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OPINION OF THE FARMERS REGARDING VARIOUS ASPECTS OF KRISHI MAHOTSAV

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ABSTRACT

Krishi Mahotsav programme, with almost universal outreach (covering almost all the villages) has been upheld as a critical factor driving Gujarat's high growth rate in agriculture (Shah and Pattnaik, 2014). Considering the time spent, behind this innovative extension model, expenditure incurred and the man power used, it is essential to know the opinion of farmers towards various aspects of Krishi Mahotsav. A random sample of 120 farmers from 10 villages of five talukas in Anand district, who had participated in Krishi Mahotsav were selected for the study. Ex-Post Facto design was used. The data collected was tabulated and analysed to make meaningful research findings. The statistical tools used were percentage, mean score, and frequency analysis. An overwhelming per cent (100.00 per cent) of the farmers opinioned that Krishi Mahotsav should be organized during the Kharif season, majority (92.50 per cent) of the farmers felt that thirty days' duration of Krishi Mahotsav is too long, about 50.00 per cent of the farmers felt that Krishi Mahotsav should be organized at taluka level, majority of the farmers felt that they were satisfied to highly satisfied with the information, all most all the technologies disseminated during Krishi Mahotsav were very useful to extremely useful to the farmers. Hence, majority of the farmers had medium to very high level of opinion towards Krishi Mahotsav.

Keywords: Opinion, Krishi Mahotsav, Farmers

Introduction

Farming is the most important enterprise and farmers are an integral part in the development of our country. Though, India is self-sufficient in production, Indian farmers are not self-reliant (Agashe *et al*., 2019). Farmers income remained low in relation to those working in the non-farm sector (Ramesh, 2017). Hence, there is a dire need to increase the income of the farmers. Extension plays an important role in bridging the gap between researchers and farmers. Further, it fulfils the information needs of the farmers. Government of Gujarat has introduced a demand led extension approach, to bring all the line departments personnel to the door steps of the farmers. Krishi Mahotsav programme, with almost universal outreach (covering almost all the villages) has been upheld as a critical factor driving Gujarat's high growth rate in agriculture (Chandawat *et al*., 2013). As Krishi Mahotsav is a proactive extension approach, farmers should play an active role in the implementation of this programme. An individual's exposure to any new technology or innovations, results in judgment or viewpoint of them towards that technology or innovations and may result in formation of attitude towards it. There were no studies measuring the opinion of the farmers. Hence, this was studied and opinion regarding various aspects like time, duration, place of organization, information provided, usefulness of new technologies and subsidies or inputs given etc. during Krishi Mahotsav were included.

Methodology

The present investigation was carried out in Anand district of Gujarat state. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select 120 farmers who had participated in Krishi Mahotsav. Out of eight talukas of Anand district, Anand taluka,

Anklav taluka, Borsad taluka, Sojitra taluka and Petlad talukas were randomly selected for the study. Two villages from each taluka were selected randomly and hence, a total of 10 villages were selected from all the five talukas. Twelve farmers were selected randomly from each village. 'Ex-post facto design' was used for this study as independent variables have already acted upon. The already occurred variables formed the presumed cause (independent variables) and the dependent variables formed the presumed effect. The data were collected through the personal interview method by Guajarati version of interview schedule. The respondents were interviewed personally at their home or work place. The statistics namely simple arithmetic mean, frequencies and percentages were calculated for analysis and interpretation of data.

Results and Discussion

Opinion of farmers regarding time of Krishi Mahotsav is the viewpoint of farmers' regarding the time of conduction of Krishi Mahotsav. The data was collected and presented in the Table 1. It can be observed that 79.10 per cent of the farmers were agreed to strongly agreed that Krishi Mahotsav was timely conducted. About 82.50 per cent of the farmers disagreed to strongly disagreed that Krishi Mahotsav was conducted earlier than expected. It can be seen that 76.60 per cent of the farmers were disagreed to strongly disagreed that Krishi Mahotsav was conducted later than expected. The probable reason might be due to the fact that Krishi Mahotsav is organized generally before the commencement of season i.e., May or in June. Farmers might have felt that it is organized timely as they can adopt the pre-sowing operations along with new technologies disseminated during Krishi Mahotsav.

Table 1: Opinion of farmers regarding time of Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No.	Statement	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	Timely	85 (70.80%)	10 (8.30%)	02 (1.70%)	03 (2.50%)	20 (16.70%)
2	Earlier than expected	3 (2.50%)	7 (5.80%)	11 (9.20%)	24 (20.00%)	75 (62.50%)
3	Later than expected	14 (11.70%)	02 (1.70%)	12 (10.00%)	21 (17.50%)	71 (59.10%)

SA = Strongly Agree, **A** = Agree, **UD** = Undecided, **D** = Disagree, **SD** = Strongly Disagree

Opinion about time of next Krishi Mahotsav

It can be inferred that cent (100.00 per cent) of the farmers agreed to strongly agreed that Krishi Mahotsav should be organized during pre-sowing period of Kharif season. The reason might be due to the fact that Anand having good rainfalls and fertile season, farmers prefer to get more yield in Kharif season by using new technologies and innovations disseminated during Krishi Mahotsav. Similar findings were reported by (Sipai *et al*., 2017).

Table 2: Opinion of farmers about time of next Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No	Statement	SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	Pre-sowing- Kharif	114 (95.00%)	06 (5.00%)	00 (0.00%)	00 (0.00%)	00 (0.00%)
2	During operations-Kharif	22 (18.30%)	14 (11.70%)	06 (5.00%)	23 (19.20%)	55 (45.80%)
3	Pre-sowing –Rabi	63 (52.50%)	08 (6.70%)	03 (2.50%)	07 (5.80%)	39 (32.50%)
4	During operations-Rabi	23 (19.20%)	14 (11.70%)	05 (4.10%)	21 (17.50%)	57 (47.50%)
5	Pre-sowing-Summer	60 (50.00%)	07 (5.80%)	02 (1.70%)	09 (7.50%)	42 (35.00%)
6	During operations-Summer	19 (15.80%)	15 (12.50%)	4 (03.30%)	23 (19.20%)	59 (49.20%)

Opinion about duration of Krishi Mahotsav

The Table 3 shows that a majority (92.50 per cent) of the farmers felt that thirty days' duration of Krishi Mahotsav is too long. This might be due to the fact that attending such a long duration programme may disturb their other works schedule.

It was interesting to note that about 75.80 per cent of the respondents felt that that one-day duration of Krishi Mahotsav is too short. As majority of the respondents were having agriculture and animal husbandry as their occupation, which they require knowledge about various modern technologies and Krishi Mahotsav is a place where all the resources about agriculture and allied activities were pooled and provided to the farmers at one place. Hence, they felt short duration of one-day programme will not be effective and the all the information cannot be communicated to the farmers in an efficient manner.

Table 3: Opinion of farmers about duration of Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No.	Duration	Too long	Appropriate	Too short
1	30 days	111 (92.50%)	02 (1.70%)	07 (5.80%)
2	15 days	97 (80.80%)	15 (12.50%)	08 (6.70%)
3	7 days	70 (58.30%)	29 (24.20%)	21 (17.50%)
4	2 days	23 (19.20%)	48 (40.00%)	49 (40.80%)
5	1 day	00 (0.00%)	29 (24.20%)	91 (75.80%)

Opinion about place or level of organization

Table 4: Opinion of farmers about duration of Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No.	Level or place of organization	Frequency	Per cent
1	District level	10	08.30
2	Taluka level	60	50.00
3	Village level	50	41.70
Total		**120**	**100**

The data in the Table, indicate that 50.00 per cent of the farmers felt that Krishi Mahotsav should be organized at taluka level. The reason might be that farmers felt that it will be convenient for them to participate in Krishi Mahotsav if it was organized either in villages or talukas which are near their living areas. In addition to this, when the Krishi Mahotsav was organized during the auspicious seasons or festivals reduces the participation of farmers in Krishi Mahotsav if organized at a place which is far for the farmers to reach and it will coincide with their social functions.

Opinion about information provided during Krishi Mahotsav

Table 5: Opinion of farmers about information provided during Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No.	Information	HS	S	N	DS	HDS
1.	**Agriculture**					
	I) Crop production					
	Soil analysis	50 (41.70%)	43 (35.80%)	18 (15.00%)	09 (7.50%)	00 (00.00%)
	Pre-sowing operation	39 (32.50%)	52 (43.30%)	20 (16.70%)	07 (5.80%)	02 (1.70%)
	Seed treatment	63 (52.50%)	43 (35.80%)	10 (8.30%)	03 (2.50%)	01 (0.80%)
	Sowing technique	48 (40.00%)	43 (35.80%)	20 (16.70%)	06 (5.00%)	03 (2.50%)
	Nutrient management	72 (60.00%)	39 (32.50%)	07 (5.80%)	02 (1.70%)	00 (00.00%)
	Weed management	50 (41.70%)	42 (35.00%)	16 (13.30%)	09 (7.50%)	03 (2.50%)
	Irrigation management	50 (46.70%)	34 (28.30%)	24 (20.00%)	06 (5.00%)	00 (0.00%)

	II) Crop protection					
	Pest management	84 (70.00%)	23 (19.20%)	08 (6.70%)	02 (1.70%)	02 (1.70%)
	Disease management	82 (68.30%)	20 (16.70%)	13 (10.80%)	05 (4.20%)	00 (0.00%)
	Harvesting	17 (14.20%)	34 (28.30%)	37 (30.80%)	28 (23.30%)	04 (3.30%)
	III) Market information	07 (5.80%)	06 (5.00%)	15 (12.50%)	61 (50.80%)	31 (25.80%)
	IV) Post-harvest management					
	Value addition	24 (20.00%)	20 (16.70%)	27 (22.50%)	36 (30.00%)	13 (10.80%)
	Processing and preservation	08 (6.70%)	26 (21.70%)	31 (25.80%)	42 (35.00%)	13 (10.80%)
2.	**Horticulture**					
	Fruit production	47 (39.20%)	31 (25.80%)	25 (20.80%)	15 (12.50%)	02 (1.70%)
	Vegetable production	35 (22.00%)	43 (35.84%)	22 (18.33%)	13 (10.83%)	07 (5.80%)
	Flower production	26 (21.70)	23 (19.20%)	44 (36.60%)	26 (21.70%)	01 (0.80%)
3.	**Animal husbandry**					
	I) Dairy	71 (59.20%)	32 (26.70%)	10 (8.30%)	04 (3.30%)	03 (2.50%)
	II)Livestock management					
	Breeding practices	11 (09.10%)	60 (50.00%)	29 (24.20%)	17 (14.20%)	03 (2.50%)
	Feeding practices	13 (10.83%)	46 (38.34%)	31 (25.83%)	19 (15.80%)	11 (09.20%)
	Health care practices	12 (10.00%)	93 (77.50%)	13 (10.80%)	02 (1.70%)	00 (0.00%)

HS= Highly Satisfied**, S=** Satisfied, **N=** Neutral (Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied), **DS=** Dissatisfied, **HDS** = Highly Dissatisfied

Conclusively, it can be said that majority of the farmers felt satisfied to highly satisfied with the information about crop production, protection, dairy, livestock management and fruits and vegetable production. These are in line with the findings of (Manjula and Sheik, 2010). These findings are in contrast with the findings of (Gangil *et al*., 2019). They found that most of the farmers were of the opinion that they were not getting proper information regarding livestock management in these fairs. But majority of the farmers felt dissatisfied to highly dissatisfied with the information about harvesting, market information, value addition and processing and preservation. This shows the importance for the dissemination of market related and post-harvest management related information during Krishi Mahotsav. Hence, policy makers and the scientists concerned with the organization of Krishi Mahotsav should include more information regarding marketing and post-harvest management.

Opinion about the dissemination of new technologies

From the Table-6 it can be said that all most all the technologies like new crops, varieties, improved farm mechanization etc., disseminated during Krishi Mahotsav were very useful to extremely useful to the farmers. These findings are in agreement with the findings of (Shirur *et al*., 2011), (Agashe *et al*., 2019) and (Sarnaik *et al*., 2020).

Table 6: Opinion of farmers about dissemination of new technologies (n=120)

No.	Technology	EU	VU	MU	SU	NU
1	New crops	29 (24.20%)	45 (37.50%)	31 (25.80%)	15 (12.50%)	00 (0.00%)
2	New varieties	28 (23.35%)	32 (26.70%)	31 (25.80%)	25 (20.85%)	04 (3.30%)
3	Improved farm mechanization Practices	37 (30.80%)	38 (31.70%)	33 (27.50%)	11 (9.20%)	01 (0.80%)
4	Soil health (nutrition) management	70 (58.30%)	28 (23.30%)	14 (11.70%)	08 (6.70%)	00 (0.00%)
5	Irrigation practices	50 (41.60%)	44 (36.70%)	17 (14.20%)	09 (7.50%)	00 (0.00%)
6	Pest management	81 (67.50%)	29 (24.20%)	09 (7.50%)	01 (0.80%)	00 (0.00%)
7	Disease management	73 (60.80%)	30 (25.00%)	13 (10.80%)	02 (1.70%)	02 (1.70%)
8	Water harvesting	40 (33.35%)	40 (33.35%)	31 (25.80%)	07 (5.80%)	02 (1.70%)
9	Better marketing of crops	14 (11.70%)	24 (20.00%)	39 (32.50%)	29 (24.10%)	14 (11.70%)
10	Increase in milk Production	42 (35.00%)	32 (26.67%)	32 (26.67%)	12 (10.00%)	02 (1.66%)
11	Milk quality Production	27 (22.50%)	34 (28.30%)	33 (27.50%)	22 (18.30%)	04 (3.30%)
12	Value addition	05 (4.20%)	10 (8.30%)	29 (24.20%)	49 (40.80%)	27 (22.50%)
13	Processing and Preservation	36 (30.00%)	37 (30.85%)	24 (20.00%)	19 (15.85%)	04 (3.30%)
14	Horticulture	48 (40.00%)	39 (32.50%)	24 (20.00%)	09 (7.50%)	00 (0.00%)
15	Floriculture	46 (38.30%)	38 (31.70%)	18 (15.00%)	17 (14.20%)	01 (0.80%)
16	Organic farming	46 (38.30%)	35 (29.20%)	19 (15.80%)	19 (15.80%)	01 (0.80%)
17	Micro-irrigation	19 (15.80%)	27 (22.50%)	30 (25.00%)	29 (24.20%)	15 (12.50%)
18	Farm machinery	29 (24.20%)	20.00 (16.70%)	29 (24.20%)	40 (33.30%)	02 (1.70%)

EU= Extremely useful**, VU=** Very useful, **MU=** Moderately useful, **SU**= Slightly useful, **NU**= Not at all useful

Opinion about the aid given during Krishi Mahotsav

Table 7 : Opinion of farmers about the aid given during Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No.	Response	Frequency	Per cent
1	Yes	24	20.00
2	No	96	80.00
Total		**120**	**100.00**

From the table, it can be observed that 20.00 per cent of the farmers had received the aid, whereas 80.00 per cent of the farmers had not received the aid during Krishi Mahotsav.

Table 8 : Opinion of farmers as per their degree of satisfaction about the aid given during Krishi Mahotsav (n=24)

No.	Response	Frequency	Per cent
1	Highly satisfied	18	75.00
2	Satisfied	06	25.00
3	Neutral (Neither satisfied/ dissatisfied)	00	00.00
4	Dissatisfied	00	00.00
5	Highly dissatisfied	00	00.00
Total		**24**	**100.00**

The data regarding the degree of satisfaction of the farmers who had received the aid (24 farmers) were collected and presented in the Table 8. The data shows that majority of the farmers surveyed had not received any aid during Krishi Mahotsav. The probable reason might be due to the fact that the aids were given to the resource poor and needy farmers during Krishi Mahotsav, hence all the farmers might not be covered for aid distribution. During the interaction with the farmers, it was also noted that some farmers were interested in the knowledge gained during Krishi Mahotsav than obtaining aids. Hence, they had not shown interest in receiving the aids.

Overall opinion about Krishi Mahotsav

Table 9: Overall Opinion of farmers about Krishi Mahotsav (n=120)

No.	Opinion	Number	Per cent
1	Very low (Up to 20 per cent score)	00	00.00
2	Low (20.01 to 40 per cent score)	00	00.00
3	Medium (40.01 to 60 per cent score)	12	10.00
4	High (60.01 to 80 per cent score)	104	86.70
5	Very high (Above 80 per cent score)	04	03.30
Total		**120**	**100.00**

From the Table-9 it can be observed that a majority (86.70 per cent) of the farmers had high level of overall opinion about Krishi Mahotsav, followed by 10.00 per cent and 3.30 per cent of the farmers had medium and very high level of overall opinion, respectively. None of the farmers had very low and low level of overall opinion about Krishi Mahotsav. Hence, it can be concluded that a great majority (96.70 per cent) of the farmers had medium to high level of overall opinion about Krishi Mahotsav. Similar findings were reported by (Rai *et al*., 2007), (Chandawat *et al*., 2013) and Patel and Patel (2014).

Conclusion

From the above findings, it can be concluded that farmers had medium to very high level of opinion towards Krishi Mahotsav. Majority of the farmers opinioned that harvesting, market related information, post-harvest management related information was not given during KM. Hence, policy makers and scientists should make efforts to disseminate this kind of information. Aids also should be made available to the needy farmers. Policy makers should take the opinion of the farmers into consideration to make the programme further successful.

Authors' Contributions

'Boppana Jagadeeswari' designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, wrote the protocol, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. 'J. B. Patel' and 'Hemlata Saini' have managed the analyses of the study and proof reading. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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