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Adoption Behaviour of Cashew Growers in Cuddalore District

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ABSTRACT

India has a creditable record of attaining good amount of foreign exchange by way of export of cashew kernels. Among the Agri-Horticultural commodities getting exported from India cashew ranks the 2nd position. The main objective of the study was to analyse the relationship of socio-personal and socio-psychological characteristics with their level of adoption.The study was conducted in four village of Virudhachalam block of Cuddalore district. The sample size consisted of 120 cashew growers under NHM. Proportionate random sampling procedure was employed in selecting the respondents. The extent of adoption of different cultural practices taught in NHM training programmes was studied through a teacher made test and that majority (65 %) of the respondents exhibited high level of adoption of technologies taught in NHM training programme.

Cashew (*Anacardiumoccidentale* L.) a native of Eastern Brazil, was introduced to India just as other commercial crops like Rubber, Coffee, Tea etc. by the Portuguese nearly five centuries back. Cashew became one of the important plantation crops with its significant contribution to the country's foreign exchange through export of processed cashew kernels and Cashew Nut Shell Liquid (CNSL). India is the largest area holder of this crop. Among the Agri-Horticultural commodities getting exported from India, cashew ranks the 2nd position. Tamil Nadu ranks fifth in area and production of nuts in India and the cashew crop has been raised in about one lakh hectares (Venkattakumar .R. 2008). The National Horticulture Mission (NHM) has been launched as a centrally sponsored scheme to promote holistic growth of the horticulture sector through an area based regionally differentiated strategies. The scheme is implemented through District Mission Committees headed by the District Collectors and Deputy Director of Horticulture of the district is the member Secretary of the committee. For instance, a massive funds estimating Rs.8518 lakh (2007-08) has been allocated for the Training component of NHM to Tamil Nadu alone. Massive funds were spent on training adopting diversified training methods like exposure visits, farmers field schools, on-farm demonstrations, practical class room sessions etc., There is an ever existing scope to study the extent of both symbolic and practical adoption of the technologies by the trainees, have to be known by the researchers.

METHODOLOGY

In Tamil Nadu, there are 32 districts, out of which Cuddalore district (cashew cluster under NHM) was purposively selected as the study area. The area expansion under NHM

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(800 ha) is comparatively more when compared to other districts of Tamil Nadu and the district has marketing infrastructure within its cluster. Cuddalore district has 13 blocks .It was decided to select one block purposively based on the criteria of more number of beneficiaries. The beneficiaries list for the year 2007-08 under National Horticultural Mission obtained from the office of Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Virudhachalam as the cashew farmers were trained by the Subject Matter Specialist of KVK. The block Virudhachalam has the maximum number of beneficiaries under National Horticultural Mission (NHM). Hence it was purposively selected for the study. Among the selected block Virudhachalam, four villages which had maximum number of beneficiaries were deliberately selected for the study. The selected villages were Puthukurapetai, Kuppanatham, Aladi and Manakollai. As the study aims to analyze the knowledge gain through National Horticultural Mission training and adoption of cashew technologies farmers and the relationship between the profile of the respondents with their adoption towards National Horticultural Mission. Employing proportionate random sampling method, 120 beneficiaries of the NHM were selected from block Virudhachalam.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Extent of adoption of different cultural practices taught in NHM training programmes.

The extent of adoption is the degree to which a farmer accepts and adopts a new technology. Though various technologies were introduced and taught to the farmers, it is important that those technologies were fully accepted and adopted by the farmers in their field characterized by continuous adoption of those technologies (MamtaTiwari and priyavashishttia, 2005). The extent of adoption of different cultural practices taught in NHM training programmes was studied through a teacher made test and the results are tabulated in Table 1.

Majority (65 %) of the respondents exhibited high level of adoption of technologies taught in NHM training programme. It is followed by 20.00 percent of the respondents with low adoption level and 15 percent with medium level of adoption of technologies taught in NHM training programme.

The high level adoption of technologies imparted through NHM training programme is mainly due to the positive and significant attitude of respondents towards training, innovativeness, scientific orientation and risk orientation.

Practice wise Adoption

From Table 1, it is inferred that almost majority of the technologies namely selection of varieties (94.2 %), planting material to be used (98.3 %), seedling treatment with bio-fertilizer (87.5 %), spacing (93.3 %), pit forming and bunding (91.7 %), pesticide application (90.8 %), fungicide application (92.5 %), mulching (90 %), pruning (90.8 %), cover cropping (66.7 %), inter cropping (90.0 %),

Table 1. (n=120)
Distribution of Respondents Based on Their Practice Wise Adoption

S.No.	Technologies	Adoption		Non-adoption	
		Number	percentage	Number	Percentage
1	Varieties	113	94.20	7	5.80
2	Planting material	118	98.30	2	1.70
3	Treatment of seedling with bio-fertilizer	105	87.50	15	12.50
4	Appropriate spacing	112	93.30	8	6.70
5	Drip irrigation	1	0.80	119	99.20
6	Fertigation	8	6.70	112	93.30
7	Pit forming	110	91.70	10	8.30
8	Pesticide application	109	90.80	11	9.20
9	Fungicide Application	111	92.50	9	7.50
10	Hormones Application	14	11.70	106	88.30
11	Weedicide application	17	14.20	103	85.80
12	Mulching	108	90.00	12	10.00
13	Pruning	109	90.80	11	9.20
14	Cover cropping	80	66.70	40	33.30
15	Inter cropping	108	90.00	12	10.00
16	Time and stage of harvest	113	94.20	7	5.80
17	Top working	17	14.20	103	85.80

(*Multiple response obtained)

time and stage of harvest (94.2 %) were adopted by majority of the respondents.

The adoption of these major production technologies of cashew is due to the farmers experience with the Regional Research Station (Cashew) and Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) which is located in the study area. Frequent exposure of the respondents to various training programmes of NHM is another important factor for influencing the adoption of above mentioned technologies which stood as the basic production technologies in cashew production.

Some other bottom lying reasons for adoption of the described technologies were, Cost effectiveness, Compatibility with local conditions and previous technologies, Less skill requirement and Increased income per unit area, etc.,

Technologies in relation to the practices like drip irrigation (0.8 %), fertigation (6.7 %),

hormones application (11.7 %), weedicide application (14.2 %) and top working (14.2 %) were not adopted by majority of the respondents. The reasons for non-adoption the above mentioned technologies by a majority of the respondents was high cost factor, more skill requirement and extended time duration and poor availability of resources.

CONCLUSION

Majority (65 %) of the respondents exhibited high level of adoption of technologies taught in NHM training programme. It is followed by 20.00 per cent of the respondents with low adoption level and 15 per cent with medium level of adoption of technologies taught in NHM training programme.The reasons for non-adoption the above mentioned technologies by a majority of the respondents was due to high cost factor, more skill requirement and extended time duration and poor availability of resources.

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