

## Farmers' Retention of Knowledge Gained from Posters

In mass campaign on agriculture, posters play an important role. The combined use of mass media and face-to-face contact has been found to be a powerful persuasive technique in any propaganda campaign. Poster usually includes a few words with an illustration. It gives the passerby a brief but impressive message. It is not known as to how far the message from a poster is remembered by its receiver. This study does give some idea about the farmers' retention of message of a selected poster.

This investigation forms part of a larger study on the retention of knowledge gained through selected extension methods individually and in combination. A poster on HB 3 cumbu produced by the State Department of Agriculture, Tamil Nadu was exposed to a sample of 37 literate farmers to whom the message would be applicable. The sample farmers had also not seen that poster earlier and they belonged to Thenkarai village of Thondamuthur block in Tamil Nadu. The poster was shown to the respondents individually for a shorter period of time and after it was withdrawn, they were able to reproduce the message correctly on immediate recall. Subsequently the

respondents were asked to recall the same message after one, two and three weeks. The verbal material expressed orally by the respondents was quantified by assigning score. Credit was given not only to the perfect recall but also to partial recall. At the perfect recall one could get a maximum of 3 scores.

The poster chosen carried the message as "HB 3 cumbu suitable for dry lands with the picture of a pair of cumbu earheads" in the regional language, Tamil. The data were analysed and interpreted on the basis of percentage distribution of responses and weighed mean score. The data are presented in Tables 1 to 3.

Table 1. Percentage of farmers giving perfect recall of the message at the different intervals

(n=37)

Message-different items	After 1 week	After 2 weeks	After 3 weeks
Recalling the picture of cumb earheads	100.0	100.0	100.0
Recalling verbal item HB 3 cumbu	45.9	40.6	40.6
Recalling verbal item "suitable for drylands"	48.7	24.3	24.3



Nearly 75 per cent of the total message was retained by the farmers up to one week. After two weeks the farmers remembered only 64 per cent of the total message and 62 per cent at the end of 3rd week. There was also a gradual reduction in retentivity of the message as the time passed (Table 2). This was evident from the analysis of mean scores at different intervals.

Table 2. Retention of knowledge by farmers at different intervals in terms of mean score

Retention of knowledge	After 1 week	After 2 weeks	After 3 weeks
Farmers' average mean score out of 3	2.23	19.3	1.87
Percentage of mean score	74.33	64.33	62.33
Difference in mean score between two successive tests	0.77	0.30	0.06

Recalling was rapid immediately after learning and thereafter proceeded at a slower rate. This was evident from the initial drop by 0.77 in the mean score from immediate recall after one week. But the drop in the mean score between first and second recalls was 0.30 and that between second and third recalls was 0.06 only.

Table 3 implies that education was found to influence the retention of message. As levels of education of farmers increased, the mean score of

Table 3. Educational levels of farmers in relation to their retention of knowledge (by mean score) at different intervals

Education levels	After 1 week	After 2 weeks	After 3 weeks
Primary (17 Nos)	1.94	1.65	1.59
Secondary (15 Nos)	2.37	2.00	1.90
Collegiate (5 Nos)	2.80	2.70	2.70

knowledge retained increased correspondingly in each of three intervals. This means that the more educated a farmer is, the more likely he is to retain knowledge.

Thus a pictorial representation in a poster is likely to be remembered for a longer period of time and this suggests that all posters should included pictorial representation. Further the poster should be exhibited one to two weeks prior to the probable use of the message so as to ensure the maximum retention of the message by more number of farmers.

V. S. SUBRAMANYAN

Department of Agricultural  
Extension, Agricultural College and  
Research Institute,  
Coimbatore-641003.