

FACTORS AFFECTING THE KNOWLEDGE OF FARMERS ABOUT KISAN MANDALS AND KISAN SEVA KENDRAS

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in all three sub. districts of Jaipur namely Sangamer, Shahpur and Jotwara. Total 180 respondent selected for the study purpose. The study reveals that attitude towards Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendra, Participation in extension activities, social participation education, size of land holding and socio-economic status have direct learning on knowledge of farmers about kisan mandal and Kisan Seve Kendra.

INTRODUCTION

Being in 21st century there is a need for change in our thinking towards agricultural extension. In the present scenario, Government of India, State Governments, ICAR and State Agricultural Universities are stressing the need for a change in the outlook of Agricultural Extension. When everything is changing, agricultural extension also needs to be changed. The extension system has been revised substantially to achieve self sufficiency in agricultural food production to meet out the demand of increasing population by motivating illiterate and marginal farmers, by transfer of technical knowledge of crop production to the farmers so that exportable surplus of agriculture produces can be achieved.

The T&V system has witnessed many problems in Rajasthan with its limitation of individual approach system and therefore Rajasthan has launched a modified agricultural extension system namely Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendra since 1st January, 1993. In this system unlike the T&V system the village extension worker has to approach a group of 20 progressive farmers collectively rather than contacting 10 individual contact farmers. This group of 20 progressive farmers namely Kisan Mandal assembles once a fortnight on a fixed place and used to have discussion with Village Extension Worker on latest agricultural technologies. Besides meetings they can have solutions to their problems of input arrangements, pest and disease management from the Kisan Seva Kendras which is

established at every extension workers head quarter. These Kisan Seva Kendras are working like Agro-Clinics on every Thursday. This modified system gave encouraging results and knowledge was found key factor to achieve these results.

Knowledge as a body of understood information possessed by an individual is one of the most important components of adoption behaviour and it is considered as a pre-requisite for adoption. There are many factors which might influence the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendra. The study about such factors will provide a way for improving the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendra. Keeping this fact in mind the present study has been undertaken to find out the association between knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras and the selected independent variables such as attitude, participation in extension activities, social participation, education, size of land holding and socio-economic status.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in all the three sub-districts of Jaipur namely Sangamer, Shahpura and Jhotwara. One panchayat samiti from each selected sub-district and Three village extension worker circles from each panchayat smaiti were selected. Thus totally nine village extension worker circles were selected randomly. Total 18 Kisan Mandals (2 from each village extension worker circles) with

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10 farmers (5 mandal + 5 non-mandal farmers) from each Kisan Mandals were randomly selected. By this procedure, a total of 180 farmers (90 mandal + 90 non-mandal farmer) were selected for the study purpose. To measure the knowledge level of farmers regarding Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendra, a test was prepared with 15 questions. The data so collected were tabulated and analyzed in the light of the objective of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The association between selected independent variables and the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras was calculated by applying 'Zero order correlation' (r). The results have been presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Association between selected independent variables and the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras

(n=180)

S.No.	Independent variables	Zero order correlation 'r' values
1.	Attitude	0.8089**
2.	Participation in Extension activities	0.8262**
3.	Social-participation	0.4756**
4.	Education	0.6691**
5.	Size of land holding	0.3761**
6.	Socio-economic status	0.3748**

** Significant at 1% level of probability.

A perusal of the data in Table 1 states that attitude towards Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras, participation in extension activities, social participation, level of education, size of land holding and socio-economic status were positively and significantly associated with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras at one per cent level of probability. It means that these six variables could significantly exert their influence in gaining knowledge about the working of Kisan mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras of agricultural extension. In other words it may be indicated that the farmer who possessed the above characteristics would be able to get more knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras.

Attitude was also positively and significantly related with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. It means that farmers with positive attitude were subjected to acquire knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. Many scientists have claimed that attitude is a prerequisite for acquiring knowledge about new technology. It shows that the attitude an individual farmer possessed towards Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras developed interest for acquiring knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. The findings were in line with the findings of Chauchan (1994), Sharma and Kalla (2002) and Lahoti *et al* (2011) who stated that attitude was positively and significantly associated with knowledge.

Participation in extension activities was found positively and significantly related with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. It means that more the participation in extension activities by the mandal and non-mandal farmers, more will be the knowledge about the Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. The results seem to be quite natural because of the fact that participation in extension activities was pre-requisite for developing interest in extension functionalities. It leads to the conclusion that participation in extension activities is one of the factors which inspired the farmer for knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. The finding is in line with the finding of Jat (1991) who stated that participation in extension activities was positively and significantly associated with knowledge.

Social participation was also found significantly and positively associated with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. It leads to the conclusion that social participation is important factor as far as knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. This may be due to the fact that the farmers who were engaged more in social organizations had higher knowledge level as they had more chances of interaction with different people in such organizations. Mishra and Sinha (1981), Sepat (1984), Sharma (1989) and Khandelwal *et al.* (2011) have supported these results by

pointing out that social participation was significantly and positively associated with the knowledge of farmers.

Level of education was found positively and significantly associated with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. It means that farmers with higher education were subjected to acquire knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. This may be due to the fact that literate farmers can read the literature related to Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. The literate farmers can read the Kisan Seva Kendras boards and slogans which were painted on the wall in the villages. This may be helpful in increasing knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. Accordingly, Singh (1999) and Sharma and Kalla (2001) reported that level of education had positive and significant relationship with the knowledge level of farmers.

As against the assumption the size of land holding was found positively and significantly associated with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. It means that large the size of holding the more knowledge the farmers possessed. This might be due to the fact that as farmers possessed more land they were more curious to increase their production. To fulfill this requirement, they might have consulted the village extension worker in Kisan Mandals meetings or at the Kisan Seva Kendras on every Thursday.

Socio-economic status was positively and significantly associated with the knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. This indicates that the higher the socio-

economic status, the more will be knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras. This may be due to the fact that farmers who had higher socio-economic status could spare time to attend the Kisan Mandals meetings and could subscribe literature related to agriculture like Kheti Ri Bata, Krishi Vikas, Chokhi Kheti etc. So they possessed more knowledge about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras as compared to other farmers. The results were in conformity with the results of Sharma and Kalla (2001), Singh (1999) and Khandelwal et al (2011) who reported that knowledge of farmer was positively and significantly associated with their socio-economic status.

Multiple regression equation with six independent variables related to knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras:

It may not be enough to know that a particular variable is associated or not associated significantly with the knowledge of farmers. The comparative influence of each of the interacting factors needs also to be known. For this purpose multiple regression technique was applied to know the influence of each of the eight selected independent variables (X_1, \dots, X_8) on the knowledge of the farmers (Y_1). All the six selected independent variables along with the dependent variable (i.e. knowledge of farmers) were put in the multiple regression equation. The results have been presented in Table 2.

It is explicit from the data in the table that all the six independent variables taken together explained the variation in the knowledge of farmers

Table 2. Multiple regression showing influence of independent variables on the knowledge of the farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras

(n=180)				
S. No.	Independent variables	b-value (R.Cof.)	S-error of b	't' value
1.	Attitude	0.077	0.009	8.880**
2.	Participation in Extension activities	0.553	0.055	9.988**
3.	Social Participation	0.111	0.130	0.859
4.	Education	0.091	0.074	1.234
5.	Size of land holding	0.085	0.162	0.526
6.	Socio-economic status	-0.004	0.012	0.366

$R^2 = 0.8471$ Calculated value of 'F' = 159.76** (with 6 and 173 d.f.s.)

**significant at 1% level of probability

to the extent of 84.71 per cent. The respective 'F' value (Significant at 1 per cent level) at 6 and 173 degrees of freedom was 159.76. Thus, the results showed that all the six selected independent variables would be accounted for a significant amount of variation in the knowledge of the farmers.

Further, it was observed that the 't' values of attitude (X_1) and participation in extension activities (X_2) were found positively significant at one per cent level of significance. The table also depicted that regression coefficient was non-significant for social participation (X_3), education (X_4), size of land holding (X_5) and socio-economic status (X_6).

Hence, it may be inferred from the above results that attitude towards Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras and participation in extension activities were the most important influencing factors on knowledge of the farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras.

CONCLUSION

Thus from the above explanation it may be concluded that attitude towards Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras, participation in extension activities, social participation, education, size of land holding and socio-economic status have direct bearing on knowledge of farmers about Kisan Mandals and Kisan Seva Kendras.

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