KNOWLEDGE OF YOUNG TRIBAL FARMERS ON COTTON PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The Amirgadh taluka of Banaskantha District (Gujarat) was purposively selected for the study, as tribal population in the taluka is about forty seven per cent of its total district population. Total 156 young tribal farmers from eight tribal villages were selected by using proportionate random sampling method. The data were collected by personal interview. Based on the finding of the study, majority of the young tribal farmers (53.85 per cent) had medium level of knowledge about cotton production technology, while 28.85 per cent young tribal farmers had low level of knowledge about cotton production technology and 17.30 per cent of the young tribal farmers had high level of knowledge about cotton production technology. The major sources of information were relatives (89.76 %), neighbours (65.68 %) and village level worker (55.77 %) for cotton cultivation technology. Majority of young tribal farmers were participated in extension activities *viz,* field days on farmer's field (58.33 %), discussion with village level workers/extension workers (37.82 %) and extension meeting (35.26 %).

KEY WORDS: Young tribal, Technique, Extension activities

INTRODUCTION

In the past two decades, agricultural technology has changed from conventional method and techniques to new method and technique. Technological changes however, have opened up a new era for Indian farming community. The new agricultural technologies have established their superiority over the old ones. It is, therefore, believed that the adoption of such technologies will lead to enhance socio-economic development of the country. At present, adoption of agricultural technologies confined only to certain sections of farming community and this way create socio-economic disparities. As a result, new technologies will have to be developed, which smaller and tribal farmers with different socio-economic conditions would eventually take up.

The attention of extension researchers have been directed in studying adoption behaviour in general and farmers in specific area of work in particular. Adoption of an improved practices

by the farmer necessarily based on his capacity to acquire and absorb information about new technology and on his capacity to convert this knowledge in to practice. As such, it is necessary that the extension worker must know a good deal about the social environment, in which that person lives and operates.

Tribal farmers are mostly use traditional pattern for the agriculture; they are in habit to use the same method from year to year. Modern inputs such as hybrid seed, insecticides, chemical fertilizers and improved implements are hardly used by them. Due to this, scope for increasing agricultural production by tapping of potential resources and bringing changes in their traditional pattern of farming. This is only possible through diffusion of modern technology from research station to the farmer's fields and there by increasing their knowledge about improved technology. For the speedy diffusion, involvement of youth in the process of transfer of technology is necessary especially among the tribal community. If youth will sound in knowledge, their knowledge will serve as guide for other farmers. Therefore, the present study was framed in tribal areas, Amirgadh taluka of Banaskantha District (Gujarat) by keeping in mind the following objectives.

1. To measure the knowledge level of the young tribal farmers about cotton production technology.
2. To know the sources of information utilized by the young tribal farmers for cotton production technology.
3. To determine the participation of young farmers in different extension activities.

METHODOLOGY

The Amirgadh taluka of Banaskantha District (Gujarat) was purposively selected for the study as tribal population in the taluka is about forty seven per cent of its total district population. Total 156 young tribal farmers from eight tribal villages were selected by using proportionate random sampling method. To measure farmer's knowledge about cotton production technology, the scale developed by Jha and Singh (1970) was administrated with modification to suit the local conditions of the area under study. In order to study the sources of information used by the young tribal farmers, they were asked to indicate sources of information utilized by them for seeking information for cotton cultivation technology. For the measurement of extension participation, respondents were asked to indicate their participation in various extension activities. For the collection of data field survey by personal contact using structured schedule was used. The data were collected, coded, classified, tabulated and analyzed in order to get meaningful findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A perusal of data presented in Table 1 pertaining to the level of knowledge of cotton production technology indicated that more than half (53.85 %) of the young tribal farmers had medium level of knowledge about cotton production technology, while 28.85 per cent young tribal farmers had low level of knowledge about cotton production technology and 17.30 per cent

of the young tribal farmers had high level of knowledge about cotton production technology. It can be inferred from the above finding that more than 70.00 per cent young tribal farmers had medium to high level of knowledge about cotton production technology. The probable reason for this finding might that the young tribal farmers had frequent extension contact and utilization of information sources, which led them to improve their knowledge level about cotton production technology. This finding is in line with the finding of Patel *et al.* (1992), Dharminder and Ravinder (2004) and Christain *et al*, (2005).

Distribution of the respondents according to their sources of information is presented in Table 2. It is evident from the data that relatives were the first in rank (89.76 %) for getting information about cotton cultivation technology as a source, followed by neighbours (65.68 %) and Village Level Workers (55.77 %) secured second and third rank, respectively. Research station and training programmes ranked fourth and fifth, respectively as sources of information. Other information sources were utilized by very few farmers. This clearly indicated that majority of the young tribal farmers were getting information about cotton cultivation technology through relatives, neighbours and Village Level Workers. The probable reason for this finding might that the young tribal farmers had frequent contact with relatives, neighbours and Village Level Workers and they are closely related with them is useful for getting information. Chandawat (1997), Gunawardana & Sharma (2006) and Patel (2005) also reported similar findings.

The data presented in Table 3 pertaining to the respondents according to their participation in extension activities illustrated that majority of the respondents (58.33 %) participated in field days on farmer's field, whereas about 37.82 and 35.26 per cent of the respondents participated in discussion with village level workers/extension workers and participated in extension meetings, respectively. Participation by conducting demonstration on own field, visiting exhibitions on agriculture and participation in Krishi mela / farmer's day were found next in order with 26.92, 21.15 and 15.38 per cent of the respondents, respectively. The probable reason behind might be that the study area totally tribal and it is nearer to S. D. Agricultural University, Sardarkrushinagar. The government is also more focused on the upliftment of the tribal peoples by executing new schemes and projects in the tribal areas and in this context, more numbers of field days were conducted on farmers' fields of this region after giving demonstrations. The village level workers/extension workers frequently visited the villages of this area and the young tribal farmers may got the chances of discussion with him and the tribal farmers may also called frequently in the university to attend some of the extension meetings running at the university under different schemes.

CONCLUSION

From the survey, it can be evident that more than half (53.85 per cent) of the young tribal farmers had medium level of knowledge about cotton production technology. The major sources of information were relatives, neighbours and village level worker for cotton cultivation technology. Majority of young tribal farmers were participated in extension activities like, field days on farmer's field, discussion with village level workers/extension workers and extension meeting.

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Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to level of their knowledge about cotton production technology (N= 156)

Sr. No.	Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (Less than 10.42)	45	28.85
2.	Medium (10.42 to 54.86)	84	53.85
3.	High (More than 54.86)	27	17.30
	Total	156	100.00

$\bar{X}$ =32.64 S.D. = 22.22

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their sources of Information (N=156)

Sr. No.	Sources of Information	Number	Percentage	Rank
	Formal			
1.	Co-operative Society	07	04.49	VIII
2.	Village level workers	87	55.77	III
3.	Research Station	50	35.46	IV
4.	G.S.F.C. Depot	05	03.21	IX
	Informal			
5.	Friends	32	21.15	VI
6.	Relatives	140	89.76	I
7.	Neighbours	105	65.68	II
	Mass media			
8.	Literature	16	10.25	VII
9.	TV	03	01.31	X
10.	Training Programme	45	28.25	V

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their participation in extension activities (N=156)

Sr. No.	Extension Activities	Number	Percentage	Rank
1.	Participation by conducting crop demonstration on his own farm	42	26.92	IV
2.	Participation in discussion held with farmers in the village by Agril. Asstt./V.L.W./Agril. Officer	56	37.82	II
3.	Participation in Krishi mela/shibir	24	15.38	VI
4.	Participation in Extension meeting	55	35.26	III
5.	Participation in field day on farmers' field	91	58.33	I
6.	Visiting exhibition	33	21.15	V
7.	Use of reading materials/literature published by extension agency	09	05.77	VII

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