

Perception of Farmers about Usefulness of University *Kisan Mela*

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ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken to know the perception of farmers about usefulness of university *Kisan Mela*. The study was conducted at Rajendra Agricultural University, Bihar where *Kisan Mela* was organized for three days from 5-7th March 2016, involving 120 randomly selected participating farmers. The findings indicated that maximum numbers of participants were middle age group, had matriculation level of education, belong to OBC category, untrained with small land holding and agriculture and subsidiary was major occupation. Good majority of participating farmers perceived that information received at *Kisan Mela* on Agricultural implements & machine, IFS, Dairy & AH, Mushroom Cultivation and Medicinal & Herbal planting were more useful. It was also observed that more than fifty percent of the respondents expressed their opinion that suggestions by experts, *Kisan Gosthi* and horticultural exhibition were very good. Most of them were of the opinion that sale of inputs, transport arrangement and food facilities in farmers fair were average.

Keywords: Perception, *Kisan Mela*

INTRODUCTION

Fairs or *Mela* are a part of our culture. Rural fairs attract a large number of persons dressed in their best, with joy and gaiety, bringing together rustic culture and traditions. With the establishment of agricultural universities, such type of fairs has been organised regularly for disseminating of improved practices to a large number of farmers in a short period of time. These fairs include an agro-industrial exhibition, demonstration of improved practices, *Kisan Gosthi* and sale of extension publications and improved seeds in small packets. These fairs are generally held at a place where some institution or research farm is located as their organisation needs the participation and coordination of a large number of departments and persons.

Kisan Mela is an important mass contact method in extension teaching. It is an organized educational activity for involving and educating farmers by bringing together the farmers, scientists, extension workers, input agencies, developmental departments and non-governmental agencies on agriculture or allied aspects at a Research Station or an agriculturally important educational centre, where the farmers can see, interact and gain first hand knowledge about the latest technologies and

developments in agriculture and allied aspects. It integrates several educational activities specifically directed to the farmers of a region, state or country. At present, there has been increasing demand for organising such *Kisan Mela* at different levels. Hence, it is appropriate to study the perception of farmers about usefulness of university *Kisan Mela*. The findings on these aspects would act as guideline to identify the strength and weakness of the programme and also to help in tapping the area that need toning up. Keeping in view, the present study was conducted with the following objectives to study the socio-personal characteristics of participating farmers, to understand the perception of farmers about usefulness of *Kisan Mela* and to analyze the opinion of farmers about *Kisan Mela*

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at Rajendra Agricultural University, Bihar where *Kisan Mela* was organized for three days from 5-7th March 2016. Hundred twenty participants of *Kisan Mela* were randomly contacted with the help of structured schedule for eliciting the information by personal interview method. The data were analyzed with the help of frequency and percentage.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic and Personal profile of the respondents

It is clear from table that 36.66 percent of the selected respondents belong to the middle age group i.e. the age group between 36-50 years followed by advanced age group (35 %) and young age group(20%) whereas only 8.33 percent respondents belong to old age group(65-above). Data also indicates maximum 28.33 percent of the respondents to be matriculation and 26.66 percent respondents having their educational level Graduate & above followed by 24.16 and 20.83 percent respondents having their educational level intermediate and primary respectively.

Maximum 46.66 per cent respondents were small farmers followed by 34.16 and 11.66 per cent respondents were marginal and medium farmers respectively. Only 7.50 per cent respondents were large farmers.

The findings reveal that a majority of the respondents (45%) were of medium income category. This was followed by respondents in the low-income group (26.66%) and high-income group (20%). Only 8.33 percent respondents having very high level of income. Table 1 also showed that 50.83 per cent respondents belonged to joint family and 49.16 percent of the respondents belonged to nuclear family. Fifty percent of the respondents were engaged in agriculture & subsidiary occupation whereas 43.33 per cent respondents having agriculture as a major occupation and only 6.66 per cent respondents were engaged in other non-agricultural occupation.

Data presented in table also indicates majority of respondents (65.83%) were un- trained. They are not got any training programme from any institution while 34.16 percent respondents have got training programme and they are trained. Majority of respondents (64.16%) were belonged to OBC category, while about 31 per cent of respondents belonged to general category and only 5 percent respondents were in SC/ST category.

It can also be inferred that majority of respondents owned television, radio, newspaper and mobile phone followed by 33.33 and only 6.66 per cent respondents owned magazine and computer respectively. A Maximum 56.66 per cent respondent was no any member of organisation. This was followed by 32.50 9.16, and only 1.66 per cent respondents were member of one, two and more than two organisations respectively.

Table 1: Socio-economic and Personal profile of the respondents

Category	Total (n=120)	
	Frequency(f)	%
Age		
Young (up to 35years)	24	20.00
Middle (36-50 years)	44	36.66
Advanced (51-65 Years)	42	35.00
Old (above 65 years)	10	8.33
Education		
Primary	25	20.83
Matriculation	34	28.33
Intermediate	29	24.16
Graduate & above	32	26.6
Size of land holding		
Marginal (below1 hac)	41	34.16
Small (1-4 hac)	56	46.66
Medium (4.1-10 hac)	14	11.66
Large (above 10 hac)	09	7.50
Annual income		
Low (below ` 50,000)	32	26.66
Medium(` 50,000-1,00,000)	54	45.00
High(` 1,00,001-1,50,000)	24	20.00
Very high(above 1,50,000)	10	8.33
Family size		
Joint	61	50.83
Nuclear	59	49.16
Occupation		
Agriculture alone	52	43.33
Agril.+ Subsidiary	60	50.00
Others	08	6.66
Training		
Trained	41	34.16
Un-trained	79	65.83
Category		
General	37	30.83
OBC	77	64.16
SC/ST	06	5.00
Media ownership		
Television	92	76.66
Radio	105	87.50
Newspaper	112	93.33
Magazine	40	33.33
Mobile Phone	102	85.00
Computer	08	6.66
Members of Group/Club/Voluntary organisation		
None	68	56.66
one	39	32.50
Two	11	9.16
More than two	2	1.66

Perception of farmers about usefulness of *Kisan Mela*

The extent of usefulness of the information given at farmer's fair both in agricultural and other subsidiary occupation as perceived by farmers were quantified as "more useful", "useful" and "less useful". The data presented in table 2 revealed that more than fifty percent of the respondents perceived that information received at farmers fair on High yielding varieties of seed, Agricultural implements & machine, information on high-tech horticulture, information on IFS, Dairy & AH, Fisheries, Agroforestry, Mushroom Cultivation, Vermicomposting, Organic farming, Medicinal & herbal planting and models, charts & poster display in farmers

fair were more useful.

Majority of respondents also felt that the information received at farmers fair like information of fertilizers, information of pesticides, irrigation methods, agriculture weather information, Biofertilizers and models, charts & poster were useful to them. Similarly, more than fifty percent of respondents perceived that information received in farmers fair in the area of contingency crop planning and seed storage & processing were less useful.

Table 2: Farmers Perception of usefulness of *Kisan Mela* n= 120

Items	More Useful		Useful		Less Useful	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
High Yielding Varieties of seed	62	51.66	37	30.83	21	17.50
Information of fertilizers	17	14.16	63	52.50	40	33.33
Information of pesticides	16	13.33	52	43.33	52	43.33
Agricultural implements & machine	74	61.66	36	30.00	10	8.33
Irrigation methods	48	40.00	56	46.66	16	13.33
Soil and water conservation	41	34.16	44	36.66	35	29.16
Information on high-tech horticulture	58	48.33	62	51.66	0	0.00
Information on Kitchen gardening	32	26.66	38	31.66	50	41.66
Information on IFS	64	53.33	36	30.00	20	16.66
Dairy & AH	61	50.83	40	33.33	19	15.83
Fisheries	54	45.00	48	40.00	18	15.00
Agro forestry	52	43.33	54	45.00	14	11.66
Ag. Weather Information	32	26.66	60	50.00	28	23.33
Dry farming technology	22	18.33	33	27.50	65	54.16
Bio fertilizers	43	35.83	56	46.66	21	17.50
Mushroom Cultivation	66	500	43	35.83	11	9.16
Honey bee rearing	30	25.00	32	26.66	52	43.00
Vermicomposting	58	48.33	34	28.33	28	23.33
Organic farming	51	42.50	36	30.00	33	27.50
Medicinal & herbal planting	64	53.33	39	32.50	17	14.16
Sugarcane	48	40.00	45	37.50	27	22.50
Contingency Crop planning	12	10.00	27	22.50	81	67.50
Seed Storage & Processing	22	18.33	38	31.66	60	50.00
Models/ Charts /Poster	52	43.33	57	47.50	11	9.16

Opinion of farmers about selected dimensions of *Kisan Mela*

The farmers' opinion about different dimension like suggestions by the experts, arrangements of exhibition stalls, sale of inputs, food facilities, transport arrangement, accommodation, Kisan Gosthi, cultural programmes, horticultural exhibition, registration of farmers and inquiry service held were elicited and the

results are provided in table 3. It could be observed that more than fifty percent of the respondents expressed their opinion that suggestions by experts, Kisan Gosthi and horticultural exhibition were very good. Thirty percent and above respondents express their opinion regarding all the selected dimensions of *Kishan Mela* were good. Most of them opinion on sale of inputs, transport arrangement and food facilities in farmers fair were average.

Table 3: Farmer's opinion on selected dimensions of *Kisan Mela* n= 120

Items	Very Good		Good		Average	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Suggestions by experts	70	58.33	32	26.66	18	15.00
Arrangements of stalls	60	50.00	40	33.33	20	16.66
Sale of inputs	18	15.00	38	31.66	64	53.33
Food facilities	22	18.33	47	39.16	51	42.50
Transport arrangement	24	20.00	38	31.66	58	48.33
Accommodation	38	31.66	41	34.16	41	34.16
<i>Kisan Gosthi</i>	88	73.33	30	25.00	2	1.66
Cultural programmes	30	25.00	42	35.00	48	40.00
Horticultural Exhibition	72	60.00	36	31.66	12	10.00
Registration of farmers	51	42.50	32	26.66	37	30.83
Enquiry service	32	25.83	36	30.00	52	43.33

This may be due to the fact that experts were giving information on Mushroom Cultivation, Medicinal & herbal planting, Vermicomposting, Organic farming, Agricultural implements & machine, IFS, Dairy & AH and high-tech horticulture that was a need of present farming situation. The arrangements of stall and Kisan Goshti were also very good because it is regular feature of the organisation. Sale of inputs was average to good, this is due to the fact that lack of control over the participants and vision about the arrangements. Participants ranked transport and food as average to good which may be due to wider participants of the farmers that may beyond the expectation of the organiser and also no control mechanism to check the exact number of the probable participants. These findings support the study of Sharma and Hasan (2012).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that maximum numbers of participants were middle age group, had matriculation level of education, belong to OBC category, untrained with small land holding and agriculture and subsidiary was major occupation. Good majority of participating farmers perceived that information received at *Kisan Mela* on Agricultural implements & machine, IFS, Dairy & AH, Mushroom Cultivation and Medicinal & herbal planting were more useful. It was also observed that more than fifty percent of the respondents expressed their

opinion suggestions by experts, Kisan Gosthi and horticultural exhibition were very good. Most of them opinion on sale of inputs, transport arrangement and food facilities in farmers fair were average. Therefore, special emphasis should be given on selected dimension by policy makers and planners while organising the *Kisan Mela*. This will lead to enhance the adoption of technology by the farmers in special and effectiveness of *Kisan Mela* in general.

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