Journal of Pharmacognosy and Phytochemistry

Available online at www.phytojournal.com

E-ISSN: 2278-4136
P-ISSN: 2349-8234
JPP 2019; 8(2): 468-472
Received: 26-01-2019
Accepted: 28-02-2019

Uaday Kumar Watti
Assistant Librarian, DKS College of Agriculture & Research Station, Bhatapara, Chhattisgarh, India

Corresponding Author:
Uaday Kumar Watti
Assistant Librarian, DKS College of Agriculture & Research Station, Bhatapara, Chhattisgarh, India

Study on utilization of agriculture extension personal to obtaining agricultural information by the farmers of Chhattisgarh state

Uaday Kumar Watti

Abstract
The study aims at discover the extent to use of agriculture extension personal among farmers in the Chhattisgarh state. Chhattisgarh state having 27 districts and out of that 400 farmers from nine districts were selected for the study. Simple random technique was used to select respondents from the population. Data indicated that majority of the respondents (95.25%) got agricultural related information from rural agriculture extension officers, followed by agricultural input dealers (92%). The data further reveal that majority of the respondents (98.5%) never met the non government organisation for getting information, while 92.5 and 62.75 per cent were never sought information from other sources and subject matter specialist, respectively. The data express that majority of the respondents (81.50%) were participated in extension programmes, while 18.50 per cent were not participated in extension programmes. It was noted that 13.25 per cent of the respondents regularly participated in kisan mela, followed by field tour (8.50%), The majority of the respondents (62.12%) were participated upto two training programme, which was organised by agriculture department, followed by krishi vigyan kendra (35.86%), while 11.62 per cent of the respondents were participated 3-4 times in training programs, which was organised by agriculture department, followed by gram panchayat (4.04%).

Keywords: Extension personal; Extension programmes; Training programmes

Introduction
Dissemination of information about new technologies is very crucial so that the farmer is able to make use of the latest agricultural developments. A gap between research findings and the needs of farmers is also widening in spite of modern era of IT technology to be successful; it should serve a useful purpose to the end-user so that they are completely satisfied with the technology. The main objective of Agriculture Extension Services or AES is to empower the farmers to make wise decisions with the support of transmitting the latest technical know-how to farmers. Besides this, the AESs also focuses on enhancing farmers' knowledge about crop techniques and helping them to increase productivity. This is done through need based training, farm visits, on farm trials, kisan mela, kisan clubs, advisory bulletins, and the like. Development in the agriculture sector is never possible without the proper extension of agricultural technology but in India the ratio between an extension agent and farmer is merely 1: 2000. Participation in the extension programme is always useful for farmers to gather important information on agricultural-based development. 'Training plays an important role in human resources development or capacity building. Training is not only the idea of knowledge received, but that of such knowledge digested through application, drill and discipline'.(Chole, 2010).

Objective of the study
The study was conducted based on the following objectives:
1. To study the utilization of Agriculture extension personal by the respondents for obtaining information.
2. To study the participation of the farmers in different extension programs & training for obtaining information of the latest agriculture technology by the farmers

Methodology
Simple random technique was used to select sampling for the population. Nine districts were chosen from 3 agro-climatic zones as the population of this region is primarily consisting of farmers. A total of 400 farmers engaged in agricultural activities in Chhattisgarh were randomly selected as respondents to the study. Data were collected through personal interview and face to face meeting with each individual by using a structured interview schedule.

Result was analyzed quantitatively by using appropriate statistical tools and presented in tabular format.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their family size

(n=400)

S. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Small family (upto 4 members)	79	19.75
2	Medium family (5-10 members)	271	67.75
3	Large family (more than 10 members)	50	12.50
	Total	400	100.00

The data regarding the size of family given in the Table 1 depict that more than two-third (67.75%) of the respondents belonged to a medium size of family with 5-10 members, followed by 19.75 per cent belonging to small family size of family with upto 4 members, while 12.50 per cent belonged to big family with more than 10 members in their family. From the above findings, it may be concluded that about 80 per cent of the surveyed respondents belonged to medium to large size of family. This finding reflects that rural people still prefer to live in joint family.

Table 2: Information obtained by respondents from agricultural extension personal

(n=400)

S. No.	Extension personal	Frequency *	Percentage
1.	Rural Agriculture Extension Officer (RAEO)	381	95.25
2.	Agriculture scientist	173	43.25
3.	Subject Matter Specialist (SMS)	149	37.25
4.	Non Governmental Organization (NGO)	6	1.50
5.	Seller of agriculture product (Input dealers)	368	92
6.	Other (Company sales man)	30	7.50

*Frequencies are based on multiple responses

The extension worker is usually a technically trained person with excellent communication skills. They enjoy working with people; can deal with complex technical and social situations. A perusal of entries reported in the Table 2 indicate that majority of the respondents (95.25%) got agricultural related information from rural agriculture extension officers (RAEO), followed by agricultural input dealers (92%), agricultural scientists (43.25%), subject matter specialist (SMS) (37.25%), others *i.e.* agriculture product companies salesman (7.50%) and Non-Governmental organisations (NGO) (1.50%).

Table 3: Responses based on regularity of contact with extension personal by the respondents

(n=400)

Sr.	Extension personal	Regularity of contact											
		Daily		Weekly		Fortnightly		Monthly		2-3 times in a year		Never	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Rural Agriculture Extension Officer (RAEO)	5	1.25	133	33.25	73	18.25	92	23	78	19.5	19	4.75
2.	Agriculture scientist	0	0	1	0.25	5	1.25	25	6.25	142	35.5	227	56.75
3.	Subject Matter Specialist (SMS)	0	0	2	0.5	5	1.25	32	8	110	27.5	251	62.75
4.	Non Governmental Organization (NGO)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	1.5	394	98.5
5.	Seller of agriculture product (Input dealers)	0	0	36	9	41	10.25	175	43.75	114	28.5	32	8
6.	Others (Company sales man)	0	0	0	0	4	1	4	1	22	5.5	370	92.5

A perusal of entries reported in the Table 3 show that regularity of contact is glaringly less as discerned through the obtained data. It was observed that very few numbers of the respondents (1.25%) daily contacted with rural agricultural extension officers for gathering information. It was also found that majority of the respondents (33.25%) weekly contacted with rural agricultural extension officers, followed by input dealers (9%), subject matter specialist (0.5%) and agricultural scientist (0.25%). However, majority of the respondents (18.25%) fortnight contacted with rural agricultural extension officers, followed by input dealers (10.25%), subject matter specialist (1.25%), agricultural scientist (1.25%) and others such as company salesman (1%). It was also noted that majority of the respondents (43.75%) monthly contacted with input dealers, followed by rural agricultural extension officers (23%), subject matter specialist (8%), agricultural scientist (6.25%) and other such as company salesman (1%). While, majority of the respondents (35.5%) contacted 2-3 times in a year with agriculture scientist, followed by input dealers (28.5%), subject matter specialist (27.5%), rural agricultural extension officers (19.5%), other such as company salesman (5.5%) and NGO (1.5%). The data also reveal that majority of the respondents (98.5%) never met the non government organisation for getting information, while 92.5, 62.75, 56.75, 8 and 4.75 per cent were never sought information from other sources, subject matter specialist, agricultural scientist, sellers of agricultural products and rural agricultural extension officers respectively.

In this context, it may be concluded that most of the respondents frequently contacted with rural agricultural extension officers as compared to other agriculture extension personal. The finding also highlights the fact that the farmers are not taking interest to seek information from various extension personnel, which are appointed for dissemination of agricultural knowledge to door steps of farmers. Thus, the farmers should be motivated to frequent contact with these extension personals.

Table 4: Credibility of information which gathered from agricultural extension personal

Sr.	Agriculture Extension personal	Level of Credibility					
		Fully		Partial		Nil	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Rural Agriculture Extension Officers (N=381)	365	95.8	16	4.2	0	0
2.	Agriculture Scientists (n=173)	169	97.7	4	2.3	0	0
3.	Subject Matter Specialist (n=149)	147	98.7	2	1.3	0	0
4.	Non Government Organisation (n=06)	3	50	3	50	0	0
5.	Seller of Agricultural Product (n=368)	320	86.9	48	13.1	0	0
6.	Others (n=30)	14	46.66	16	53.33	0	0

The credibility of information which was obtained from various agricultural extensions personal is shown in the Table 4. It was found that most of the respondents (98.7%) believed that subject matter specialists provided fully true information related to agricultural activities, followed by agriculture scientists (97.7%), rural agricultural extension officers (95.8%), seller of agricultural products (86.9%), NGOs (50%) and others agricultural personal (46.66%). Whereas, majority of the respondents (53.33%) believed that others sources provided information were partial credible related to agriculture information, followed by NGOs (50%), seller of agricultural products (13.1%), RAEOs (4.2%), agriculture scientists (2.3%) and SMS (1.3%).

From the above findings, it may be concluded that most of the farmers have great confidence on SMSs guidance as compare to other extension personal. However, it was also noted that above 60 per cent of the respondents never contacted with SMSs. In this regards, thus the farmers should be motivated to frequently contact with the SMSs, so that they can acquire credible knowledge from them.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of participation in different extension programmes

(n=400)

S. No.	participation in different extension programmes	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Participated	326	81.50
2.	Not Participated	74	18.50
	Total	400	100.00

The distribution of the respondents in terms of participation in extension program is being presented in the Table 5. The data express that majority of the respondents (81.50%) were participated in extension programmes, while 18.50 per cent were not participated in extension programmes.

The farmer's participation in extension programme may be useful for gather important information on agricultural based development. The results of the study show the favourable responses of respondents towards participation in various extension programmes.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their participation in number of different extension programmes

(n=326)

S. No.	Number of Extension programme	Frequency	Percentage
1	One	64	19.63
2	Two	67	20.55
3	Three	89	27.30
4	Four	61	18.71
5	Five	45	13.80
	Total	326	100

The distribution of respondents in terms of participating in number of extension programmes is being presented in table 6. It was noted that 27.30 per cent of the respondent's participated three extension programmes, followed by 20.55 per cent were attended two extension programs, 19.63 per cent attended only one extension programs, 18.71 per cent were attended four extension programs and 13.80 per cent were attended five extension programs.

From the above results, it may be concluded that about 40 per cent of the respondents participated only 1-2 extension programme, so that efforts should be made to motivate farmers to actively participate more extension programs for enhancing their agricultural knowledge which will ultimately enhance their produce as well as standard of living also.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to their frequency of participation in various extension programmes

(n=400)

S.No.	Programme	Regularly		Sometimes		Never	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Field tour	34	8.50	160	40.00	206	51.50
2.	Field demonstration	32	8.00	191	47.75	177	44.25
3.	Kisan Mela	53	13.25	238	59.50	109	27.25
4.	Farmers seminar	21	5.25	133	33.25	246	61.50
5.	Agriculture awards programme	13	3.25	58	14.50	329	82.25
6.	Others	00	0.00	01	0.25	399	99.75

A perusal of entries reported in the Table 7 reveal that 13.25 per cent of the respondents regularly participated in kisan mela, followed by field tour (8.50%), field demonstration (8%), farmers seminar (5.25%) and agriculture awards programme (3.25%), whereas 59.50 per cent of the respondents sometimes participation in kisan mela, followed by field demonstration (47.75%), field tour programme (40%), farmers seminar (33.25%), agriculture awards

programme (14.50%) and others programme (0.25%). It was also observed that 99.75 per cent of the respondents never participated in others programme, followed by agriculture awards programme (82.25%), farmers seminar (61.50%), field tour programme (51.50%), field demonstration (44.25%) and kisan mela (27.25%) (fig. 1).

The results clearly indicate that most of the respondents show low interest to participate various extension programmes which are run by the government and other agencies. The main objective of Agriculture Extension Services or AES's is to transmit latest technical knowledge and focus on enhancing farmer's knowledge about crop management techniques and helping them to increase their productivity. This is done through by imparting training courses, farm visits, on farm trials, kisan mela, kisan clubs, seminars, advisory bulletins *etc*.

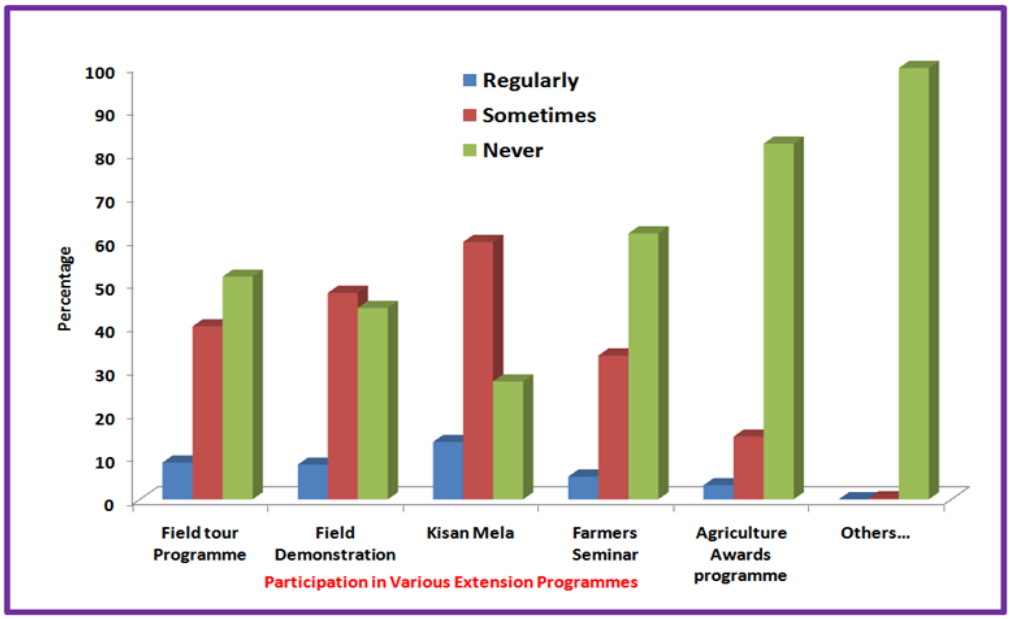

Fig 1: Distribution of respondents according to their frequency of participation in various extension programmes

Table 8: Distribution of respondents on the basis of their participation in training programmes

(n=400)

S. No.	Participation in training programme	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Participated	198	49.50
2.	Not Participated	202	50.50
Total		400	100.00

The distribution of selected respondents on the basis of their participating in various training programme on modern agricultural techniques is presented in the Table 8. The data express that out of the total 400 respondents, 49.50 per cent of them were participated in training programme which was organised to impart knowledge of agricultural techniques, while 50.50 per cent were not participated in any training programme.

It shows that almost 50 per cent of the respondents do not show the interest to obtain information of agricultural related techniques through training programme. The result clearly shows that farmers are not attracted or they might not know about the programs which organised with a purpose to impart knowledge regarding agricultural techniques. Hence efforts should be made in this regard to create awareness among farmers regarding the benefit of these programs.

Table 9: Distribution of the respondents according to participation in various training programmes

(n=198)

S. No.	Training centre	Number of training					
		Upto 2 time		3-4 times		More than 4 times	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK)	71	35.86	6	3.03	2	1.01
2.	Agriculture department	123	62.12	23	11.62	4	2.02
3.	State agriculture training academy	01	0.51	0	0.00	0	0.00
4.	Non-governmental organization	01	0.51	0	0.00	0	0.00
5.	Gram panchayat	45	22.73	8	4.04	12	6.06
6.	NABARD	08	4.04	0	0.00	0	0.00
7.	Others	09	4.55	1	0.51	0	0.00

The data demonstrated in the Table 9 show that majority of the respondents (62.12%) were participated upto 2 times in training programme, which was organised by agriculture department, followed by Krishi Vigyan Kendra (35.86%), gram panchayat (22.73%), others (4.55%), NABARD (4.04%), state agriculture training academy and non government organisation (0.51%) each. It was also noted that 11.62 per cent of the respondents were participated 3-4 times

in training programs, which was organised by agriculture department, followed by gram panchayat (4.04%), KVK (3.03%) and other agency (0.51%).

The data further reveal that 6.06 per cent of the respondents were participated more than 4 times in training program, which was organized by gram panchayat, followed by agriculture department (2.02%) and KVK (1.01%).From the above finding it may be concluded that agricultural departments are most preferred as training institution by farmers to obtained training.

Conclusion

The findings highlight that the farmers were not showing interest to seek information from various extension personnel, which are appointed for dissemination of agricultural knowledge to door steps of farmers. Thus, now it is great responsibility of the extension personal to increase frequent of contact with the farmers as well as motivate them to share their problems and seek answer to the problems. It was also revealed that majority of the farmers were not show in interest to obtain information through training programmes also. So there is utmost need for increasing awareness amongst the farmers regarding the importance of the information sources which are available within their surrounding and are meant for them. Until and unless the farmers, who are the clientele of the latest agricultural technology information, does not utilize the AEPs who are there to serve them. The need of the hour is to make the farmers aware of the availability and importance of the AEPs.

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