

A Study on Source Credibility and Attitude of Farmers Towards Field Day

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ABSTRACT

The study conducted at National Demonstration Scheme, Bheemarayanagudi revealed that Agricultural Assistant, Assistant Agricultural Officer and Agricultural Research Stations were the sources of information in descending order which motivated the participant farmers. It also revealed that large percentage of farmers had favourable attitude towards field day irrespective of their personal characteristics.

National Demonstration Scheme (NDS) is one of the many ways by which the research findings are being disseminated effectively to farmers. Field day is a common teaching method used in NDS which is generally accepted to be effective (Oliver *et al.*, 1975). Field days are organised in research stations of the University. Despite well organised field days, it is observed that there is little change in the attitude of farmers because of illiteracy, fatalism and lack of risk bearing ability. Annual field days organised by NDS, Bheemarayanagudi attracts large number of farmers. However, there is hardly any research conducted on the impact of field days organised by the University. Hence, the present study was conducted with the following specific objectives.

1. To find out the attitude of farmers towards field day.
2. To ascertain the association between personal characteristics and attitude.
3. To identify the credible sources of information to participate in the field day, and
4. To study the reasons to participate and suggestions for improvement of field day.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

From among the farmers attending the field day at ARS, Bheemarayanagudi during 1987, 51 farmers were randomly selected for the study. Data were collected from the respondents through the pre-tested schedules by personal interviews at the end of the field day.

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The quantification and categorisation of variables was done as follows :

Attitude : In consultation with the specialists in the Department of Agricultural Extension, 10 statements of attitude were developed. The scoring was done as below

Statement	Score		
	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
Positive statement	2	1	0
Negative statement	0	1	2

The maximum possible score obtainable was 20 and the categorisation was done taking mean score into consideration (Edwards, 1969).

Age : The respondents were grouped into two categories namely youths (below 35 years) and old farmers (above 35 years).

Education : The respondents were grouped into four categories as follows :

Category	Formal Education
Illiterate	Not attended School
Primary	I - VII std.
High School	VIII - X std.
College	XI std. and above

Land holding : Data regarding total number of acres of rainfed, irrigated and garden land as reported by respondent were collected. The total land holding of the respondents was expressed in rainfed unit by multiplying the irrigated and garden land by two as recommended by District Rural Deve-

lopment Society, Dharwad. Thus, the total rainfed land in acreage was the size of land holding possessed by the farmer. Farmers were categorised as follows :

Category	Area in acres
Small	Less than 5 acres
Medium	5 - 10 acres
Large	More than 10 acres

The data were quantified, tabulated and categorised using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The data were further subjected to analysis by chi-square test and correlation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Attitude of farmers towards the field day : Large percentage (66.66) of farmers had favourable attitude towards the field day, whereas only 17 farmers out of 51 had unfavourable attitude (Table 1). This was because i) the demonstration/trials conducted in a systematic and scientific way might have attracted the farmers and aroused interest in them, and ii) the panel of scientists might have clarified the field problems of farmers.

Table 1. Attitude of farmers towards field day

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Favourable	34	66.66
Unfavourable	17	33.34
Total	51	100.00

Mean attitude score - 15.47

Influence of age, education and size of land holding on the attitude of farmers towards field day.

Age and attitude: Irrespective of age of the farmers, the attitude towards field day was similar as shown in Table 2. Equal number of farmers (17) in both the categories had developed favourable attitude towards field day. This may be due to i) the extension methods deployed for conduct of field day have reached farmers of all age in time and ii) the panel of scientists/experts might have provided first hand

information which was perceived by the farmers of all age groups.

Education and attitude: The farmers with different levels of education had similar attitude towards the field day organised at Agricultural Research Station as revealed in Table 3.

Large percentage of farmers (50) with primary education had developed favourable attitude whereas only four per cent of farmers with college education developed favourable attitude towards field day. The chi-square test applied to the data revealed no significant difference between the categories.

Table 2. Association of age of farmers and their attitude towards field day

Age	Attitude		Total	(X) ² value
	Favourable	Unfavourable		
Youths	17 (50.00)	9 (52.94)	26 (50.98)	0.015 N.S.
Old farmers	17 (50.00)	8 (47.06)	25 (49.02)	
Total	34 (66.66)	17 (33.33)	51 (100)	

Mean age - 37.2

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages

Table 3. Association between education of farmers and their attitude towards field day

Education	Attitude		Total	(X) ² value
	Favourable	Unfavourable		
Illiterate	6 (17.65)	2 (11.77)	8	5.22 N.S.
Primary	17 (50.00)	4 (23.53)	21	
High School	7 (20.59)	8 (47.10)	15	
College	4 (11.77)	3 (17.65)	7	
Total	34	17	51	

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages

The field day concentrated more on demonstrations supplemented by literatures on crops and individual contact by the consultancy panel which made the literate and illiterate farmers to develop similar attitude. Also the demonstrations/trials were more need based, practicable and feasible for all farmers which made them to develop similar attitudes.

Land holding and attitude : Farmers with small, medium and large land holding had developed similar attitude towards field day as shown in Table 4. Large percentage of farmers (30) with large sized land holding developed favourable attitude whereas only 4 per

cent of farmers with small holding developed favourable attitude. The chi-square test revealed no significant difference among the farmers with different sized land holdings.

The field day was organised comparatively on large scale involving various technologies on agriculture and allied fields to suit the small, medium and big farmers and even the expert's advice to modify particular technology for the local conditions of the farmers depending on his resources was provided. Hence, the farmers with different levels of land holding developed similar attitude towards the field day.

Table 4. Association between land holding of farmers and their attitude towards field day

Land holding	Attitude		Total	(X) ² value
	Favourable	Unfavourable		
Small	4 (11.76)	2 (11.77)	6	2.04 N.S.
Medium	10 (29.41)	2 (11.77)	12	
Large	20 (58.82)	13 (76.47)	33	
Total	34	17	51	

Figures in the parentheses indicate percentages

Table 5. Motivational sources for farmers to participate in field day

Sl. No.	Source	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1.	Agricultural Assistant	34	66.66	I
2.	Assistant Agricultural Officer	18	35.29	II
3.	Agricultural Research Station	8	15.68	III
4.	Invitation	7	13.72	IV
5.	Assistant Horticultural Officer	3	5.88	V
6.	Friends and neighbours	2	3.92	VI
7.	Radio	1	1.96	VII

Motivational source to participate in field day : Out of seven sources consulted by farmers to participate in field day, Agricultural Assistant formed the most credible source as he was consulted by 34 farmers out of 51 (Table 5). The Assistant Agricultural Officer and Agricultural Research Station ranked II and III sources respectively, among the sources consulted by farmers.

Agricultural Assistant ranking first in the source consultancy pattern is due to the fact that he will have more and regular contacts with farmers and he is the only source easily available to farmers.

Reasons for participation in field day : Farmers gave totally seven reasons to participate in the field day. Forty three per cent of the farmers gave the reason that they get more knowledge and 20 per cent farmers attended to get solutions to their agricultural problems (Table 6). Each farmer was at liberty to give more than one reason. Hence, the total frequency is more than the number of respondents. This pattern of reasons for participation might be due to the reasons that the i) demonstration/trials might be based on their immediate needs and ii) consultation

Table 6. Reasons for participation in field day

Sl. No.	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
1.	To get more knowledge	43	43.00
2.	To get solutions to agril. problems	20	20.00
3.	To develop contacts with scientists	13	13.00
4.	To have a change	11	11.00
5.	To see Agricultural Research Station	6	6.00
6.	To please local extension worker	4	4.00
7.	To enjoy with friends	3	3.00

Table 7. Suggestions given by farmers for improvement of field day

Sl. No.	Suggestions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Demonstrations/trials should be on irrigation methods	5	31.25
2.	To arrange field day in each village	4	25.00
3.	Dairy, poultry and sericulture information should be available	3	18.75
4.	Sale of quality seeds should be arranged	2	12.50
5.	Farm women should be involved in the programme	2	12.50

with the scientists / experts might have solved their immediate problems.

Suggestions for improvement of the field day : Five suggestions were given by the farmers for improvement of field day which are listed in Table 7. Of the total number of respondents (51) only 16 farmers made suggestions for improvement. Considerable percentage of farmers (31.25) suggested that demonstration trials should be on irrigation methods and 25 per cent of the farmers suggested arrangements of field day in each village.

CONCLUSION

Field day is an important medium for communicating agricultural technology. The study revealed that large percentage of farmers had favourable attitude towards field day irrespective of their personal characteristics. Hence, it is imperative to have field days for effective communication. The formal source, Agricultural Assistant, must be well exploited as he forms the major influential source of information followed by Assistant Agricultural Officer and Research Stations.

REFERENCES

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