

To study the Farmer's attitude towards drip irrigation and traditional irrigation system in Junagadh district, Gujarat

ABSTRACT

Cotton (*Gossypium herbaceum*) is a leading natural fiber crop that is cultivated for its soft, fluffy staple fiber. Drip irrigation is a method of irrigation wherein water is carried to the plant under low pressure, through small diameter plastic pipes and delivered at the root zone, drop by drop through an emitting device. The research was conducted in five talukas of Junagadh district, utilizing a multistage sampling technique. A total of 160 farmers were selected as respondents. The study employs various research methodologies to achieve its objectives. Likert's scale was used to analyse attitude towards the drip and traditional irrigation system. Study of attitude revealed the farmers in the research area to having neutral attitudes of the majority of respondents toward the drip irrigation methods. The study of attitude reflects the behavioural intention towards the acceptance of irrigation systems. The study revealed that some 48.75 % of the non-adopter farmers had the positive attitude toward the traditional irrigation methods whereas 51.25 % of them had a negative and neutral attitude. With regards to trends toward drip irrigation methods, about 66.25 % of the total respondent farmers were found with positive attitudes and some 33.75 % with neutral and negative trend.

Keywords: Cotton (Gossypium herbaceum), Farmer's attitude, Drip irrigation system, Traditional irrigation system, Likert's scale

1. INTRODUCTION

In India, more than 80 per cent of the available water is used for irrigation. Irrigation is the controlled application of water through man-made system to meet the water requirements of agriculture. Irrigation is an artificial application of water to crop or plants, especially when an agricultural field does not get enough water through rains. Having perhaps the largest irrigated area in the world, India faces acute water scarcity. We need to adopt irrigation method that help in not only in saving freshwater, but also provide sufficient water to plants for growth. One such method now being followed in India is 'micro irrigation' [1]. Micro-irrigation is used in farm as well as commercial greenhouses. It has proven successful in a commercial sense due to automation. Also, with

pipng and pressurized pumps, fertilizer can be added to the water. This automates the water inland feeding of plants and is hilly or sloped, micro-irrigation can be the answer in avoiding run-off. The cost of micro-irrigation would cost less than levelling the land for any type of farming and can help control erosion. On farm growing crops spaced closely together such as strawberries, micro-irrigation can help in more direct watering methods. For crops grown under cover, requiring more water, micro-irrigation can help control the flow [2].

Cotton, one of the most important commercial and fibre crops of global significance is called as the king of fibre, it is a multipurpose crop grown under various agro-climatic conditions [9] [17]. Cotton accounts for around 25 per cent of total global fibre production. It plays a notable role in

the sustainable economy of India and livelihood of the Indian cotton farming community (5.8 million cotton farmers). Cotton is the most favoured fibre among the Indian textile mills, as a major raw material for the textile industry. In the raw material consumption of the Indian textile industry the proportion of cotton is around 60 per cent [10]. According to India Brand Equity Foundation report on cotton industry and export (2021), the Indian textile industry contributes around 5 per cent to country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 14 per cent to industrial production and 11 per cent to total export earnings. It is also the second largest employer in the country after agriculture, providing employment to over 51 million people directly and 68 million people indirectly including unskilled workers. Because of this social and economic significance, it is famously renowned as "white gold" [11].

As per the Cotton Corporation of India Limited, Statistics (2021), world cotton production is estimated at 24.22 million metric tons, with the area of 32.04 million hectares. The major cotton growing countries in the world are India (12.96 million hectares), United States of America (3.52 million hectares), China (3.17 million hectares), Pakistan (2.19 million hectares), Brazil (1.52 million hectares) and Uzbekistan (1.03 million hectares) [12]. India has the highest cotton production and area, with 6.05 million metric tons and 12.96 million hectares accounting for 26 per cent and 41 per cent of global cotton production and area respectively. The cotton growing region in the country is classified in to 3 zone Northern zone comprises Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan, Central zone comprises of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat and Southern zones comprises of Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Among them, the 3 major cotton producing states are Gujarat (22.79 lakh hectares), Maharashtra (42.86 lakh hectares) and Telangana (24.51 lakh hectares) [12].

Irrigation systems are meant to supplement crop water requirements and to support the farmers by drawing water from different water sources (rivers, reservoirs, canals, channels, lakes, and wells) and diverting to farms or fields [13] [18]. From pre-historic times in India, several cost-efficient and sustainable traditional/indigenous

irrigation systems (TIS) have been developed based on harnessing and collection of rainwater and utilization of surface and groundwater. From different Archaeological excavations, it is found that TIS are a part of Indian agriculture for at least 5000 years. These TIS are typically designed for small-scale community applications, which are designed, constructed and managed by local farmers. However, only very limited TIS have remained as of today, which are under community ownership and at religious places [14].

In old time most of the farmers were using well, tube well, tank and canal for irrigating crops. There is lack of sufficient irrigation water. Due to limitation on availability and scarcity of irrigation water farmers adopted advance irrigation system. Drip irrigation is a method of irrigation wherein water is carried to the plant under low pressure, through small diameter plastic pipes and delivered at the root zone, drop by drop through an emitting device. This is based on the fundamental concept of irrigation only the root zone of the crop rather than the entire land surface, as done in the surface irrigation. It is most suitable for the crops which are shown at mind distance and find applicability in hard rock areas where groundwater is scarce which helps in optimization use of the limited water resources. The drip irrigation system (DIS) has its advantages and limitations. Its advantages are in terms of savings of water over flow irrigation, effective use of fertilizer, less labour and energy cost. The limitation for adopting of this method is its high initial cost, which is beyond the purchasing capacity of small and marginal farmers and thus mainly adopted by large farmers [3].

In drip irrigation system, water is supplied to the crop drop by drop at very low rate from a system of small diameter plastic pipes fitted with outlets called emitters or drippers. It is also called as trickle irrigation. It does not wet the whole soil profile like surface or sprinkler method of irrigation, it only gets a part of soil in which roots grow. In other words, it delivers water and nutrients directly to the plant roots on in the right amount at the right time so that each plant can achieve its proper growth and development. Drip irrigation is 40% more efficient because it uses 40% less water than conventional method of irrigation. Usage of fertilizer can also be optimized this way [15]. Due to different factors and perception of farmers towards drip irrigation,

it has become inevitable to use drip irrigation practices in agriculture, especially in agriculture and horticultural crops to obtain higher yields of good quality products and to earn good revenue by the farmers [16] [19] [20] [21] [22].

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Data source

The data used in this study were obtained from survey questionnaires and interviews among farmers in Junagadh district of Gujarat. A multi-stage random sampling method was used to select the samples during the actual survey. In the first stage of sampling, the Junagadh district was selected. In the second stage five talukas was selected. At the third stage, two villages from each talukawere selected. From each village 8 users and 8 non-users' farmers were selected. In this way total 160 farmers were selected for the study purpose.

2.2 Statistical method

The Likert's scale technique was used to study the attitude of cotton grower towards drip irrigation system. Mean score and Standard Deviation was calculated for assigning the ranks [7]. Likert's scale with three-divisions was used to classify the respondents. This was based on their use of traditional and drip irrigation methods [5]. Data against the 10 statements were collected by using the questionnaire, consisting of positive and negative statements [4]. The attitude of each farmer is measured against the level of his agreement to each of the statement into the following categories: 1=agree, 2=natural, and 3=disagree for the statements remained like 3, 2, 1 [6].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Farmer's attitude towards drip irrigation method

Table 2 show the farmer's attitude toward use of drip irrigation method. The positive statements such as: "Can save time, effort and energy?" (Mean 2.01; SD 0.865); "Does not require trained labour?" (Mean 2.075; SD 0.791); "Can cause difficulty in the application of fertilizers and pesticides?" (Mean 2.0375; SD 0.8335); and "By applying the irrigation method, light and frequent irrigations can be made efficiently" (Mean 2.025; SD 0.8855); were ranked from the first to the fourth order to indicate the farmers' attitude toward drip irrigation methods with a mean more than 2.0 for each statement. With the mean

1.63; SD 0.799, the statement "Can cause wastage of water as the farmer has no control over the amount of water to be applied to the crops?" received the lowest rank. The 2nd lowest means 1.812; SD 0.791 was observed for the statement "Economical". The statement "Can manage the irrigation system automatically?" received the 3rd lowest mean 1.83; SD 0.802.

Table 1. Farmer's attitude towards the drip irrigation system (n=80)

Statement	Drip Irrigation System		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Does not require trained labour?	2.075	0.791969185	2
Easy to implement	1.8875	0.856749081	7
Can involve high initial cost?	1.9	0.805047369	6
Can cause difficulty in the application of fertilizers and pesticides?	2.0375	0.833533731	3
Easy to use farm machinery	1.825	0.791969185	9
By applying the irrigation method, light and frequent irrigations can be made efficiently	2.025	0.885537811	4
Can deliver water to all parts of the field uniformly and efficiently?	1.9625	0.877911071	5
Can manage the irrigation system automatically?	1.8375	0.802586799	8
Can save time, effort and energy?	2.01	0.865659915	1
Can cause wastage of water as the farmer has no control over the amount of water to be applied to the crops?	1.6375	0.799426218	10

3.2 Farmer's attitude towards traditional irrigation system

Table 3 show the farmer's attitude towards traditional irrigation method. The statement "Can involve high initial cost?" with the highest mean 1.8875 and SD 0.8713 got the highest rank from

the perspective of farmers toward the traditional irrigation methods. The statement “Can deliver water to all parts of the field uniformly and efficiently?” achieved the 2nd highest mean 1.85 and SD 0.7647. The statement “Can cause wastage of water as the farmer has no control over the amount of water to be applied to the crops?” with the mean 1.8375 and SD 0.8485 remained with the 3rd highest rank, and the statement “Can manage the irrigation system automatically?” attains the fourth position with the mean of 1.825 and SD 0.7919. With the mean 1.6625 and SD 0.8259, the lowest rank was observed for the statement “Can cause difficulty in the application of fertilizers and pesticides?”. Whereas the 2nd lowest means 1.7 and SD 0.8018 was attached to the statement “Easy to implement”. The statement “Easy to use farm machinery” received the 3rd lowest rank with mean 1.7375 and SD 0.7914. These statements were ranked at the bottom, being with the lowest means, indicating the farmers’ attitude toward traditional irrigation methods with an arithmetic mean less than 1.75.

Table 2. Farmer’s attitude toward use of traditional irrigation method (n=80)

Statement	Drip Irrigation System		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Does not require trained labour?	1.7875	0.806520107	6
Easy to implement	1.7	0.801896486	9
Can involve high initial cost?	1.8875	0.871398556	1
Can cause difficulty in the application of fertilizers and pesticides?	1.6625	0.825905717	10
Easy to use farm machinery	1.775	0.795159406	7
By applying the irrigation method, light and frequent irrigations can be made efficiently	1.7375	0.791469551	8
Can deliver water to all parts of the field uniformly and efficiently?	1.85	0.764728793	2
Can manage the irrigation system	1.825	0.791969185	4

automatically?			
Can save time, effort and energy?	1.8125	0.843347009	5
Can cause wastage of water as the farmer has no control over the amount of water to be applied to the crops?	1.8375	0.848584078	3

3.3 Distribution of Farmers Regarding Their Attitudes Based on the Numeric Values

The distribution of farmers on the basis of the numeric values that represent the attitudes toward traditional and drip irrigation methods is presented in Table 4. Here 10 statements have been used to determine the attitudes of farmers by employing 3-point Likert scale, whereas $10 \times 1 = 10$ indicates the minimum and $10 \times 3 = 30$ is the maximum score to indicate the attitude. Similarly, $30 - 10 = 20$ is the range we do have to express attitude. To indicate the level of acceptance for a particular irrigation system we used three categories like negative, neutral, and positive [4]. The numeric values to indicate their neutral attitudes toward both the irrigation methods range between 40 degrees and less than 60 degrees. And negative attitudes toward both the irrigation methods range between 0 to 40 degrees. The third category includes the farmers with positive trends. 48.75% farmers showed the positive attitudes toward traditional irrigation methods whereas 66.25% farmers were found with positive attitudes toward drip irrigation methods. The study identifies a significant portion of the experimental population (respondents) with positive attitudes toward irrigation methods. Positive attitudes were expressed with the numeric value 60 degrees or more as revealed in the Table 4.

Table 3. Distribution of farmers according to the numeric value for their attitudes toward drip irrigation and traditional irrigation methods

Numeric value for the Drip and Traditional irrigation methods	Drip Irrigation System		Traditional Irrigation System	
	No.	%	No.	%
Less than or equal to 40 degrees (negative trend)	8	10	17	21.25
40 degrees to less than or equal to 60 degrees (neutral)	19	23.75	24	30

trend)				
60 degrees or more (positive trend)	53	66.25	39	48.75
Total	80	100	80	100

4. CONCLUSION

Likert's scale method was used for the study the attitude of farmers towards the drip and traditional irrigation method. The study of attitude reflects the behavioral intention towards the acceptance of irrigation systems. The study revealed that some 48.75 % of the non-adopter farmers had the positive attitude toward the traditional irrigation methods whereas 51.25 % of them had a negative and neutral attitude. With regards to trends toward drip irrigation methods, about 66.25 % of the total respondent farmers were found with positive attitudes and some 33.75 % with neutral and negative trend. Based on the results obtained, the study establishes the importance of the agriculture extension and training programs for the farmers of the area of research to mitigate the negative attitudes and modify the neutral attitudes toward the drip irrigation methods.

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