

Information source use by the farm scientists

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ABSTRACT

Modernization of agriculture greatly depends on creation of farm technology, but full use of available technology is not being made in many areas of the country. The farm scientists *viz.*, Junior Research Assistants, Senior Research Assistants, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors working at the Central Campus of the University, Agricultural Colleges, N.A.R.P. headquarters and main research stations under the jurisdiction of the university was the universe of the investigation. At overall level 73.00 per cent of farm scientists have sometimes used personal letters and majority (63.27 per cent) always used the self observation methods as individual source. The majority (64.00 per cent) of farm scientists always used group contact sources like discussion with colleagues and discussion with farmers and sometimes used training class, seminars/workshops/symposia and professional meetings. The print media *viz.*; extension publications, newspapers and research journals were always used by majority (70 per cent) of farm scientists

INTRODUCTION

Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, Rahuri in Maharashtra have been established with the three-fold objective of research, education and extension. Modernization of agriculture greatly depends on creation of farm technology, but full use of available technology is not being made in many areas of the country. By and large, the results remain unused in laboratories and research stations. Only a fraction of this useful information reaches the farmers. Besides this, agricultural technology is changing at an increasing rate. It is necessary to select quick and effective system of communication to keep farmers in tune with these research technologies. Individual and group contact methods such as telephone calls, personal letters, demonstrations, meetings as well as print and electronic media such as farm publications, newspaper, posters, radio, T.V., films are widely used for communicating the new technologies to the farming community. These activities have made a decisive impact on the agricultural, socio-economic and psychological conditions of the farmers. Hence, it was thought worthwhile to assess how information seeking behaviour of the farm scientists is in obtaining information for transfer of technology.

METHODOLOGY

The farm scientists *viz.*, Junior Research Assistants, Senior Research Assistants,

Assistant Professors, Associate Professors and Professors working at the Central Campus of the University, Agricultural Colleges, N.A.R.P. headquarters and main research stations under the jurisdiction of the university was the universe of the investigation. At present, there are 754 farm scientists working under the jurisdiction of the University. With the help of the list so prepared thirty per cent farm scientists were selected on a random basis from each of the selected college/research station, thus, making the total number of respondents 226. Information seeking behaviour refers to all the activities performed by the farm scientists for acquiring technical and scientific information related to technologies from various sources. Information seeking behaviour of farm scientists was studied by finding out the channels, sources used by them. For measuring information seeking behaviour method developed by Veerasamy *et al.* (1992) with some modification was used. The farm scientists were asked to give their responses on sources and channels used by them for acquiring the information along with frequency of use and they were grouped in the three categories.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For studying the information source use of the farm scientists they were exposed to five information sources use. They were asked to indicate always and sometimes sources used

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by them in getting the farm information for transfer of technology.

Information source use of farm scientists:

The data in respect of the various channels/media used by the farm scientists for seeking the scientific agricultural information are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the farm scientist according to information source use by the farm scientist

Sr. No.	Category	Respondents (n = 226)	
		Number	Percentage
1.	Low (upto 25 score)	34	15.04
2.	Medium (26 to 32 score)	121	53.54
3.	High (33 and above score)	71	31.42
	Total	226	100.00

It is observed from Table 1 that more than half (53.54 per cent) of the farm scientists had medium level of information seeking followed by high level of information seeking nearly one-third (31.42 per cent) and very few (15.04 per cent) farm scientists had low level of information seeking. This shows that majority of the farm scientists had medium level of information seeking at their work place in University from individual source, group sources and mass media sources. Distribution of farm scientists according to channel/media use information seeking behaviour is presented in Table 2.

Individual sources used by farm scientists:

It is observed from Table 2 that nearly two-third (63.27 per cent) of farm scientists sometimes used extension personnel source for seeking information. More than half (56.00 per cent) of farm scientists sometimes used telephone calls and immediate supervisor as media for information input. Nearly two-third (63.27 per cent) of farm scientists always received information on scientific agriculture by self observation.

Group contact sources used by farm scientists:

Nearly two-third (64.00 per cent) of farm scientists always used group contact sources like discussion with colleagues and discussion with farmers. The more than 60.00 per cent of the farm scientists sometimes received the information on scientific agriculture mainly through training classes, seminars/ workshops/symposia and professional meetings. The group discussion and visit to demonstration/experiment sites sources were sometimes used by more than half (52.00 per cent) of farm scientists for seeking information.

Table 2: Distribution of farm scientists according to channel/media use information source use

Sr. No	Channels sources	Total (n = 226)		
		Always	Sometimes	Never
Individual sources				
1.	Telephone calls	77 (34.07)	130 (57.52)	19 (8.41)
2.	Extension personnel	69 (30.53)	143 (63.27)	14 (6.20)
3.	Self observation	143 (63.27)	74 (32.74)	9 (3.99)
4.	Immediate supervisor	66 (29.20)	126 (55.75)	34 (15.05)
Group contact				
1.	Discussion	92 (40.70)	120 (53.10)	14 (6.20)
2.	Training class	58 (25.66)	155 (68.58)	14 (6.20)
3.	Visit to demonstration/experiment sites	99 (43.81)	117 (51.77)	10 (4.42)
4.	Seminars/workshops/symposia	66 (29.20)	152 (67.26)	8 (3.54)
5.	Professional meeting	39 (17.26)	136 (60.18)	51 (22.56)
6.	Discussion with colleagues	148 (65.49)	66 (29.20)	12 (5.31)
7.	Discussion with farmers	144 (63.71)	72 (31.86)	10 (4.42)
Print Media				
1.	Extension publication	152 (67.26)	62 (27.43)	12 (5.31)
2.	Newspapers	173 (76.55)	48 (21.24)	5 (2.21)
3.	Research journals	159 (70.36)	66 (29.20)	1 (0.14)
4.	Text Books/ Farm magazines/others	117 (51.77)	95 (42.04)	14 (6.20)
Electronic Media				
1.	Farm radio broadcast	100 (44.25)	110 (48.67)	16 (7.08)
2.	Farm telecast	70 (30.97)	130 (57.52)	26 (11.51)
Other sources				
1.	Agricultural exhibition	83 (36.73)	120 (53.10)	23 (10.17)
2.	Farmer's rallies	74 (32.74)	124 (54.87)	28 (12.39)

Print media used by the farm scientists:

The print media *viz.*, extension publication, newspapers and research journals is always used by more than two third of farm scientists for information input. More than one half (52.00 per cent) of farm scientists always used text books/ farm magazines for seeking information.

Electronic media:

About one-half of farm scientists sometimes used farm radio broadcast and farm telecast to receive the information on scientific agriculture.

Other sources used by the farm scientists:

The agriculture exhibitions and farmers' rallies were sometimes used by more than half of farm scientists for seeking information for disseminating the agril. technology. It can be concluded that farm scientists have always given more emphasis on print media for information seeking. Whereas, they have given preference to receive information through the media such as group contact, individual sources, electronic media and other sources. The findings of the present study are similar to those of Jawahar (1993), Santiprabha (1994), Veerasamy *et al.* (1992) and Mali (2004).

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