.16 per cent of respondents was found low level of information

Table 4 : Suggestions for fulfillment of the needs of farmers about groundnut production technology.

S. no.	Suggestions	Beneficiaries		Rank
		No.	%	
1.	Training programme should be organized for need based information	90	75.00	I
2.	The information related to subject should be supplied on time and in proper way	81	67.50	II
3.	Regional language should be used during any type of communication	70	58.33	III
4.	Literatures on different practices of agriculture and other activities should be made available to the farmers	69	57.50	IV
5.	Effective training programme should be organized regularly	62	51.67	V

need followed by 35.00 and 20.83 per cent of the respondents were medium and high levels of information need.

Overall information need of groundnut production technology

The distribution of the respondents according to their information need (overall) of selected groundnut production technologies *viz*. improved varieties, seed treatment, sowing time & methods, manure and fertilizers, and plant protection were considered for the study is shown in table 2.

It was observed from the data presented in table 2 that most of the farmers (38.33%) belonged to high information need category about recommended production technology of groundnut, whereas, 35.83 and 25.83 per cent of them in medium and low information need categories of groundnut production technologies, respectively.

Thus, it has been inferred that most of the respondents belonged to medium overall information need category. The present finding confirms the result of Zhao (2004).

Relationship between independent and dependent variables of farmers

The zero order correlation coefficient of characteristics of respondents namely education, size of family, social participation, size of land holding, farming experience, annual income, risk preference, source of information, information seeking behavior, knowledge about groundnut production technology and adoption behavior of mustard production technology were determined with information need. The zero order correlation coefficient of independent and dependent variables of farmers are furnished in table 3.

It can be observed from the table that correlation coefficients in respect of education (0.457), social participation (0.328), size of land holding (0.355), farming experience (0.351), annual income (0.320), risk preference (0.314), source of information (0.251), knowledge about mustard production technology (0.438), adoption behavior of groundnut production technology (0.389) were found positively significant with information need, whereas size of family (0.017) was found no significant relationship.

Suggest the strategies for fulfillment of the needs of farmers about groundnut production technology

The data regarding suggestions for fulfillment of the needs of farmers about groundnut production technology are presented in table 4. The data indicate that the suggestion 'Training programme should be organized for need based information' was suggested by most of the beneficiaries (75.00%) & got the first rank. 67.50 per cent of the respondents reported that the information related to subject should be supplied on time and in proper way (ranked second). Regional language should be used during any type of communication (58.33%) ranked third. Literatures on different practices of agriculture and other activities should be made available to the farmers (57.50%) ranked fourth and effective training program should be organized regularly (51.67%).

Conclusion

Maximum farmers (38.33%) belonged to high information need category about recommended production technology of groundnut. Correlation coefficients between independent variables- education, social participation, size of land holding, farming experience, annual income, risk preference, source of information, knowledge about groundnut production technology, adoption behavior of groundnut production technology were found positively significant with dependent variable- information need, whereas size of family was found no significant relationship. Training programme should be organized for need based information' was the major suggestion suggested by 75.00 per cent respondents.

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