

Usefulness of Krishimela as Perceived by Farmers

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ABSTRACT

Despite various ICT tools for information dissemination, Krishimelas continue to be a significant mode of transfer of technology owing to many advantages. Face-to-face interaction, live demonstration of technologies, learning from other farmers etc. are important components of Krishimela. The present study was conducted to know the sources of information, usefulness of themes and opinion of participants on services provided at Krishimela. The study was undertaken at UAS, GKVK, Bangalore during 2017-18, involving 290 randomly selected farmers. The data was elicited from the farmers by personal interview method. Among the different sources of information, the farmers ranked friends/relatives, KVKs and department of agriculture as most important sources to participate in Krishimela. Almost equal per cent of the farmers perceived that information received at Krishimela on agricultural implements and machineries (91.03%), advisory services (90.34%), minor millets production and value addition (90.34%), irrigation methods (90.00%) were most useful. Regarding services provided arrangements in demonstration plots, sale of agricultural inputs and agricultural implements and distribution of prizes to farmers was highly satisfactory. Whereas, basic amenities (water, electricity & toilet) and vehicle parking needed improvement.

Keywords: Krishimela, Source of information, Usefulness, Services provided

KRISHIMELA is considered as one of the most important mass contact method of extension teaching and transfer of technology in India. It is an integrated extension approach consisting of individual, group as well as mass contact methods with appropriate audio visual aids. It envisages a large scale display of improved agricultural technologies and farm inputs for the benefit of farmers. Owing to its powerfulness in changing the behaviour of farmer, farm women and youth, in terms of knowledge, skill, attitude and symbolic adoption, it continue to be a significant mode of technology transfer in India owing to their effectiveness in facilitating face-to-face interaction with the experts and enabling farmers to see the improved technologies in action. The purpose of organizing Krishimela by UAS-B is to provide first hand information to farmers about the availability of technology useful to them and also to inform them about the ongoing research activities relating to problems of farming.

History

The word Krishimela is a Kannada word meaning fair. Where large number of people would gather to see the events. It is believed that the word fair comes from Latin word *Feria* meaning holy day. Each *Feria* was a day when people from distant places gather to see or worship. Fairs in USA are usually thought of as a rural event- a festive occasion where farmers and their families match skills and display products of their land. With the advent of Land Grant College and Agricultural Extension, the fair was used as a educational tool rather than just a place to show off accomplishments. As the numbers of events were added, fair become not only a festive event but also a learning experience venue.

The Directorate of Extension of UAS-B, organizes Krishimela every year. It is being organized on a large scale in co-ordination with all the developmental departments. Various public and private agencies are involved in organizing this programme annually to transfer the technologies to the intended clientele.

Farmers are invited to participate in the Krishimela since “seeing is believing” where farmers are actually shown, all the latest technologies which are available for them in the field of Agriculture and allied sectors.

Objectives

The present study was aimed to know the usefulness of different themes of Krishimela and level of satisfaction on services provided at Krishimela by the farmers. The findings on these aspects would act as guidelines to identify the strengths and weakness of the programme and also to help in tapping the area that needs toning up. With this background the present study was conducted with the following specific objectives;

1. To study the profile characteristics of farmers participated in Krishimela
2. To know the sources of information farmers consulted to participate in Krishimela
3. To know the usefulness of the different themes of Krishimela.
4. To elicit the level of satisfaction of farmers towards different services provided in Krishimela.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted at Gandhi Krishi Vigyan Kendra (GKVK), University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru, during 17th to 20th November 2017, where Krishimela was organised for four days. Two hundred and ninety participants including both farmers/ farm women of Krishimela were randomly contacted with the help of structured schedule for eliciting the information through personal interview method. The data were analyzed with the help of frequency and percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study along with insights from the discussions held during the Krishimela are summarized below.

Profile of the participants

Table 1 revealed that, majority of the farmers participated in Krishimela were middle aged, had education up to primary level, married and having marginal landholdings. Nearly 79 per cent of them were following agriculture along with subsidiary enterprises as their main occupation. Majority of participants were gathering information by watching TV (70 %) followed by listening to Radio (66.21%). Further, among the participants almost equal per cent of them visited Krishimela once (29.31%), twice (27.24%) and thrice (26.90%) to gather latest technological information.

TABLE 1

Profile of the participants		(n=290)	
Particulars	Categories	Total	
		No.	Per centage
Age (Years)	Young (<35yrs)	91	31.37
	Middle (35-55yrs)	138	47.58
	Old (>55yrs)	61	21.05
Education	Primary School	122	42.07
	High School	106	36.55
	College	62	21.38
Marital Status	Married	194	66.21
	Unmarried	96	33.79
Land Holding	Marginal (<2.5 acres)	144	48.97
	Small (2.5-5 acres)	86	30.34
	Big (> 5 acres)	60	20.69
Occupation	Agriculture alone	42	21.38
	Agri + Subsidiary	248	78.62
Mass Media Participation	Listening to Radio	162	66.21
	Watching TV	203	70.00
	Reading Newspaper	72	24.83
	Reading Magazines	43	14.83
Frequency of visit to Krishimela	Once	85	29.31
	Two times	79	27.24
	Three times	78	26.90
	Four times	22	7.59
	More than 5 times	50	17.24

Sources of information farmers consulted to participate in Krishimela

Among the different sources of information used by the participants to participate in Krishimela, friends/relatives, KVKs and department of agriculture were the most important sources they ranked first, second and third respectively, in providing information about the conduct of Krishimela (Table 2). The mass media sources like dailies, radio, TV were ranked fourth, fifth and sixth respectively in providing information to the farmers. These results are in line with the results of Nanjappa *et al.* (2011), Devaraj & Ravichandra (2017) and Balamurugan (2015). The KVKs of the university do conduct Demonstrations on and off campus trainings to the farmers of all the taluks of the district. They inform the farmers through the posters in all the line departments, public places like post office, bus stands *etc.* and also distributing posters, letters to private institutions like MCF, IFFCO, *etc.* The invitee farmers might have further disseminated the same among their friends and neighbours. Wide publicity was given through media (radio, local TV channels, dailies *etc.*) also helped to intimate large number of farmers. Similarly, the coordinated efforts of Department of Agriculture, Horticulture and University in organizing Krishimela regularly by giving some transportation and other facilities to the beneficiaries might have fetched more popularity about Krishimela since many years. This implies conventional sources and word of mouth

TABLE 2
Sources of information farmers consulted to participate in Krishimela

Source of Information	No.	Per centage	Rank
Friends/Relatives	123	42.41	I
KVKs	85	29.31	II
Department of Agriculture	61	21.03	III
Dailies	58	20.00	IV
Radio	55	18.97	V
Television (Doordarshan Prog.)	49	16.90	VI
Others: School + teachers, neighbours	16	5.52	VII

is more popular sources among farmers in rural areas. Added to this, the universal truth that mass media sources like radio and television are powerful tools to create awareness in rural areas could be brought here to substantiate this finding.

Usefulness of themes of Krishimela as perceived by the participants

The extent of usefulness of the information provided at Krishimela both in agricultural and other subsidiary occupation as perceived by farmers (Table 3) were

TABLE 3
Usefulness of themes of Krishimela as perceived by the participants (n=290)

Stalls	Most Useful		Less Useful	
	No.	%	No.	%
Water Management	260	89.66	30	10.34
Central and state government Schemes	211	72.76	79	27.24
Improved Varieties/ Technologies of UAS(B)	248	85.52	42	14.48
Exhibition and sale of Agricultural Inputs	252	86.90	38	13.10
Books selling stalls	202	69.66	88	30.34
Advisory Services	262	90.34	28	9.66
Agricultural Implements and machineries	264	91.03	26	8.97
Organic Farming	247	85.17	43	14.83
Irrigation methods	261	90.00	29	10.00
SHG/Co-operative Societies	216	74.48	74	25.52
Open space stalls	251	86.55	39	13.45
IFS Demonstration stalls	259	89.31	31	10.69
Minor millets Production and Value addition	262	90.34	28	9.66
Horticulture and precision farming	260	89.66	30	10.34
Medicinal and aromatic plants	220	75.86	70	24.14
Dry Land Farming Technologies	240	82.76	50	17.24
Dairy/Poultry/Goat Rearing	258	88.97	32	11.03
Nursery Production and management	232	80.00	58	20.00
Demonstration plots	249	85.86	41	14.14

quantified as more useful and less useful. The data revealed that, almost equal per cent of the farmers perceived that information received at Krishimela on agricultural implements and machineries (91.03%), advisory services (90.34%), minor millets production and value addition (90.34%), irrigation methods (90.00%), water management (89.66%), horticulture and precision farming (89.66%) and integrated farming system (IFS) demonstration stalls (89.31%) were more useful. Less than thirty per cent of the farmers felt that the selling of books, central and state government schemes and SHG/Co-operative societies stalls were less useful. The probable reason for this might be due to the fact that, majority of the farmers are facing labour scarcity in carrying out seasonal agricultural operations and also due to climatic changes farmers are very much interested to know about alternative agricultural practices that make agriculture as profitable sector, hence they might have visited to gather more information on agricultural implements and machineries. These findings are contradictory to the results of Nanjappa *et al.* (2011) and Devaraj & Ravichandra (2017).

Participants opinion on services provided in Krishimela

The participants opinion about different services provided by them were elicited and the results are provided in Table 4. It could be observed that more than 90 per cent of the farmers expressed arrangements in demonstration plots, sale of agricultural inputs and agricultural implements and distribution of prizes to farmers was highly satisfied. More than 85 per cent of the farmers opined that farmers & scientists interaction, services provided at enquiry, registration and time of conduct of Krishimela was highly satisfied. Around forty two per cent and thirty seven per cent of the farmers expressed less satisfaction on basic amenities (water, electricity & toilet) and vehicle parking provided at Krishimela respectively.

Further, the arrangements in the demonstration plots were highly satisfied because it is a regular feature of the organization as well as enthusiasm of the institution to provide information to the farmers. Sale of agricultural inputs and implements was also highly

TABLE 4
Opinion of participants on services provided in Krishi Mela (n=290)

Service	Highly Satisfied		Less Satisfied	
	No.	%	No.	%
Farmers & Scientist Interaction	248	85.51	42	14.48
Sale of Agricultural inputs	274	94.48	16	5.52
Sale of Agricultural Implements	270	93.11	20	6.90
Enquiry	252	86.9	38	13.10
Food arrangements	234	80.69	56	19.31
Vehicle parking	182	62.76	108	37.24
Registration	247	85.17	43	14.83
Advertisement	240	82.76	50	17.24
Time of conduct	253	87.24	37	12.76
Basic Amenities (water, electricity & Toilet)	168	57.93	122	42.07
Arrangements in demonstration plots	277	95.52	13	4.48
Volunteers services	241	83.11	49	16.90
Prize to Farmers	263	90.69	27	9.31

satisfied because, that was a need of the present situation to conserve soil fertility status and to overcome from labour problem. Distribution of prizes to farmers was also highly satisfied. It may be because of the reason that, it might encourage other participant farmers to perform and practice the agricultural practices in better way at their farm to earn more income and to become model farmers to other fellow farmers. Participants ranked basic amenities (water, electricity & Toilet) and vehicle parking arrangements as less satisfied which may be due to huge participation of the farmers that might be beyond the expectations of the organizers and also no control mechanism to check the exact number of the probable participants. This might led to this type of results. This finding seeks the support of the study conducted by Nanjappa *et al.* (2011), Devaraj & Ravichandra (2017) and Preethi *et al.* (2017).

It can be concluded that among different services provided, most of the farmers expressed that arrangements in demonstration plots, Sale of Agricultural inputs, Agricultural Implements and distribution of prizes to farmers were highly satisfied. Whereas, basic amenities (water, electricity & Toilet) and vehicle parking needs improvement. By and large

the organization of Krishimela is beneficial in many ways and promotes popularization of newly released varieties, improved cultivation practices and technologies. Therefore, emulating such efforts in other campuses in the years to come is a worthy proposition. Also efforts should be made to arrange basic amenities to conduct Krishimela in a be-fitting manner

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