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The personal and socio-economic characteristics of the farm input dealers

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Abstract
The present study on Training Needs of Farm Input Dealers About Farm Input was conducted in Akola and Wardha districts of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state. For this study 70 dealers were purposively selected from ten tahsils from both districts with the help of proportionate sampling method. The data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule. Personal interview technique was used for data collection.

The results revealed that majority (48.58%) respondents were observed in 'middle' age category that is up to 42.52 years having 71.42 per cent respondents were found in 'medium' category of experience in dealership. About 64.28 per cent of respondents educated up to 'graduate' level of education and most of them had 'medium' land holding (27.14%). Majority of 81.42 per cent respondents had annual income found in the range of Rs. Up to Rs. 3,47,000 to 7,34,000/-. Maximum number of the respondents having 'medium' level of source of information (67.14%), followed by 61.42 per cent of respondents had 'medium' level of extension contact and social participation (60.00). Majority (70.00%) of the respondents have 'medium' level of cosmopoliteness and innovativeness (54.28%). All 100.00 per cent farm input dealers did 'not received' training on various aspect related to fertilizers, seeds, insecticides, pesticides and implements. Majority (68.00%) of the farm input dealers had 'medium' level of knowledge related to use of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides.

Results of relational analysis revealed that variables such as land holding, annual income, source of information, extension contact, cosmopoliteness and innovativeness were found positively and significantly correlated with training needs of farm input dealers. In case of other variables like age, social participation and knowledge had shown negative non-significant relationship with training needs of farm input dealers.

Keywords: Socio-economic characteristics, farm

1. Introduction
Modernization of agriculture involves mainly three things. First to evolve suitable agricultural technology, second transfer of technology and third one is acceptance or adoption of technology. The most of the farm input dealers are related to the transfer of farm technology. While trading the farm inputs, dealers advise the farmers about their use and application in the field. Farm input dealers by this way perform the function of the "Change Agent".

India has around three lakh agricultural input dealers (Anonymous 2011) [3]. Farm input dealers are also playing an important role in increasing agricultural production in the country. Because they affects the farmers adoption behavior regarding the use of agricultural technology. There are number of economical, social and psychological factors which influence training need of agricultural input dealers as far as selling of agricultural input is concerned. The main aim of input dealers is to sale agricultural inputs according to local needs i.e. quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and input material. The marketing of agricultural inputs does not only help the dealers to increase their profitability but also facilitate to get all the input requirements under the one roof. And the subsidiary roles played by agricultural input dealers are to provide expert services, advice to farmers. These, input dealers plays a vital role to boost up the agricultural production. So it is felt necessary to study the training need of agricultural input dealers. Apart from the extension services rendered to the farmers by the State Department of Agriculture and other organization to boost up agricultural production, farm input dealers are also playing an important role in increasing agricultural production in the country.

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The agricultural technology evolved is of no use unless it is transferred to and adopted by majority With the "Green Revolution" in agriculture in the country, the use of modern high-pay off inputs such as hybrid seeds, fertilizers and pesticides is increasing. Lastly, the proper use of these inputs is being emphasized. Dealers those have been trained in the farm production technology or those are farm graduates can give technical guidance to the farmers about the proper use of these inputs.

The present study is focused to know the nature and extent of advice and expert services provided by these input dealers to farmers along with supply of input, training needs and constraints of the dealers in transfer of farm technology and running the agriculture input center.

1.2 Objectives
Keeping in view the importance, scope and statement of problem of the topic, the present investigation entitled 'Training Needs of Farm Input Dealers About Farm Input in both Akola and Wardha Districts of Vidarbha Region' was undertaken with the following objectives.
1. To study the personal and socio-economic characteristics of the farm input dealers.
2. To study the relationship between personal and socio-economic characteristics and their training needs.

1.3 Methodology
The study was conducted purposively in Wardha and Akola districts in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra State. The Wardha district consists of eight tahsils. Out of these five tehsils were selected on random basis namely, Wardha city, Arvi, Deoli, Hinganghat and Seloo. The Akola district consist of seven tehsils. Out of these five tehsils were selected on random basis namely, Akola, Pathur, Barshitakli, Balapur and Akot. A list of licenses issued to the farm input dealers in the tahsils of Wardha and Akola districts was obtained from Agricultural Development Officer, Zilla Parishad of both the districts. Ten tahsils were selected from both the districts. Thus, 10 tahsils comprises the said study, 5 Agro Service Centre from each selected tahsils were selected. In all 50 Agro Service Centre from 10 tahsils and 20 Agro Service Centre from 2 district Headquarters thus, in all 70 Agro Service Centre were selected to the study. An exploratory research design of social research was used for present study.

2. Results and Discussion
2.1 Personal, socio-economic characteristics of the farm input dealers.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents

Sr. No.	Variables	Categories	Respondents (n=70)	
			Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age level	1.Young(Up to 35)	19	27.14
		2. Middle(36-50)	34	48.58
		3. Old (above 50)	17	27.14
2.	Education	1. Primary	00	00.00
		2. secondary	00	00.00
		3. High school	16	22.86
		4. Higher secondary	45	64.28
		5. post graduate & above	09	12.86
3.	Experience of farm input dealing	1. Low (Up to 5)	11	15.72
		2. Medium (6-20)	50	71.42
		3. High (Above 20)	09	12.86
4.	Annual Income	1. Low (Up to 3,47,000)	06	8.58
		2. Medium(3,47,001-7,34,000)	57	81.42
		3. High (Above 7,34,000)	07	10.00
5.	Land Holding	1. Landless (No land)	12	17.14
		2. Marginal (Up to 1.00)	01	01.42
		3. Small (1.01-2.00)	14	20.00
		4.Semi-medium(2.01-4.00)	16	23.85
		5. Medium (4.01-10.00)	19	27.14
		6. Large (Above 10.00)	07	10.45
6.	Training received	1. Received	00	00.00
		2. Not received	70	100.00
7.	Source of Information	1. Low	10	14.28
		2. Medium	47	67.14
		3. High	13	18.58
8.	Extension Contact	1. Low	08	11.44
		2. Medium	43	61.42
		3. High	19	27.14
9.	Social participation	1. Low	19	27.14
		2. Medium	42	60.00
		3. High	09	12.86
10.	Innovativeness	1. Low	19	27.14
		2. Medium	38	54.28
		3. High	13	18.58
11.	Cosmopoliteness	1. Low	14	20.00
		2. Medium	49	70.00
		3. High	07	10.00

2.2 Relationship between characteristics of farm input dealers with their need

In the present investigation an attempt was made to find out the nature of relationship between the selected characteristics of farm input dealers with their training need. To ascertain the relationship co-efficient of correction worked out.
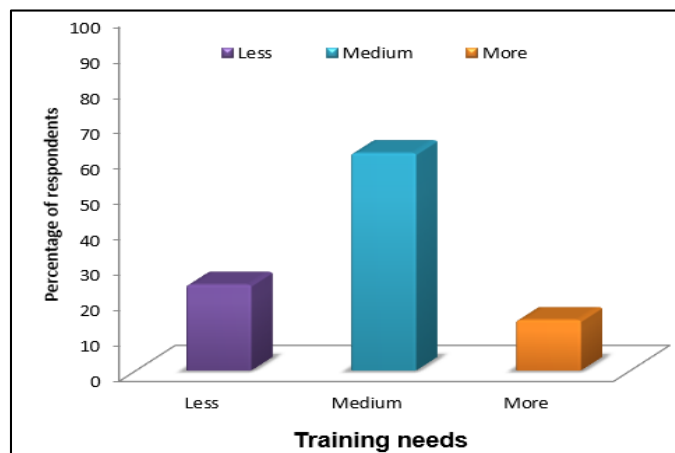

Fig 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their level of training needs

Table 2: Relationship between characteristics of farm input dealers with their training need

Sl. No.	Characteristics	' r ' value
1	Age	-0.200
2	Education	-0.239*
3	Land holding	0.280*
4	Experience of farm input dealing	-0.232*
5	Annual income	0.272*
6	Source of information	0.247*
7	Extension contact	0.263*
8	Social participation	0.0992
9	Cosmopoliteness	0.252*
10	Innovativeness	0.255*
11	Knowledge	0.1677

**Significant at 0.01 per cent level of probability.
*Significant at 0.05 per cent level of probability.
N. S. Non-significant.

It was seen from Table 2, that out of eleven characteristics of respondents three were negatively correlated with training need. The education and experience in farm input dealer were negatively and significantly correlated with training need. The relationship was 0.05 per cent level of probability, in this case null (H_0) hypothesis already framed was rejected as there was negative significant correlationship. However, relationship of characteristics of respondents like age, social participation and knowledge found to be non-significant correlation with training need, hence the null (H_0) hypothesis in this case accepted.

It is clear from above observation that selected characteristics of respondents like land holding, annual income, source of information, extension contact, cosmopoliteness and innovativeness had positively and significant correlation at 0.05 per cent level of probability.

2.3 Summary and Conclusion
A. Summary
Personal and socio-economic characteristics of farm input dealers

1. The distributional analysis pertaining to age of farm input dealers indicated 48.58 per cent of the respondents from region belonged to 'middle' age group. The average age of the respondents was 42.52.
2. More than half 64.28 per cent of the respondents were 'graduate'. The average education score of the respondents was 15th standard (B.com and B.Sc.).
3. Majority 27.14 per cent of the respondents possessed medium land holding.
4. Nearly half of the respondents (71.42%) were having medium level of experience of dealership. The average experience in fertilizer dealing of the respondents was '13 years'
5. All i.e. 100.00 per cent of the respondents did not received training.
6. Higher proportion of the respondents had (81.42%) medium annual income between Rs. 3,47,001 to 7,34,000/-.
7. Majority (67.14%) of the respondents had 'medium' level of source of information. The average score of source of information of the respondents was 14.17.
8. Maximum number of the respondents (61.42%) was having medium level of extension contact.
9. Majority (60.00%) of the respondents from the region belongs to middle level of social participation.
10. Two-third (70.00%) of the respondents had medium level of cosmopoliteness. The average score of cosmopoliteness of the respondents was 6.27.
11. Majority of the respondents (54.28%) had 'medium' level of innovativeness. The average score of innovativeness of respondents was 7.6.

B. Conclusion

These findings revealed that, majority of the farm input dealers were 'middle' age, with 'medium' experience in farm input dealing, source of information, social participation, innovativeness and cosmopoliteness. Majority of the respondents were 'graduate' and most of them had 'medium' land holding and annual income. All the farm input dealers did 'not received' training on various aspects related to fertilizers, seeds, insecticides, pesticides and implements. Majority (68.00%) of the farm input dealers had 'medium' level of knowledge related to use of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. In respect of training needs, farm input dealers had expressed 'high' training needs on seed technology, different insecticides and pesticides its contents, concentration to be used Storage and keeping quality of insecticides, pesticides and fertilizers, etc., followed by advanced technical information of new agricultural inputs, training about credit/financial management and government policies, rules regulations and taxes related agriculture. 'Competition with other input dealers, followed by transportation, non-availability of clients and inadequate credit facilities, non-availability of labors, lack of knowledge about mode of chemicals, non-availability of selling organizations and sometime prices of agricultural input goes high', were the major constraints faced by them.

C. Implications

1. The study has brought out useful information about the personal, socio-economic characteristics of the farm input dealers from the districts of Akola and Wardha districts of Vidarbha region. The information can be used by the input supplying agencies for identifying the prospective farm input dealers and thus, can minimize their efforts for locating the people to promote the use of other farm input.

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