Credibility of information sources as accorded by cotton growers in relation to integrated weed management practices

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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out in Vadodara district of Gujarat state with specific objective to explore the relative credibility of information sources as accorded by the cotton growers, which revealed that progressive farmers achieved the first efficiency rank amongst all the eleven sources of information with 3.88 relative credibility index, the 2nd runner in the competition was farm magazine with 3.33 relative credibility index and the 3rd and 4th most credible sources of information accorded by cotton growers were friends and relatives and agro-service centre with 1.80 and 1.15 relative credibility index, respectively. Whereas, agriculture extension officer, neighbour farmer and television were most credible sources of information with 1.00, 0.97 and 0.83 relative credibility index. Hence, newspaper, Gram Sevak and Kisan Call Centre were considered as least credible sources of information by cotton growers by giving 6, 22 and 34 votes against them with 0.55, 0.28 and 0.17 relative credibility index, respectively. The looser in the competition was Kisan Call Centre.

It is generally accepted that communication is the basic step affecting changes in any aspect of clientele system. It is being said that the greater the number of information sources sought, the greater the adoption. Formal sources, informal sources and mass media plays important role in communication of agricultural technology. There are many sources of information and some would like to get information from these sources. The source preference and its credibility may differ at different stages of innovation process depending upon the socio-economic, educational and other personal characteristics of farmers (Patel, 2011). Some of the communication sources are very effective as compared to others and have their own credit worthiness in farming community. The present study has been made to identify different sources of information and their credibility for developing a suitable approach to evolve an effective communication strategy. Hence, the study was undertaken with the following objective :

To explore the relative credibility of information sources as accorded by the cotton growers.

The present study was conducted in Vadodara district of Gujarat state. 12 villages from two talukas of Vadodara district with higher potentiality of cotton cultivation were selected for the study. Ten respondents from each selected villages were selected randomly and thus total 120 farmers were selected as respondents.

Sandhu (1973) studied and compared different methods to find out credibility and arrived at conclusion that the most and least credibility index method was most efficient for measuring source credibility.

Out of given sources of information, the respondents were asked to indicate only the most and least credible source of information related to cotton cultivation. The relative credibility index was worked out with the following formula.

$$\text{Relative credibility index} = \frac{X}{Y} \times \frac{100}{N}$$

where,

X = Number of respondents who believed a source most credible

Y = Number of respondents who believed a source least credible

N = Total number of respondents.

Friends and relatives were third most credible source of information with 1.80 credibility indexes. Nine farmers (07.50 %) accorded it as the most credible source of information and four farmers (03.33 %) placed least credibility on it. It might be that due cordial relationship and frequent contacts with friends and relatives help to develop trustworthiness in friend and relatives.

Agro-service centre was also fourth important credible sources of information accorded by cotton growers with 1.15 credibility indexes, through which they got appropriate and reliable information regarding different weed management practices in general and chemical weed management in particular. Eighteen (15.00 %) accorded it as the most credible source of information and thirteen farmers (10.83 %) placed least credibility on it. It might be due to business rapport which helps to develop trustworthiness in agro-service providers.

Agriculture Extension Officer ranked fifth as credible sources of information accorded by cotton growers with 1.00 credibility index. Twelve (10.00 %) voted favouring as a most credible source, whereas ten voted as a least credible source (0.83 %).

Sixth rank was accorded by the respondents to neighbour as they got 0.97 relative credibility index. Seven (05.83 %) accorded it as the most credible source of information and six farmers (05.00 %) placed least credibility on it.

Television, the most versatile and dynamic means of mass communication in recent times has been placed at seventh efficiency rank of credibility. Seven respondents (05.83 %) each mentioned it as a most and least credible source. Time allotted for farm broad cast is little which might be the reason for lower order credibility of television.

Radio has been placed eighth in efficiency rank by the respondents. Five voted favouring radio as a most credible source, where as seven voted as a least credible source. It might be due to the fact that radio does not provide such visual effect and varieties of experience by visual sensory, appealing colour choice, providing lively scenes to believe the things and develop confidence.

Ninth efficiency rank of credibility was assigned to newspapers by the respondents as four respondents perceived newspapers as a most credible source and six respondents perceived newspaper as a least credible source. Space allocation for farm information in general and integrated weed management in particular was very less, which might be the possible explanation of this type of results.

Village level worker got last but one rank in efficiency. Five respondents (04.16 %) opined it as most credible source and twenty two respondents (18.33 %) mentioned it as least credible source. Most of the posts at grass root level, extension functionary are vacant which resulted into less frequency of contact with VLW and their low technical capabilities might have compelled the respondents to have voting against them.

The looser in the competition was Kisan Call Centre. Only seven (05.83 %) accepted it as the most credible source whereas thirty four (28.33 %) of the respondents considered it as the least credible source. Kisan Call Centre perhaps might be the most conducive in using but it is a new entrant in recent times as the source of information and generally respondents had not utilized properly yet might be the possible explanation of this type of result.

Conclusion :

From the forgoing explanation, it could be concluded that progressive farmers, farm magazines, friends and relatives, agro-service centres were most credible sources of information because of their reorganization, two way communication mode, timeliness and easy availability. Newspaper, Gram Sevak and

Sr. No	Information sources	Frequency and percentage		Relative credibility index	Rank
		Most	Least		
1.	Progressive farmer	14 (11.66)	3 (02.50)	3.88	I
2.	Farm magazine	32 (26.66)	8 (6.66)	3.33	II
3.	Friends and relatives	9 (07.50)	4 (03.33)	1.80	III
4.	Agro service centre	18 (15.00)	13 (10.83)	1.15	IV
5.	Agriculture extension officer	12 (10.00)	10 (0.83)	1.00	V
6.	Neighbour farmer	7 (05.83)	6 (05.00)	0.97	VI
7.	Television	7 (05.83)	7 (05.83)	0.83	VII
8.	Radio	5 (04.16)	7 (05.83)	0.59	VIII
9.	News papers	4 (03.33)	6 (05.00)	0.55	IX
10.	Gram Sevak	5 (04.16)	22 (18.33)	0.28	X
11.	Kisan Call Centre	7 (05.83)	34 (28.33)	0.17	XI

Table 1 : Credibility of information sources as accorded by the cotton growers (n=120)

Kisan Call Centre were least credible sources of information as perceived by the cotton growers.

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