

CONSTRAINTS FACED BY THE FARMERS IN ATTENDING FARMER FIELD SCHOOL IN ANAND DISTRICT OF GUJARAT

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out in Anand district of Gujarat state to know about the various constraints faced by the farmers in attending Farmer Field School (FFS). Majority of the farmers faced the constraint of labour shortage, ranked at first place followed by untimely release of fund, higher cost of inputs, lack of regular visit by extension personnel, lack of training programme regarding improved agricultural practices were ranked at second, third, fourth and fifth place, respectively. Valuable suggestions given by the farmer to improve their participation in Farmer Field School were; to provide latest technical guidance on various aspect of farming, ranked first followed by easy availability of loans for purchase of machinery/implements, timely availability of inputs/kits, increase participation of woman farmers in FFS and FFS should promote awareness regarding the location specific cropping systems were ranked at second, third, fourth and fifth position, respectively.

Keywords : farmer field school (ffs) constraints, suggestions

INTRODUCTION

Today, agriculture sector, also the primary sector, is witnessing radical changes and challenges both at national and international level. The demand for agricultural commodities is steeply rising; food preferences of the next-generation consumers are changing; and agriculture sector is struggling with decelerating profitability which play major role for dragging its performance. The ever increasing population has worsened the situation. The preconditions for making agriculture sector more sustainable and remunerative would be to evolve an effective for technology delivery and to enhance capacity of all stakeholders, especially farmers in the invention-innovation continuum (ICAR, 201, Chaudhary *et al.*, 2016 and Vinaya *et al.*, 2015). For any successful invention-innovation continuum, there is a high need for all the key stakeholders to participate with a common vision and relevant technical tools.

Farmer Field School represent a master approach towards agricultural development. It tries to impart all essential skills needed for overall improvement and capacity building of the farmer. But, every new approach will always carry some constraints which hinders its proper implementation.

An attempt has been made here to know about the constraints faced by the farmers in attending Farmer Field School.

OBJECTIVES

- (a) To identify constraints faced by the farmers in attending Farmer Field School
- (b) To explore suggestions from the farmers to overcome the constraints faced while attending Farmer Field School

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Anand district of Gujarat state. Anand district comprises of eight talukas, of these; Anand taluka, Borsad taluka and Petlad taluka were purposively selected for having organised fairly good number of Farmer Field School. Randomly four villages from Anand taluka, three villages from Borsad taluka and three villages from Petlad taluka were selected because of higher farmer participation and good crop production. After selecting 10 villages, randomly 6 farmers were selected from each village. Thus, total 60 farmers were selected for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints faced by the farmers in attending Farmer Field School

As seen from Table 1, major Technological constraints faced by the farmers were: Shortage of skilled labors (I), lack of training program regarding improved agricultural practices (II), lack of knowledge about the pest/disease in crops (III), lack of advanced knowledge about

farming (IV) and absence of location specific technology (V).

Major Farmer level constraints' were: Reluctance of farmers to participate (I), difference in opinion among member farmers (II), lack of regular marketing facilities (III), less interest by women farmers to participate in FFS (IV), strict and hectic schedule (V), conflict among farmers (VI) and gender bias (VII).

Table 1: Constraints faced by farmers in attending Farmer Field School

n=60

Sr. No.	Constraints	MS	Rank	Overall Rank
A	Technological constraints			
1	Shortage of skilled labours	2.55	I	I
2	Absence of location specific technology.	2.00	V	XII
3	Lack of advanced knowledge about farming	2.02	IV	XI
4	Lack of knowledge about the pest/disease in crops	2.12	III	VIII
5	Lack of training program regarding improved agricultural practices	2.22	II	V
B	Farmer Level Constraint			
1	Reluctance of farmers to participate	2.13	I	VII
2	Conflict among farmer	1.72	VI	XVIII
3	Strict and hectic schedule	1.80	V	XVI
4	Difference in opinion among member farmers	2.05	II	IX
5	Less interest by women farmers to participate in FFS	1.92	IV	XIV
6	Lack of regular marketing facilities	2.03	III	X
7	Gender bias	1.47	VII	XIX
C	Institutional/Infrastructural Constraints			
1	Unavailability of inputs	2.00	II	XII
2	Poor interaction among extension worker and farmer	1.88	IV	XV
3	Lack of regular visit by agricultural personnel	2.23	I	IV
4	Net connectivity	1.97	III	XIII
5	Power supply	1.73	V	XVII
D	Economic Constraints			
1	Untimely release of fund	2.27	I	II
2	Higher cost of inputs	2.25	II	III
3	Complex procedure in getting loan	2.20	III	VI

Institutional/Infrastructural constraints' faced by the farmers were: Lack of regular visit by agricultural personnel (I), unavailability of inputs (II), net connectivity (III), poor interaction among extension worker and farmer (IV), and power supply (V).

Economical constraints faced by the farmers were: Untimely release of fund (I), higher cost of inputs (II) and complex procedure in getting loan (III).

Suggestions from the farmers to overcome the constraints faced while attending Farmer Field School

An attempt was also made to seek suggestions from farmers to overcome the constraints faced while attending Farmer Field School. The farmers were requested to offer their valuable suggestions against difficulties faced by them in attending FFS. The suggestions given by the farmers were collected, summarized and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Suggestions given by farmers to overcome the constraints faced by them while attending Farmer Field School n=60

Sr. No.	Suggestions	MS	Rank
1	In FFS, latest technical guidance should be provided to the farmers on various aspects of farming	2.65	I
2	Easy availability of loans for purchase of machinery/implements	2.50	II
3	Timely availability of inputs/kits	2.50	II
4	Increase participation of woman farmers in FFS	2.43	III
5	FFS should promote awareness regarding the location specific cropping systems	2.42	IV
6	Timely release of funds in FFS	2.42	V
7	In FFS, organic cultivation of crops should be promoted	2.38	VI
8	Regular visit of extension personnel for technical backstopping/training	2.37	VII
9	In FFS, information related to Integrated Crop Management like field preparation, seed treatment, IPM, INM should be available at right time	2.35	VIII
10	FFS should promote indigenous traditional knowledge available with farmers	2.33	IX

The major suggestions as endorsed by the farmers to overcome their constraints in attending FFS were: In FFS, latest technical guidance should be provided to the farmers on various aspects of farming (I), Easy availability of loans for purchase of machinery/implements (II), Timely availability of inputs/kits (II), Increase participation of woman farmers in FFS (III), FFS should promote awareness regarding the location specific cropping systems (IV), Timely release of funds in FFS (V), In FFS, organic cultivation of crops should be promoted (VI), Regular visit of extension personnel for technical backstopping/training (VII), In FFS, information related to Integrated Crop Management like field preparation, seed treatment, IPM, INM should be available at right time (VIII) and FFS should promote indigenous traditional knowledge available with farmers (IX).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that constraints faced by the farmers in attending Farmer Field School were labour shortage, ranked at first place followed by untimely release of fund, higher cost of inputs, lack of regular visit by extension personnel, lack of training programme regarding improved agricultural practices were ranked at second, third, fourth and fifth place, respectively. Suggestions given by the farmer to improve their participation in Farmer Field School were; to provide latest technical guidance on various aspect of farming, ranked first followed by easy availability of loans for purchase of machinery/implements, timely availability of inputs/kits, increase participation of woman farmers in FFS and FFS should promote awareness regarding the location specific cropping systems were ranked at second, third, fourth and fifth position, respectively.

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