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A Study on Communication Characteristics and Information Seeking Behaviour of Red Gram Growing Farmers in North-eastern Region of Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

Background: Redgram is a contribute to nutritional and food security of India. India contributes more than eighty (80%) percentage of redgram production in globe. With respect to India, redgram growing in Maharashtra state followed by Madhya Pradesh (MP), Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh (AP) Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and it have area 3.89 million hectares. The production of regram is more than 3.31 million tonnes and productivity on an average of 849 kg per hectare. In Karnataka state redgram crop have nearly 0.83 million hectares area and production 0.62 million tonnes. The average yield of redgram crop is 734 kg per hectare. The study conducted to know and understand the communication characteristics and information seeking behaviour of redgram growers.

Methods: Redgram's communicative characteristics and information-seeking behaviours are the subject of the research investigation. The research was done in three districts (Kalaburgi, Bidar and Yadgiri) in the north-eastern regions of Karnataka state during 2019-22. Districts above were purposefully chosen based on the rankings in area and redgram output. For the study total 180 sample size were randomly selected from research area.

Result: The results from the study reveals more than half (53.34%) of the redgram geowers belonged to medium category of mass media utilization, 38.89 per cent of respondents had medium level of information seeking behaviour and more than 1/3rd (38.33%) of redgram grwoers had medium level of cosmopoliteness.

Key words: Communication, Cosmopoliteness, Information seeking behaviour, Participation, Redgram.

INTRODUCTION

Redgram [*Cajanus cajan* (L.) Millsp.], one of the major pulse crop stands after gram or chickpea. In India redgram known as pigeonpea, tur (Tur daal in India). Redgram is 6th (sixth) rank in area and production after Chick pea. It has the ability to fix atmospheric nitrogen. It offers multiple benefits-protein rich seed (21- 25% protein), fuel, fodder and erosion control. It is cultivated mainly as kharif crop and both as a sole crop and mixed crop. Considering the average crop duration of pigeon pea, it is very difficult to grow this crop in mixed cropping system (Borah *et al.,* 2020). In India, redgram mainly growing in Maharashtra state followed by Madhya Pradesh (MP), Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh (AP), Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and it have area 3.89 million hectares. The production of regram is more than 3.31 million tonnes and productivity on an average of 849 kg per hectare. (Anonymous, 2016). In Karnataka with respect to area redgram is morethan 0.83 million hectares and production 0.62 million tonnes. The average yield of redgram crop is 734 kg per hectare. The major districts of Karnataka are Kalaburagi, Vijayapura, Bidar and Yadgiri districts of north-eastern parts of Karnataka.

Extension is an informal educational process directed towards rural populations. This process offers advice and information to help them solve their problems (Lalitha *et al.,* 2022). Agricultural extension provides need based information and impart specific skills to farmer who are in farming in non-formal condition. It is a mechanism for bringing behavioural changes and technological adoptionand it plays the important role of TOT (transferring technology) to the farmers and conveys feedback, issues related farming and farmers problems to the research system and research station. Farmers easily understand by seeing the result of new innovative methods and technology in the field and also by conducting method and result demonstration. The innovative technology and farming related research findings utilized by

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farmers effectively, through various agricultural extension activities. Thus, agricultural extension help farmers in TOT, transfer of technical knowledge to farming community, advising and serving and providing education to redgram growing farmers in solving problem, good decision making, enabling farmers to identify their needs and objectives, to identify their role in agriculture and stimulating desirable agricultural developments. In past era, agricultural services delivery in developing countries started with production-led extension services for commodity export. But now-a-day it can see, everywhere agricultural extension services required to get more yield and profit as like money to money concept. (Anandajayasekeram *et al.,* 2008). Agricultural extension services providing more emphases on innovative practices and different methods. Government also focusing on extension services and activities so that easily farmer reaches the goal and thereby gets maximum income and benefit with less investment. When the farmer satisfied with the services provided by government, line departments, NGOs', private agency then only it is worthy and effective for farmers to get more returns. Majority of the farmers uses more than one source to meet their agricultural information needs (Sandip and Mahendra, 2022).

Public, private and non-profit organizations (NGO's), PPP are involved in providing need based and demand driven services to farming community in India. Each organization are vested with the particular responsibility of providing agricultural extension services, activities, demonstration and approaches depending on their need, goals, principle, finance and manpower. In addition Information Communication Technology having its own role to disseminate the technology through different form, mobile apps are installed and popularly used, in India related to farming sector (Balkrishna *et al.,* 2021).

Department of Agriculture, Karnataka (KSDA) is the responsible agency for conducting activities of extension and dissemination of technology in Karnataka. Government of Karnataka started Raith Samparka Kendra (RSK) in the year 2000 at Hobli level (block level) to provide extension services to farmers. RSK's working at Hobli level as the grass root level organizations for transfer of modern and innovative agricultural technologies. Currently there are 745 RSKs working across the state and are functioning under the administrative control of Zilla Panchayat. Besides Department of Agriculture, State Agricultural Universities (SAUs'), NGOs', private input supply companies, agribusiness and agricultural consultancies, commodity boards *etc.,* also plays crucial role in providing effective services of extension to the farming community in the state. Based on the above mentioned facts and figures, the current study is to know communication characteristics as well as information seeking behaviour of redgram growers, as there are limited studies conducted to assess the communication characteristics and information seeking behaviour.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research study is to know the communication characteristics and information seeking behavior of redgram. The study conducted in Karnataka state especially in northern parts, in three districts (Kalaburgi, Bidar and Yadgiri) in 2019-22. Based on the ranks in area and production of redgram above districts were purposively selected (www.indiastat.com). The sample size of the study is 180, from each district two (2) taluka were selected and 2 village from each taluka were selected for the study. Thus, 30 respondents from one taluka were selected. In each village, 15 respondents were randomly selected. Ex-post fact research design was for the study and personal interview method suitable for the study and used for data collection. Data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted according to objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication characteristics of redgram growers

Mass media participation

It was clearly seen from the results presented in the Table 1, more than ½ (53.34%) of the redgram growers belonged

Table 1: Communication characteristics of redgram growers. (n=180)

Characters (Category/level)	Criteria	Respondents	
		No.	%
Mass media participation			
Low	< 3.07	33	18.33
Medium	3.07-5.04	96	53.34
High	> 5.04	51	28.33
Information seeking behavior			
Low	< 16.69	53	29.44
Medium	16.69 - 20.93	70	38.89
High	> 20.93	57	31.67
Cosmopoliteness			
Low	< 6.25	58	32.22
Medium	6.25-8.21	69	38.33
High	> 8.21	53	29.45

Table 2: Personal localite information sources utilized by the redgram growers.

Information sources	Frequently		Occasionally		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Family members	24	13.33	79	43.89	54	30.00	23	12.78
Friends/ relatives	82	45.56	43	23.89	31	17.22	24	13.33
Neighbours	80	44.44	40	22.22	28	15.56	32	17.78
Progressive farmers	14	7.78	114	63.33	30	16.67	22	12.22

Table 3: Personal cosmopolite information sources utilized by the redgram growers.

Information sources	Frequently		Occasionally		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Village panchayat member	14	7.78	114	63.33	30	16.67	22	12.22
RSK (Raith Sampark Kendra)	36	20.00	52	28.89	56	31.11	36	20.00
Scientists from Agriculture University	12	6.67	12	6.67	71	39.44	85	47.22
Agro input agencies	23	12.78	68	37.78	63	35.00	26	14.44
Marketing officials	17	9.44	57	31.67	52	28.89	54	30.00
Bank officials	17	9.44	73	40.56	69	38.33	21	11.67

Table 4: Impersonal cosmopolite sources of information utilized by the redgram growers.

Information sources	Frequently		Occasionally		Rarely		Never	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
News papers	39	21.67	64	35.56	56	31.11	21	11.67
Radio	6	3.33	9	5.00	14	7.78	151	83.89
Television	22	12.22	35	19.44	68	37.78	55	30.56
Farm literature	6	3.33	21	11.67	26	14.44	127	70.56

to medium level of mass media participation followed by high (28.33%) and low (18.33%) groups.

Now-a-days farmers are knows importance of mass media and easy to accessible like TV (television), radio, newspapers and farm literature (farm magazines). Medium to high level of mass media utilization which shows their interest of farmers in mass media not only for of news and information, also for entertainment and leisure. Mass media create awareness among the farmers about agriculture and other farming information, it also updates the latest, technology, developments are a shows good sign which shows their interest of redgram growers to improve their livelihood status and maximize their income level. The findings of Devarajaiah (2010) mirrored the present study findings.

Information seeking behaviour

With regard to information seeking behaviour, 38.89 per cent of respondents had medium level of information seeking behaviour, followed by high (31.67%) and low (29.44%) level of information seeking behaviour, respectively.

The reason for this is due to redgram growers were active in attending training and meetings and also because of their cosmopolite nature it tends to increase information seeking behaviour. Another probable reason for majority of redgram crowing farmers comes under medium level information seeking and information utilization behaviour, due to their age, experience in farming, level of education, medium level of innovativeness and medium level participation in agriculture and allied related extension activities and services. Another reason might be they feel whatever information they have the enough to do good farming. The above results are reinforced by the results found by Suresh (2004); Rathod (2007) and Basavaraj (2008).

Cosmopoliteness

It can see from the Table 1, it is evident that more than one third (38.33%) of respondents had medium level followed by low (32.22%) and high (29.45%) level in cosmopoliteness sources.

This could be due to, some villages have good road connectivity and transport mode and facility, which enabled the redgram growing farmers to visit town, city to get information from different product, sell their produce, to purchase the agricultural inputs and equipment, to meet the officers of agriculture and line departments to seek information or to derive benefits of schemes. Some farmers visiting for their daily and necessity work (domestic purposes) and entertainment. The results same line with Devarajaiah (2010) and contradictory to the findings of Rathod (2007); Basavaraj (2008) and Lavanya (2010).

Personal localite information sources utilized by the redgram growers

The result clear from the Table 2 that friends/relatives (45.56%) as a source of information proved to be the most important as it expressed respondents and frequently utilizing information followed by Neighbours (44.44%) as major sources of information. Obviously, it can be repressed that personal localite sources were equally important for getting production, technical and marketing information by farmers. Therefore, it is suggested that these information sources should be made use of by the extension agents in effective transfer of technology among the red gram farmers.

Personal cosmopolite information sources utilized by the redgram growers

The evidence Table 3 shows that RSK (Raith Sampark Kendra) were commonly utilized source of information. With regards to use of other personal cosmopolite sources, there was a great variation between all sourses categories. Many farmers were found having credibility in different other sources of information which can sequentially be arranged as, I: training RSK (Raith Sampark Kendra), II Agro input agencies, III Marketing officials and Bank officials , IV Village panchayat member and VI Scientists from Agriculture University, respectively the finding same as Ashokkumar, *et al*. (2016).

Impersonal cosmopolite sources of information utilized by the redgram growers

It was found that from Impersonal cosmopolite sources Table 4, Newspapers, television and farm literature and Farm literature were common frequently as sources of information by respondents as they ranked them I, II and III, respectively. In case of radio 83.89 per cent of respondent never used for agriculture related information (Ashok Kumar *et al*., 2016).

CONCLUSION

The communication behaviour of farmers very from crop to crop, still many farmers relying on personal localite channel and mass media channel. Based on the study result it is concluded that large numbers the variation in the pattern of utilization of different sources of information with regards to improved technology of redgram production. Majority of the redgram farmers rely on informal sources of information from friends and relatives, neighbours, along with progressive farmers and most importantly on consultancy services rather than on the public extension services. From the current study it was seen that, redgram farmers and pulse growers get information from personal localite rather than public extension services.

Conflict of Interest

All authors do not have any conflict of interest.

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