

**Research Note**

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**Communication Behaviour of Cashew Cultivators****K. Kanagasabapathi<sup>1</sup> and V. Sakthivel<sup>2</sup>****ABSTRACT**

*In a country like India where agriculture is the main occupation, communication can serve better for the cause of development. Cashew being one of the important cash crops, proper communication strategy need to be devised to reach the cashew cultivators to improve the cashew production and productivity. Keeping this in mind, the present study was taken-up to analyse the communication behaviour of cashew farmers. A sample of 120 cashew farmers were selected from Panruti taluk of Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu using simple random sampling technique. The data were collected using a well-structured interview schedule and analysed with appropriate statistical tools. Regarding communication behaviour, among personal cosmopolite sources, Rural Welfare Officer & Block development officials were the mainly utilized sources by the respondents for getting information on cashew. Among the personal localite sources, Panchayat offices and Primary Co-operatives were the most used sources by the respondents for getting information on cashew.*

**Keywords :** *Communication; Information processing; Information storage; Information output; cashew cultivators.*

Cashew nut cultivation assumes special significance as it is being grown in dry tracts of Tamil Nadu providing income to small and marginal farmers. Tamil Nadu occupies second place in terms of area under Cashewnut in the country. However its production accounted only for seven per cent of the country's production due to low productivity. Communication has attained great importance in the community development and extension programmes.

It is through this process that aims and objectives of the programmes are to be widely disseminated to the people and useful informations are passed to them to solve their problems (Baskaran and Rao, 1985). This necessitates that the extension workers should have a thorough understanding of the communication process, to influence the farmers for adopting modern recommended technologies (Dubey and Bisnol, 2008) Hence, an attempt

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was made to study the communication behaviour of cashew farmers with the specific objective of studying information input behaviour, information processing behaviour and the information output behaviour of cashew cultivators.

## METHODOLOGY

Cuddalore district has the maximum area under cashew in Tamil Nadu State. Panruti taluk has the highest area in cashew cultivation in this district and hence it was purposively selected for the study. Six villages were selected based on their higher area in cashew cultivation. A sample of 20 cashew farmers was randomly selected

from each village to have a sample size of 120 representing all the six villages for the study. A well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule was used for the collection of data. The data collected were processed, coded and tabulated for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics analyses and correlation analysis were used for meaningful interpretation of data.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### a) Information Input Behaviour

The extent of utilization of various information sources by cashew cultivators is presented in Table - 1.

**Table 1.**  
**Information Sources used by Cashew Cultivators**

Sl. No.	Information Sources	Percentage (n=120)
<b>I</b>	<b>Personal Cosmopolite</b>	
1.	Rural welfare officer	97.50
2.	Block development officials	94.16
3.	Demonstrations	67.50
4.	Campaign meetings	36.66
5.	Farmer's training	35.83
6.	Query letters	20.83
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>59.00</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>Personal-Localite</b>	
1.	Panchayat offices	88.33
2.	Co-operative society's	69.16
3.	Progressive farmers	29.16
4.	Input merchants	27.50
5.	Friends and neighbours	20.00
6.	School teachers	17.50
7.	Relatives	9.16
8.	Money lenders	0.83
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>33.00</b>
<b>III</b>	<b>Impersonal Cosmopolite</b>	
1.	Farm radio broadcast	95.83
2.	Posters and charts	94.16
3.	Agricultural films	92.50
4.	Tea shop boards	86.66
5.	Written information material	80.83
6.	Newspapers	52.50
7.	Leaflets and bulletins	29.16
8.	Popular farm magazines	9.16
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>67.00</b>

It is seen from Table 1 that the cashew cultivators approached

all the personal cosmopolite sources. Among them, 'Rural Welfare Officers', 'Block development officials' and 'Demonstrations' were the three personal cosmopolite sources predominately contacted by more number of respondents for getting information on cashew cultivation practices, inputs, marketing strategies etc.,

Regarding personal localite sources the farmers contacted 'Panchayat offices', 'Co-operative societies', 'progressive farmers' and 'input merchants' as sources of information in more proportion regarding cashew cultivation and marketing aspects.

From the table, it may also be noted that all the eight impersonal cosmopolite sources were used in different proportions by 9.16 to 95.83 percent of respondents. The impersonal cosmopolite sources used by farmers were farm broadcast, posters and charts, agricultural films, tea-shop boards, written information materials, newspapers, leaflets and bulletins and popular farm magazines.

#### **b) Information Processing Behaviour**

Information processing behaviour of cashew cultivators is presented under two sub-divisions namely information evaluation and information storage.

##### **i) Information Evaluation**

Generally farmers are likely to evaluate the information in consultation and discussion with other farmers immediately after receiving the information

(Laksmidevi, 2004). In addition, before deciding to use the information gathered, they also analyse the merits and demerits of the information received by them.

**Table 2.**  
**Methods of Evaluation of Information used by Cashew Cultivators**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Methods of Evaluation</b>	<b>Percentage (n=120)</b>
1.	Discussed with family members	85.83
2.	Discussed with friends or neighbours	83.33
3.	Discussed with relatives	72.50
4.	Considered availability of seeds, fertilizers and inputs	64.16
5.	Discussed with progressive farmers	63.33
6.	Discussed with input agents	60.83
7.	Discussed with Rural Welfare Officer	60.00
8.	Considered suitability	60.00
9.	Considered ease in operation	53.33
10.	Observed demonstrations and fields growth by others	51.66
11.	Considered profitability	50.00
12.	Discussed with block level extension personals	50.00
13.	Discussed with school teachers	40.83
14.	Conducted trials	23.33

### ii) Information Storage

After the evaluation of the information received, storage of the

information is indispensable for its future use. Table 3 reveals the different methods of storage of information used by the cashew cultivators.

**Table 3.**

#### **Methods of Information Storage used by Cashew Cultivators**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Methods of Information storage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage (n=120)</b>
1.	By memorising	117	97.50
2.	By informing to family members to keep in mind	112	93.33
3.	By making note in a specified notebook	70	58.33
4.	By keeping leaflets, handouts, etc. in a specified safe place	60	50.00
5.	By making note in a common note book	50	41.66

Memorising was the most commonly used method for information storage by majority of the respondents. 'Informing to family members to keep in mind' was the second most used Method.

### c. Information Output Behaviour

The results of information output behaviour of cashew cultivators revealed that, 'Relatives' was the category of persons with whom most of the respondents (95.83 per cent) shared the information. 'Neighbours' and 'friends' were found to be the second and third type of persons with whom majority of the respondents (89.16 percent and 63.33 per cent, respectively) shared information.

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