

Impact of agricultural technology information centre (ATIC) on the farming community in Dharwad, Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

Agricultural technology information centers (ATIC) have been established at state agricultural universities to cater to the needs of the farming community. A study was conducted at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Dharwad to know the extent of usage of ATIC services. Primary data were collected from 400 farmers/farm women to know the awareness about ATIC and its activities as well as adoption of technologies popularized by ATIC. The sample constituted 200 respondents each from UAS adopted and non-adopted villages of Dharwad Taluk. Secondary data were also collected from ATIC records to study the utilization of services by the farming community. The findings revealed that most of the respondents (70-80%) were aware of the presence of the agricultural university. In the adopted villages 79 per cent were aware of the university and 74 per cent of ATIC. In the non-adopted villages only 41 per cent were aware of the university while none of them had ever visited or availed the services of ATIC. The utilization of animal health services was as high as 91.12 per cent in 2010. This gradually decreased to 20.90 per cent in 2013. From the adopted villages most visited UAS campus to participate in Krishi Mela (74%) and to seek solutions to crop management practices (68%). The respondents from UAS adopted village had better utilized the services of ATIC. It is therefore important to create awareness among people of other villages at least from Hubli and Dharwad Taluks about the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad and the extension services which could be availed of by the farming community.

Keywords: ATIC; adoption, information service; adopted; non-adopted

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural Technology Information Centre (ATIC) has been established under the NATP programme in 1996 at UAS, Dharwad to cater to the needs of the farming community. Here the services of subject matter specialists are provided under a single window system and diagnostic services are

also provided at one place under one roof. ATIC provides linkage among research, extension and farmer. Hence it is necessary to know the extent of usefulness of ATIC to the farming community.

This study was planned to know the extent of awareness of ATIC and its activities among the farming community and

the extent of services catered to/availed of by the farming community.

Pandey and Solanki (2013) stated that 60 per cent of the respondents knew the complete and exact name of the ATIC while for others it was just a source from where they could purchase agricultural inputs and farm-based publications.

Tiwari (2011) revealed that all the respondents were aware about MGNREGA programme running within their villages however only a few knew the complete name of the programme; all the respondents knew about 100 days of guaranteed wage employment provided under the programme but none of them was able to specify that it was basically for enhancing their livelihood security.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in five villages of Dharwad. Out of these three (Lokur, Kalasankoppa and Kumbapur) were UAS adopted villages while two (Narendra and Yerikoppa) were non-adopted villages. The sample consisted of 400 farm men/women, while 200 were from adopted and 200 were from non-adopted villages. Keeping the objectives in view a structured interview schedule was used to collect primary data from the respondents about ATIC and adoption of technologies that have been transferred through ATIC. Secondary data were taken

from ATIC to study the availing of ATIC services by the farmers. The data were subjected to statistical analysis.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicates that 85 per cent of farmers/farm women were aware of Agricultural University, Dharwad in adopted and 70 per cent in non-adopted villages. Similarly the awareness about ATIC was found to be 79 per cent in adopted and only 41 per cent in non-adopted villages. It was found that 74 per cent respondents from the adopted and none from the non-adopted villages visited ATIC. The farmers expressed that they visited ATIC whenever they encountered problems rather than on a regular basis.

Awareness level of respondents regarding the ATIC activities is depicted in Table 2. Majority of the respondents (82%) in adopted villages were aware that ATIC dealt with crop management followed by horticultural information (80%) and veterinary information (75%). However in the non-adopted villages only a few respondents were found to be aware that ATIC dealt with crop management practices (37%), veterinary (36%) and horticulture (28%). About 50 per cent of adopted village respondents were aware of ATIC museum and extension publications while this per cent was very low in the non-adopted villages (6-9%).

Impact of ATIC on farming community

Table 1. Awareness about and visits of farmers to ATIC (n= 400)

Component	Adopted villages (n= 200)		Non-adopted villages (n= 200)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Awareness about Agricultural University, Dharwad	170	85	139	70
Awareness about ATIC	158	79	59	41
Visited ATIC for advisory services	148	74	—	—
Visited once or twice in a week	—	—	—	—
Visited once or twice in a fortnight	—	—	—	—
Visited once in a month	—	—	—	—
Visited once as and when there was a problem	148	74	—	—

Table 2. Awareness among farmers about ATIC activities

Activity	Adopted villages (n= 200)		Non-adopted villages (n= 200)	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Crop management	164	82	74	37
Veterinary/animal husbandry	150	75	74	36
Horticulture	160	80	55	28
Publications	92	46	18	9
Museum of ATIC	94	47	12	6

Table 3 furnishes information about the ATIC services availed of by the farming community during the years from 2010 to 2013. During 2010 out of 5550 people 91 per cent availed the animal services. In addition to the farm animals from nearby villages this service was also availed by people from Dharwad city for their pets. The other services were availed by negligible numbers. In 2011 it was again animal health

services which were availed by about 50 per cent respondents. However during this period a considerable percentage visited ATIC as a part of their study tour (22.09%) while 16.16 per cent attended trainings organized by ATIC. Even in 2012 the same trend as of 2011 continued. But in 2013 maximum number of farmers/farm women (59.70%) availed the service of the farmers study tour organized by ATIC and only

Table 3. Availing of ATIC services by the farming community

Service	2010		2011		2012		2013	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Animal health	5057	91.12	3082	47.40	2420	34.78	1153	20.99
Horticultural planting material	57	1.03	337	5.18	454	6.52	265	4.82
Crop management practices/ activities	172	3.10	461	7.09	531	7.63	443	8.06
Plant protection	31	0.59	62	0.95	153	2.2	218	3.97
Attending training programme/ visiting museum	223	4.02	1051	16.16	1838	26.42	62	1.03
Farmers' study tour	-	-	1433	22.04	1547	22.23	3280	59.70
Enquiry about entrepreneurial activities	3	0.05	6	0.09	5	0.07	49	0.89
Forestry related information	3	0.05	7	0.11	3	0.04	-	-
Soil testing information	4	0.07	63	0.97	7	0.10	24	0.44
Total	5550		6502		6958		5494	

f= Frequency

20.99 per cent availed animal health service.

The number of farmers/farm women availing ATIC services was highest (6958) in 2012 followed by 2011(6502) and 2010 (5550) and the least was in the year 2013 (5494). Over the years those availing animal health services had decreased from 91 in 2010 to 21 per cent in 2013. It may be due to availability of animal health services (vaccination and artificial insemination) at their respective villages.

Farmers' study tours were now being increasingly organized by the state department of agriculture as exposure visits

to the ATIC museum as well as to the Agricultural University, Dharwad to subject them to the research and extension activities carried out by the university. Similarly many students also visited ATIC museum to know about activities of Agricultural University, Dharwad. Exposure visits were found to be more effective to disseminate suitable/ useful technologies and also motivated farmers/farm women to adopt new and useful innovations.

Table 4 indicates purpose of visit to the ATIC by the farming community. Krishi Mela is a mega event of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad and thousands of people visit the Mela to know more about the agricultural aspects as well

Table 4. Purpose of visit to ATIC of the farmers of adopted villages (n= 200)

Purpose	Frequency	%
Training	108	54
Crop management practices	136	68
Plant protection	74	37
Livestock	36	18
Meeting	122	61
Krishi Mela	148	74
Study tour	84	42

as availability of new implements and equipments in the market. It is during this mega event that 74 per cent farmers visited the ATIC. Sixty eight per cent of them visited ATIC to know more about crop management practices. Similarly 61 per cent visited ATIC to attend the meetings or on the occasion of input distribution under certain projects. This was mostly among farmers of the adopted villages who were familiar with the staff of ATIC and due to certain state government projects being implemented by UAS.

Training is one of the important components to educate or update farming community. Many training programmes were organized by ATIC on different aspects of agricultural technologies and 54 per cent respondents said that they had visited ATIC to attend training programmes that benefitted them.

Table 5 presents practices adopted by respondents with the help of ATIC. Majority of the respondents (76%) said that they had adopted certain crop management

Table 5. Adoption of ATIC technology by the respondents (n=200)

Technology	Frequency	%
Animal Husbandry	104	52
Crop management practices	152	76
Smokeless Chullah	136	68
Agricultural implements	138	69
Fruit seedlings	70	35
Others (Azolla/vermicompost/bio-fertilizer /apiculture)	48	24

practices like new/improved varieties of seeds, balanced dosages of fertilizers and correct use of pesticides. In case of adoption of agricultural implements 69 per cent of the respondents expressed that they began using improved implements like cycle weeder, rake, Saral Kurpi after learning about the same from ATIC. Smokeless Chula was adopted by 68 per cent farmers as fuel and energy saving device. Animal husbandry was another area that 52 per cent farmers adopted with the help of ATIC.

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