

RESEARCH NOTE

General Functioning of Khedut Charcha Mandals (KCMS) Organised by Farmer's Training Centre (FTC) in Kheda District of Gujarat State

C.S. Patel¹ and H.N. Patel²

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that radio can be most effective mass media, if followed with the group discussion and inter-personal communication. This leads to organisation of Khedut Charcha Mandals (KCMS) - an informal voluntary groups in the areas of Farmers' Training Centres (FTCs) under the leadership of a convenor and guidance from the Radio Contact Officer (RCO) of FTCs.

The members of KCMS carry forward a programme of self-learning through listening, group discussion and group decision. The Rural Radio Broadcasts (RRB) popularly known as Akashwani Khedut Mandal Programme (AKMP) broadcasted biweekly from All India Radio (AIR) Ahmedabad-Baroda become a focal point for exchange of views and experiences. It enables two-way communication and interpersonal communication situation. The effectiveness of self-learning environment/situation depends on the functioning of KCMS.

The present study was carried out to know various aspects that contributes in the functioning of KCMS and to seek suggestions from the members as well as convenors of KCMS in order to make them more effective.

METHODOLOGY

The 189 KCMS organised by FTC Thasara in ten talukas of Kheda district

were classified into three categories i.e. non-effective, normal and effective KCMS with the help of norms and scores developed for this purpose. One effective and two non-effective KCMS were randomly selected from the five randomly selected talukas of Kheda district. The convenor and nine randomly selected members of each above selected KCMS were taken as respondents for this study. Thus, in all there were 150 respondents (50 from five effective and 100 from ten non-effective KCMS). This constitute of 15 convenors and 135 members.

The information was collected personally by the investigator at the time of actual listening and discussing the AKMP by the respondents and going through the records and registers maintained by respective KCMS. The convenors and members were also interviewed wherever necessary by means of a structured schedule on the day/time of visit.

MAJOR FINDINGS

The findings of the study are summarised and presented as under.

General Functioning of KCMS :

- (1) Majority of the effective and non-effective KCMS (60 per cent and 70 per cent respectively) were having upto 20 members. Only 60 per cent of the effective KCMS had prepared their constitution whereas in the case of

¹ Asistant Extension Educationist, Extension Education Institute, GAU, Anand Campus, Anand.

² Director of Campus, GAU, Anand Campus, Anand.

- non-effective KCMS, none had prepared the same.
- (2) The attendance of the members in biweekly KCM's meeting was very poor, even at the time of visit of the investigator.
 - (3) Mostly all the effective KCMS has maintained the attendance register and minutes book properly. More or less regular biweekly meetings were observed in the case of effective KCMS.
 - (4) The effective KCMS were writing their questions/doubts raised after listening the AKMP to the AIR/FTC. The members of these KCMS used the farm information literature sent by the FTC more than that of non-effective KCMS.
 - (5) All the KCMS were provided a transistor radio set by the FTC. However, in 70 per cent of the non-effective KCMS, these sets were not found in working conditions. Among them in 30 per cent, alternative arrangement had made by the convenor to listen the AKMP for their members.
 - (6) Good majority of effective KCMS (80 per cent) had conducted various activities like crop competitions, study tours, seed production programmes, visit to demonstration plot/exhibition, entertainment programmes etc. for the benefit of their members in addition to the listening of AKMP. None of the non-effective KCMS had conducted such activities.
- (3) Preference to the members of KCMS in the distribution of agril. inputs by the govt. as well as other agencies.
 - (4) Organising educational/study tours/training camps of the KCM's members by the FTC.
 - (5) Organising competitions among the KCMS at the taluka or district levels and recognising the best among them.
 - (6) Frequent visits of FTC officials to the KCMS.
 - (7) Organising different activities by the FTC through the KCMS in the village as well as nearby village.
 - (8) Quick repairing of radio set or/and replacement of the same in the case it becomes out of order.
 - (9) Increasing remuneration of stationary expenditure as well as a token to the convenor also.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

In order to make KCMS more effective, the convenors should be selected properly and trained for his job to be performed. He has to play a vital role. He should motivate the members of KCMS to listen the AKMP and encourage them to take part in the discussion. For effective and purposeful discussion, the membership in KCMS should be restricted to 20 to 25. The FTC should arrange to provide a good quality radio set and arrange its quick repairing or/and replacement in the case of its out of order. The frequent visits of FTC officials and organising various activities through the KCMS will help the convenors as well as the members for more effective participation. The convenors may be changed in rotation among the members so that everybody will have an experience of performing the role of a leader.

Suggestions of the respondents

The major suggestions made by the members and convenors of KCMS includes :

- (1) Supply of a good quality radio set with a wide reception range.
- (2) Limited membership in the KCM upto 20 members.