

Sources of Information in the Adoption of Improved Maize Cultivation Practices

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Scientific knowledge in different aspects of agriculture is accumulating at a fast rate. However, this knowledge has to be carried to the farmers taking the shortest possible time and in the most effective manner to bring about maximum benefits to the farmers and the villagers. This is possible only if there is sound sources of information which would effectively and quickly disseminate the latest technology to the farming community. To evaluate the effectiveness of various sources of information which can induce the farmers to adopt improved practices, an analysis of adoption process is necessary. Hypothetically, in adopting an improved agricultural practice, the farmer passes through a series of stages, namely, awareness, interest, trial, evaluation and adoption. Once the farmer realises the utility of an improved practice he tries to adopt it on his field. It is also revealed by the researches that in making the farmers pass through different stages from awareness to adoption, different sources of information influence them differently. With this point of view, the present study was undertaken with the objective. "To find out the sources of information perceived by the farmers regarding improved Maize Cultivation Practices".

METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken in four randomly selected villages of Raj-

samand Panchayat Samiti of Rajsamand district in Rajasthan. The name of villages are Badarda, Mohi, Soniyana and Farar. For the selection of the respondents a comprehensive list of maize growers was prepared with the help of village Extension Worker of respective villages. On the basis of this list, 30 maize growers were selected randomly from each selected village. Thus, the sample comprised of 120 respondents. For collection of data, personal interview technique was used for selected respondents.

MEASUREMENT OF SOURCES OF INFORMATION

To identify various sources of information, the respondents were asked to state the sources of information on three point continuum viz., most often, often and seldom, regarding the sources of information through which they obtained the information about improved Maize Cultivation Practices. Each source of information was assigned scores 3, 2 and 1 to most often, often and seldom, respectively to measure the intensity of sources with which they seek information.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The relative position of different sources of information contacted by the farmers for getting information about adoption of improved Maize Cultivation Practices were measured in terms of Mean

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Table 1. Overall performance of sources of information perceived by the farmers about improved maize cultivation practices.

S.No.	Sources of information	Mean Score	Rank
1.	Village Extension Worker (V.E.W.)	11.87	1
2.	Progressive farmer	2.63	2
3.	Neighbour	2.52	3
4.	Assistant Agri. Officer (AAO)	1.55	4
5.	Subject Matter Specialist (SMS)	0.77	5
6.	Village leader	0.53	6
7.	Friend	0.45	7

Score and assigning the ranks in order of preference.

Table 1 shows that, Village Extension Worker (VEW) was realised as the most important source of information with mean score 11.87 and ranked first by the farmers in the adoption of improved maize cultivation practices. Because, he is in regular contact with the maize growers. The second important source of information was progressive farmer (2.63) followed by Neighbour (2.53) and Assistant Agriculture Officer (1.55), who helped the farmers in adopting the improved maize technology. The Village Leader and Friends play less important role in communicating the information regarding the adoption of improved maize technology and ranked sixth and seventh respectively, because they were in lack of proper knowledge about improved maize cultivation practices.

The findings were in agreement with the findings of Champawat and Intodia (1970) that sources of information at the various stages of adoption of the Weedicide, the VLW was the main personal source of information at awareness, interest, evaluation, trial and adoption stages. Neighbours were also an important source of information at the awareness

and evaluation stages. Similar study conducted by the Planning Commission (1968) on HYVP, reported that out of participants adopting HYV, 58.2 per cent were approached by the VLW. Similar findings were also reported by Rajaguru and Satapathy (1971).

Individual practicewise sources of information perceived by the respondents was also worked out. For this, score value were calculated and given the ranks in order of preference of each practice was found.

The Table 2 depicts that, majority of the farmers utilized Village Extension Worker as the main source of information to adopt the improved seeds for maize cultivation. This was followed by progressive farmer and neighbour were two important sources and ranked second and third respectively. Village Leader and friends were observed to have no important role as source of information. Further, it is interesting to note that, AAO and SMS played a similar role in disseminating the information to the farmers.

Information about the seed treatment was also obtained by majority of the farmers through Village Extension Worker. Subject Matter Specialist did not play an important role as a source of information. Progressive

farmer and Village Leader perceived the similar rank (2.5) in diffusion of information regarding the seed treatment.

Sources of information regarding to recommended spacing, it was found that Village Extension Worker as the main source of information and ranked first with score value of 256. Here again, Subject Matter Specialist and Village Leader performed similar role as a source of information as in recommended spacing and friend was found to be the least important source.

Among the various sources utilised by the farmers in addition to the Village Extension Worker, progressive farmer and neighbour also helped the farmers in using proper seed rate. However, the SMS, Village Leader and friends did not play any important role in dissemination of information regarding the seed rate.

Sources of information regarding the use of fertilizers, the data shows that, VEW was the main source of information which was ranked first by the farmers with score value of 310. This was followed by the neighbour and progressive farmer who were also utilised as source of information and ranked second and third respectively. Village Leader played least important role in fertilizer application practice.

As regards the use of weedicides, it was found that farmers have neglected most of the sources of information except VEW, Progressive Farmer and AAO. These sources of information were utilized

oftenly and ranked first, second and third respectively.

Sources of information regarding the use of insecticides and fungicides, the table indicated that the VEW was considered as the first hand source of information and ranked first with score value of 215. This was followed by the AAO and neighbour and occupied the second and third ranks, respectively. Whereas, Village Leader, SMS and Friends played least role as a source of information in the use of insecticides and fungicides in maize crop.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that, Village Extension Worker was found to be the most important source of information in the adoption of new maize technology followed by progressive farmer and neighbour. It is, therefore, recommended that the services of Village Extension Worker be made available to all the farmers as well as the VEW may be linked directly to various sources of information so that their knowledge is kept up-to-date. In such areas, there must be an ideal demonstration farms to be run on a cooperative basis or by voluntary organizations so that VLW, Progressive Farmers, Village Leaders may have better practical exposure to such farm to acquire new technology for better dissemination of information among the maize grower.

(References contd. on next page)

Table 2. Sources of information for adoption of improved Maize Cultivation Practices.

Sources of Information	IMPROVED PRACTICES													
	Use of improved seeds		Seed treatment		Recomm- ended spacing		Recomm- ended seed rate		Fertilizer application		Use of weedicide		Use of insecticide and fungicides	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
1. Village Extension Worker	315	1	33	1	256	1	250	1	310	1	16	1	215	1
2. Progressive Farmer	92	2	8	2.5	56	2	58	2	70	3	8	2	23	4
3. Neighbour	58	3	5	4	55	3	39	3	120	2	0	0	25	3
4. Asstt. Agri. Officer(AAO)	43	4.5	2	6	28	4	17	4	28	4	6	3	62	2
5. Subject Matter Specialist (SMS)	43	4.5	0	0	16	5.5	12	5	19	5	0	0	2	6.5
6. Village Leader	16	6	8	2.5	16	5.5	10	6	5	7	0	0	8	5
7. Friend	12	7	4	5	9	7	8	7	18	6	0	0	2	6.5

38

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"If you give a man fish, he will eat once,
If you teach a man to fish, he will eat for the rest of his life.
If you are thinking a year ahead, sow seed,
If you are thinking ten years ahead, plant a tree,
If you are thinking a hundred years ahead, educate the people.
By sowing seed, you will harvest once,
By planting a tree, you will harvest ten fold,
By educating people you will harvest one hundred fold."

— *Kaun-tsu, 3rd-4th Century, B.C.*