

**DISCERNMENT OF COCONUT PLANTATION GROWERS ABOUT
QUALITY AND DAMAGED CAUSED BY ERIOPHYID MITE ON
COCONUT**

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ABSTRACT

Discernment is the process of understanding sensation or attaching meaning based on past experience to signs. The study was conducted in the coastal areas of Saurashtra, where coconut is a major crop. Total five talukas i.e. 3 talukas of Junagadh, one taluka of Porbandar and one taluka of Bhavnagar district were selected purposively which is having the highest coconut growing area. Three villages from each taluka and 10 respondents from each village i.e. total 15 villages and 150 respondents were included in the sample. To measure the perception level of respondents about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut, questionnaire were prepared. The scale divided in to three major head viz. quality aspects of coconut, infestation of eriophyid at pre harvest stage and infestation of eriophyid mite at post-harvest stage. The mean score were obtained individual major head and converted into percentage and assigned the rank. The results indicated that 84.00 per cent of coconut growers had perception about infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at post-harvest stage, which had obtained first rank followed by quality aspects of coconut (82.30 per cent) and infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at pre harvest stage (76.66 per cent) had second and third ranked, respectively, whereas in case of overall perception, majority of the coconut growers (63.33 per cent) had medium level of perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite in coconut.

KEY WORDS: Coconut, Discernment, Eriophyid Mite

INTRODUCTION

The coconut palm is one of the most useful plants in the world. It is grown in more than 92 countries of the world. Indonesia and Philippines are the first and second largest coconut

producing countries in the world. India is the third largest coconut producing country having an area of about 1830.9 thousand hectares with an annual production of about 15,730 million nuts and productivity of 8303 nuts per

hectare. It accounts for 58.05 per cent of the area and 90.70 per cent of the coconut production share under major plantation crops in India during 2009-10.

Gujarat state has achieved considerable growth rate in coconut plantation during last five years because of serious efforts made by the State Government. In Gujarat, 16,674 hectares area and 250.63 million nuts productions with productivity of 8433 nuts per hectare are recorded (Anonymous, 2011). Average productivity per tree is 40 nuts in irrigated area in Gujarat, whereas average productivity of India is 44 nuts per tree. Coconut is a typical case of under exploitation of a plant of high economic potential. The plant is unique in the sense that it is capable of meeting all the basic needs of food, fibre, fuel, timber and even animal feed. The study was carried out on "Discernment of Coconut Plantation Growers about Quality and Damaged Caused by Eriophyid Mite on Coconut" in the coastal areas of Saurashtra, where coconut is a mainly grown.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was carried out in Junagadh, Bhavnagar and Porbandar districts of Saurashtra region. A multistage purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of districts, talukas, villages and respondents. The selected talukas from the Junagadh district were Mangrol, Veraval and Una, while from the Bhavnagar and Porbandar districts, Mahuva and Porbandar talukas were

selected, respectively. Total 15 villages; 9 from Junagadh district, 3 from Bhavnagar district and 3 from Porbandar district were selected purposively based on the number of farmers who adopted coconut plantation. Ten coconut plantation growers from each selected village were selected as respondents and having minimum one acre of coconut plantation. Therefore, a total 150 coconut plantation growers was included in the sample for the present study.

Perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut

To measure the perception level of respondents about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut, questionnaire were prepared. The scale divided in to three major head viz., quality aspects of coconut, infestation of eriophyid at pre harvest stage and infestation of eriophyid mite at post-harvest stage. The quality aspects of coconut contained 13 items, whereas infestation of eriophyid mite at pre-harvest and post-harvest stage contained 6 and 10 items, respectively. Thus, total consisted 29 items concerning about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut. The respondents were asked to answer correct or incorrect, right or wrong and "Yes" or "No", against each item. The perception scores of an individual respondent were obtained by summing up the responses according to major head. The mean score were obtained individual major head and converted into percentage and assigned the rank.

Sr.	Perception	Mean Score
1	Quality aspects of coconut	13
2	Infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at pre-harvest stage	06
3	Infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at post-harvest stage	10
Total		29

Overall perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite

To measure the overall perception level of respondents about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut questionnaire were prepared. The

perception scores of an individual respondent were obtained by summing up the responses over all the 29 statements. The respondents were classified into three categories on the basis of mean and standard deviation.

Sr. No.	Categories		Range
1	Low perception	=	< Mean – S.D.
2	Medium perception	=	Mean $\pm$ S.D.
3	High perception	=	> Mean + S.D.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study of perception is concerned with identifying the process through which we interpret and organize sensory information to produce our conscious experience of objects and object relationship. Perception is the process of understanding sensation or attaching meaning based on past experience to signs (Taneja, 1989). Perception is the process of receiving information about and making sense of the world around us. It involves deciding which information to notice, how to categorize this information and how to interpret it within the framework of existing knowledge.

Perception of coconut plantation growers about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut

Perception is the true beginning of knowledge. It is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information. Perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut were measured. The results were given in Table 1 and Figure 1. The results indicated that 84.00 per cent of coconut growers had perception about infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at post harvest stage, which had obtained first rank followed by quality aspects of coconut (82.30 per cent) and infestation of eriophyid mite

on coconut at pre harvest stage (76.66 per cent) had second and third ranked, respectively. It can be concluded that perception of coconut plantation growers had more in post harvest stage.

The probable reason might be that coconut grower's perceived quality as an important aspect for selling of coconut in market. They took adequate care to maintain reasonable quality standards. Damaged caused by eriophyid mite which was an important aspects of quality. It was not ignored because they were not perceived market price of their produce. Similar results were also reported by Shivalingaiah *et al.* (2002).

Overall perception of coconut plantation growers about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut

The data regarding the perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite on coconut were presented in Table 2. It is evident from the data that less than one third (63.33 per cent) of coconut growers had medium perception level about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite in coconut, while nearly equal per cent of them had low (18.67 per cent) and high (18.00 per cent) level of perception about it. Therefore, it can be concluded that majority of the coconut growers had medium level of

perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite in coconut.

This might be due to the reason that farmers perceived quality as an important aspect of coconut cultivation. They took adequate care to maintain reasonable quality standards. But coconut growers do not have good understanding of the quality and damaged caused by the eriophyid mite, resulted the appearance of nut is de-shape. Ultimately coconut growers can not get remunerative price of their products. Similar results were also reported by Shivalingaiah *et al.* (2002).

CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion, it can be concluded that coconut growers had perception about infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at post-harvest stage, which was ranked first followed by quality

aspects of coconut and infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at pre harvest stage was ranked second and third, respectively. With overall perception, majority of the coconut growers had medium level of perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite in coconut.

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Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to their different aspects of perception

n = 150

Sr. No.	Perception	Mean Score	Percentage	Rank
1	Quality aspects of coconut	10.7	82.30	II
2	Infestation of eriophyid mite on coconut at			
(A)	Pre harvest stage	4.6	76.66	III
(B)	Post harvest stage	8.4	84.00	I
	Over all perception	23.6	80.99	

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their overall perception

n = 150

Sr. No.	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low perception (below 12.83 score)	28	18.67
2	Medium perception (12.83 to 23.22 score)	95	63.33
3	High perception (above 23.22 score)	27	18.00
	Total	150	100.00

Mean = 18.03

S.D. = 5.20

C.V.% = 28.83

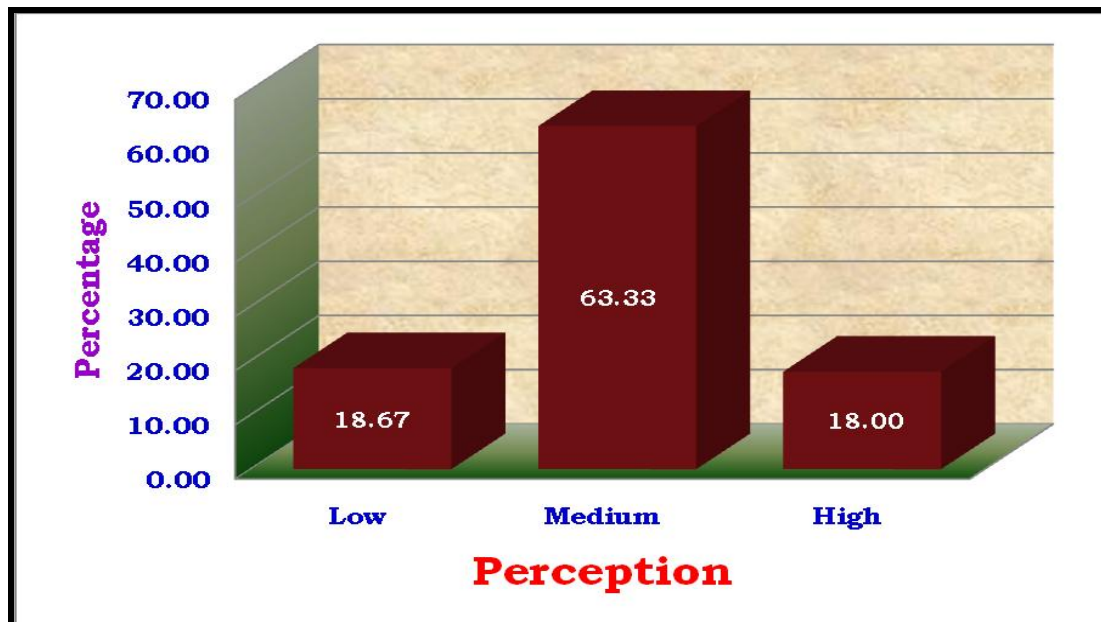


Figure 1: Distribution of respondents according to their perception about quality and damaged caused by eriophyid mite.

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