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Information Source Utilization Pattern of Rainfed Ground Nut Growers in Ananthapur District of Andhra Pradesh, India

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A B S T R A C T

The present study was conducted in Ananthapur district of Andhra Pradesh to study the profile characteristics and Information Source Utilization Pattern of rain fed groundnut farmers. Ananathapur farmers are largely dependent on drought-prone, rain-fed agriculture; and mostly a single crop of groundnut is sown in about 8 lakh ha under such harsh and agro climatic conditions. Of its geographical area of 19, 13,000 ha, (largest in AP) 10, 00,000 ha are rain-fed. The present state of A.P has totally about 40 lakh ha under rain fed cultivation and 25% of it is in Ananathapur district. Only about 1, 08,000 ha are irrigated, that too mostly through undependable ground water fed tube wells. This is the only drought-prone district with a meager 10% of cultivated area under irrigation and a large 90% under rainfed farming. Main objective of present study was to bring out the profile characteristics and extent of use of different information sources by the rainfed ground nut farmers. Respondents were entirely rain fed groundnut farmers selected by using simple random sampling technique. Quantitative data were collected by using predesigned interview schedule The study revealed that the majority of the respondents were middle aged (65%), primary school educated (55.33%), marginal farmers (46.67%), had medium farming experience (70%), had low annual income (41.67%), medium cosmopoliteness (63.33%), medium social participation (77.50%), medium innovativeness (40%), medium scientific orientation (43.33%), medium mass media exposure (57.50%), medium extension contact (41.67%) medium risk orientation (53.33%), and medium management orientation (56.67%). Whereas majority of the respondents used friends, neighbors, progressive farmers and input dealers as localite source, agricultural scientists, Mandal Agricultural officer, Agricultural Extension officer and agricultural research stations as cosmopolite sources and Television and farm journals as mass media sources of information for seeking farm information on rainfed groundnut farming.

Introduction

Groundnut is the principal vegetable oil crops in India and occupies the top slot in terms of area as well as production of total oilseeds in the country. Groundnut is called as the 'King' of oilseeds. It is one of the most important food and cash crops of our country. Groundnut is also called as wonder nut and poor men's cashew nut. It is commercially grown between

40°N and 40°S latitude. Globally, the crop is raised on 26.4 million hectares with a total production of 37.1 million MT. The average productivity is 1400 kg/ha. The annual global export of groundnuts is of two million MT valued at 2,600 million US $ (Anonymous, 2017). Utilization of improved agricultural technology by the dryland farmers, to a large extent, depends upon the effective sources of information and channels to which they are generally exposed directly or indirectly. Government of India initiating more no of policies and programs in relation to development of farmers in general and rain fed farmers specifically. The problems in agricultural development in India, is not the availability of improved agricultural technologies, but converting them into production accomplishments. Therefore, transfer of agricultural technology to the farmers is important. Among the various communication sources that play important role in providing information support to the farmers. Interpersonal sources and channels are more important for every cultivation operations. The mass media are quick economical but lack crucial elements of empathy and feedback which are apparent in face to face situation. Adoption of improved package of practices by the farmers varies from farmer to farmer depending upon their situation and availability of information sources to them. Individuals tend to use different communication and media for obtaining the technology. Keeping this in view, the present investigation was carried out to study the sources of information used by the dryland farmers about recommended package of practices of dryland crops and to evaluate frequency of the information sources and their utilization by the farmers.

Materials and Methods

The present study was conducted in Ananathapur district of Andhra Pradesh where major cultivable area under rainfed and dryland agriculture. Singanamala and Bukkaraya Samudrammandals were selected for study, from each Mandal two villages Viz. chakkarayapeta and Peravali in Singanamala Mandal and Reddipalli and Venkatapuram in Bukkaraya Samudram Mandal were selected purposively. From these two selected villages a sample of 120farmers who were involved in dryland farming were selected by using simple random sample. The frequency of using information source by the respondents had been analyzed to see how frequently they used the information sources. The frequency of contact with various sources/channels by the farmers was measured on four continuums. The response continuum was regularly, frequently, rarely and never and they were assigned scores of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The structured interview schedule was developed and was pre-tested on non-sampled respondents. The interview was conducted personally by the investigator with the farmers individually. The data thus collected were processed, tabulated and analyzed by using frequency, percentages, mean weight score and ranking.

Results and Discussion

Profile Characteristics of the Rainfed Ground Nut Growers

It is clear from Table 1 that majority (65.00%) of the rainfed groundnut farmers belonged to middle age category followed by old (19.17%) and young age (15.83%) categories. The possible reason might be that middle age and old age farmers were motivated to cultivate Ground nut by adopting latest production technologies and obtaining good returns. Another reason might be that most of the youth move out in search of white collar jobs and engaged in Government jobs, various business activities and other profitable occupations in pursuit of greater secured life

than farming. These findings are more or less similar with the results of Kalyan (2011) and Kirti *et al.,* (2016)

Results presented in Table 1revealed 53.33 per cent of the respondents had education level of primary school followed by high school (18.33%), illiterate (13.33%), higher secondary (9.17%), and college education (5.83%) categories. It could be understood from the table that majority of the rainfed groundnut farmers had primary school level of education followed by high school, illiterate, higher secondary and college level education.

From Table 1 it is evident that majority (70%) of the rainfed groundnut farmers had medium levels of Farming experience followed by low (17.50%) and high experience (12.50 %) in farming. It could be observed from the table that majority of the respondents had medium level of farming experience followed by those having low and high levels of experiences in rainfed groundnut farming. This might be due to the fact that most of the respondents belonged to middle age category, young generation was interested in agriculture and rainfed groundnut farming. Hence most of the respondents were falling under medium level of farming experience. These findings are similar with the results of Kalyan (2011) and Thiyagarajan (2011).

A glance at the Table 1 indicated that, 46.67 per cent of the respondents were small farmers followed by marginal (38.33%) and big (15.00%) farmers. Majority of the respondents were small farmers followed by marginal and big farmers. The possible reason for this might be that in the recent times the system of land fragmentation among the family members. These findings are line with results of Arathy (2011).

From Table 1 it is evident that majority (88.33%) of the respondents were having Agriculture as main occupation followed by Business and Agriculture (5.83%), Caste occupation and Agriculture (4.17%) and Services and Agriculture (1.67%). This might be due to the fact that most of the respondents belonged to middle and old age category were cultivating rainfed groundnut crop as a routine practice as they are having sufficient and assured irrigation sources. Hence very low percent of respondents were involved in other business activities.

The data furnished in the Table 1 revealed that a little more than half of the respondents belonged to high level (50.83%) of annual income followed by medium level (27.50%) and low level of annual income (21.67%). It could be observed that majority of the respondents had high level of annual income followed by those having medium and low levels of annual incomes in rainfed groundnut farming. This might be due to the fact that most of the respondents belonged to agriculture as main occupation because there are practicing mechanized agriculture from soil preparation to harvesting stages besides there are following crop wise scientific recommendations, regular contacts with departmental official as well as research scientists therefore most of the respondents were falling under high level of annual income status.

A perusal of the data from the Table 1 revealed that 35.00 per cent of the respondents had Medium social participation followed by low (33.33%) and high (31.67%) level of social participation. It was observed that majority of the farmers were having Medium level of social participation because of their membership in at least one of the social organizations. The respondents were also attending social meetings to some extent moreover they engaged and devoted much time on agriculture due to larger land holdings. Hence most of the respondents had

Medium level followed by low social participation. Another possible reason for this might be that number of farmers involved in farming activities season by season (Kharif and Rabi seasons) throughout the year and not been found time to take part in social organizations actively.

The data furnished in the Table 1 revealed that a little less than two fifth of the respondents belonged to medium level (42.50%) of extension contact followed by low (29.16%) and high (28.34 %) level of extension contact.

The possible reason for this might be that majority of the respondents being middle and old aged were unable to contact extension personnel frequently due to lack of time and it is obvious that most of the farmers having poor networking with agricultural departmental officials and agricultural research scientists and hence they were unable to reach the extension agencies.

It was observed that the agricultural officer was the main extension personnel to whom farmers had frequent extension contact. This result is in agreement with Naik (2006), Arathy (2011) and Yuvaraj *et al.*, (2015).

From Table 1 it could be seen that, a little less than two fifth of the respondents belonged to Medium level (47.50%) of mass media exposure followed by high (27.50%) and low (25.00 %) level of mass media exposure. This trend might be due to the fact that majority of the respondents were medium farmers with medium level of education. This is the reason why they did not pay much attention to print media despite the availability at lower rate. Another reason is that they are not aware about the ICTs like internet, information kiosk and call centers etc., Therefore they showed meager interest towards print media, educational films, Rythusadassus, Agricultural exhibitions and lessons from audio/ video cassettes etc. these results are line with the findings of Gopinath (2005).

A glance at the Table 1 indicated that, a little less than three fifth of the respondents belonged to high level (69.17%) of cosmopoliteness followed by Medium (19.17%) and low (11.66%) levels of cosmopoliteness. It could be observed that majority of the respondents had high level of Cosmopoliteness followed by those having Medium and low levels of Cosmopoliteness. The possible reason might be that majority of the rainfed groundnut farmers were big farmers, hence they had frequent access to channels outside their village to get the information related to technical, non-technical and government policies/schemes about rainfed groundnut crop. Because of their interest on agriculture pushing them to know the recent and updated information on rainfed groundnut cultivation in consultation with agricultural department officials, agricultural scientists, seed corporation officials, revenue department officials, civil supplies agencies, agro industries and with bank officials.

Findings from Table 1 showed that, a little more than half of the respondents belonged to high level (55.84%) of innovativeness followed by low (30.83%) and Medium (13.33%) levels of innovativeness. The possible reasons might be that majority of the farmers involved in rainfed groundnut farming were of middle age category and big farmers who are holding larger land holdings having action plan on agriculture.

The big farmers were creative and innovative in their ideas and intern adopts latest agricultural production technologies in order to obtain high productivity and profitability. Another reason might be that they are eager to know the latest agricultural scientific technologies through various channels due to their innovative ideology.

Table.1 Distribution of respondents according to their profile characteristics

(n=120)

Sl. NO	VARIABLE	CATEGORY	FREQUENCE	PERCENTAGE
1	Age	Young	19	15.83
		Middle	78	65.00
		Old	23	19.17
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
2	Education	Illiterate	16	13.33
		Primary school	64	53.33
		High school	22	18.33
		Higher secondary	11	9.17
		College education	7	5.83
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
3	Farm size	Marginal farmer	46	38.33
		Small farmer	56	46.67
		Big farmer	18	15.00
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
4	Farming experience	Low farming experience	21	17.50
		Medium farming experience	84	70.00
		High farming experience	15	12.50
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
5	Annual Income	Low (up to Rs 1 lakh)	50	41.67
		Medium (Rs 1-2 lakh)	35	29.17
		High (above Rs 2 lakh)	35	29.17
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
6	Cosmopoliteness	Low cosmopoliteness	32	26.67
		Medium cosmopoliteness	76	63.33
		High cosmopoliteness	12	10.00
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
7	Social participation	Low Social participation	13	10.83
		Medium Social participation	93	77.50
		High Social participation	14	11.67
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
8	Extension contact	Low extension contact	32	26.67
		Medium extension contact	50	41.67
		High extension contact	38	31.67
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
9	Innovativeness	Low innovativeness	40	33.33
		Medium innovativeness	48	40.00
		High innovativeness	32	26.67
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
10	Scientific orientation	Low scientific orientation	36	30.00
		Medium scientific orientation	52	43.33
		High scientific orientation	32	26.67
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
11	Risk orientation	Low risk orientation	19	15.83
		Medium risk orientation	64	53.33
		High risk orientation	37	30.83
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
12	Management orientation	Low management orientation	34	28.33
		Medium management orientation	68	56.67
		High management orientation	18	15.00
		Total	**120**	**100.00**
13	Mass media exposure	Low mass media exposure	24	20.00
		Medium mass media exposure	69	57.50
		High mass media exposure	27	22.50
		Total	**120**	**100.00**

Table.2 Frequency of information source utilization of dryland farmers (n=120)

Sl. NO	Information Source	Frequency of use				WMS	Rank
		Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Never		
A	**LOCALITE SOURCES**						
1	Neighbors	60	10	13.3	16.7	3.1	II
2	Friends	67	20	16.7	30	3.9	I
3	Progressive Farmers	47	20	13.3	20	2.9	III
4	Input dealers	33	20	13.3	33.3	2.5	IV
5	Village revenue officer	40	20	13.3	26.7	2.3	V
B	COSMOPOLITE SOURCES						
1	Agriculture extension officer	20	20	6.7	0	3.6	I
2	Agriculture officer	60	23	10	6.7	3.3	II
3	Agriculture Director	27	20	13.3	40	2	IV
4	Agriculture research stations	40	13	26.7	20	2.7	III
C	MASS MEDIA SOURCES						
1	News paper	47	20	16.7	16.7	3	III
2	Television	80	6.7	13.3	0	3.6	I
3	Agricultural exhibition	40	30	13.3	16.7	2.9	IV
4	Farm journals	63	20	13.3	3.3	3.4	II

The data furnished in the Table 1 revealed that more than half of the respondents belonged to low level (53.33%) of risk orientation followed by Medium (24.17%) and high (22.50%) levels of risk orientation.

The possible reason for this might be that majority of big farmers were having larger land holdings were able to mitigate the risk because of their high innovativeness, cosmopoliteness and mass media exposure. The big farmers are following measures to mitigate the risk by making crop insurance policies and they are also aware of how to face the adverse climatic conditions. Another reason for this trend might be that the farmers with higher education, extension contact and mass media exposure were able to update their knowledge and skills time to time hence less chance of occurrence of risk.

It is evident from the Table 1 that a little less than half of the respondents belonged to high level (45.83%) of scientific orientation followed by Medium (28.34%) and low (25.83%) level of scientific orientation. It might be due to the reason that majority of the farmers being middle to old age were continuing the farming practices followed by their forefathers.

Information Source Utilization Pattern of the Rainfed Groundnut Growers

Localite Sources

Data reported in Table 2 pointed out the fact that farmer friends head first rank with mean score 3.90, neighbors second rank with mean score 3.10 and progressive farmers third rank with mean score2.90 as those were perceived

as more frequently used localite source of information. Frequently used information source were input dealers with mean score 2.50 (fourth) and village revenue officers (fifth, mean score 2.30) were least frequently used source by the respondents.

Cosmopolite Sources

Where as in cosmopolite sources majority of the ground nut growers are using agricultural extension officers as an information source with mean score 3.60, followed by Mandal agricultural officer with 3.30 mean score, agricultural research stations with mean score 2.7 and ADA were last used cosmopolite sources by the respondents with mean score 2.00.

Mass Media Sources

Whereas, mass media sources which were frequently utilized were television (mean score 3.60), farm journals (mean score 3.40) and newspaper (mean score 3.00). Least frequently information sources as Agricultural Exhibitions (mean score 2.90) used by the farmers of selected areas.

The above findings revealed that the respondents more frequently used were friends, neighbors and progressive farmers, as localite source of information Agriculture officer and Agriculture extension officer as cosmopolite information sources and television and farm journals as mass media sources for farm information.

The study concluded that the majority of the respondents used friends, neighbors and progressive farmers as localite source of information A.O and A.E.O as cosmopolite information sources and television and farm journals as mass media sources for farm information. Different mass media and cosmopolite source of information were not more frequently utilized by the dryland farmers in area which hindered not only awareness level of farmers, but also adversely affect the adoption level regarding the latest production technology related to dryland crops. To increase the use of electronic media such as internet both public and private sector, Mobile Technologies, Expert Systems, Village Knowledge Centers and Information Kiosks should create awareness and establish centers for the dissemination of modern farming technology that ultimately results increasing the production of dryland farming.

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