AWARENESS OF MEMBERS OF FARMERS INTEREST GROUP ABOUT SIGNIFICANCE OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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ABSTRACT

ATMA is an autonomous registered society of key stakeholders at district level. It works on bottom up group approach. This approach focused on end users' (farmers') need and involve farmers in decision making process directly or indirectly. ATMA form many groups like FIGs and CIGS out of these groups one important group is FIG. Efforts of ATMA can only be fruit full when farmers get awareness about significance of ATMA. So, by considering the above fact, the present investigation was carried out in Anand district of Gujarat state. Three talukas of Anand district namely Umreth, Khambhat and Borsad where in, maximum numbers of FIGs working were selected purposively. Out of 500 FIGs working in 3 selected talukas of Anand District, 30 FIGs were selected proportionately. The data was collected through an interview schedule by employing an ex-post facto research design. The findings revealed that a majority (68.00 per cent) of member farmers falls under middle age group, nearly half (47.00 per cent) of the FIGs members had taken secondary school level of education, one third (33.33 per cent) of member farmers had a low experience in FIG, majority (70.00 per cent) of the member farmers had a very good group cohesiveness, more than half (54.67 per cent) of the FIGs members had a very good level of interpersonal communication. Whereas, in case of overall awareness more than half (58.67 per cent) of member farmers had high awareness about significance of ATMA.

Keywords : *awareness, significance of ATMA, FIG*

INTRODUCTION

The aim of agricultural extension is to transfer relevant knowledge and information as well as transferring policy to farmers. India has a long tradition of agricultural extension. Agricultural extension in the post-independence era was largely the function of State Departments of Agriculture which was worked on top down approach. But after the implementation of many post independence programmes, extension system were reached to a saturation in the output of its efforts. After that, master plan was came into existence and it was bottom up approach of extension system. Out of many top down programme the most important and massive programme was T & V, just like that for bottom up approach it was ATMA.

In the step of adoption, first step is awareness which indicates that for adoption of innovation, awareness is must. So, for adoption of these new ATMA project, farmers must have awareness, then only the adoption is possible.

OBJECTIVES

(1) To study the profile of Farmers Interest Groups' member

(2) To study the awareness of member farmers of FIG about significance of ATMA

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was undertaken in Anand district of Gujarat state. The list of FIGs working in Anand district was collected from the Project Director, ATMA, Anand. Three talukas where in, maximum numbers of FIGs were working namely Umreth, Khambhat and Borsad were purposively selected out of eight talukas of Anand district. We found 500 FIGs were working in 3 selected talukas of Anand District out of that, 30 FIGs were selected proportionately. "Ex-post Facto" research design was applied for this study as other independent variables have already acted upon. The interview schedule was constructed that all pertinent aspects in light of the objectives get covered. The data were collected by personal interview from selected respondent.

Chronological age of FIGs member farmers at the time of interview expressed in terms of completed year was considered as age of respondents. The member farmers were classified into young age group, middle age group and old age group. According to their level of education, they were

classified into five groups (Illiterate, Primary education, Secondary education, Higher secondary education, Graduate and Post Graduate) and measured with score assigned to actual possessed education. Experience in FIGs was calculated on the basis of the number of years of experience in FIGs by the member farmer at the time of interview. Group cohesiveness and interpersonal communication were measured with the help of five continuum strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with scoring of 5,4,3,2 and 1 for positive and reverse for negative statements**.** With the help of arbitrary method the respondents were further grouped in five categories as mentioned in result and discussion. Measurement of awareness was also done by arbitrary method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Distribution of the member farmers of FIGs according to their age (n=150)

Sr. No.	Age group	Frequency	Per cent
1	Young age (Up to 35 years)	32	21,33
2	Middle age (Above 35 to 50 years)	102	68,00
3	Old age (Above 50 years)	16	10,67

The result in Table 1 indicated that majority (68,00 per cent) of member farmers falls under middle age group, followed by 21,33 per cent in young age group and 10,67 per cent in old age group, respectively.

Table 2: Distribution of the member farmers of FIGs according to their level of education (n=150)

Sr. No.	Level of education	Frequency	Per cent
1	Illiterate	00	00,00
2	Primary school level	34	22,67
3	Secondary level	71	47,33
4	Higher secondary level	30	20,00
5	Graduate	15	10,00
6	Postgraduate	00	00,00

The result portrayed in Table 2 clearly indicates that nearly half (47,00 per cent) of the FIGs members had taken secondary school level of education, followed by 22,67 per cent had taken primary school level of education, 20,00 per cent had taken higher secondary level of education, 10,00 per cent were graduate and none of them were illiterate or posts graduate.

Table 3: Distribution of the member farmers of FIGs according to their experience in FIG (n= 150)

Sr. No.	Experience in FIG	Frequency	Per cent
1	Very low (Up to 02,00 years)	05	03,34
2	Low (02,01 to 04,00 years)	50	33,33
3	Medium (04,01 to 06,00 years)	30	20,00
4	High (06,01 to 08,00 years)	45	30,00
5	Very high (08,01 and above)	20	13,33

It is obvious from the data presented in Table 3 that one third (33,33 per cent) of member farmers had a low experience in FIG, followed by slightly less than one third (30,00 per cent) had high experience, one fifth (20,00 per cent) had medium experience, nearly one-tenth (13,33 per cent) had very high experience and few (3,34 per cent) had very low experience in FIG.

Table 4: Distribution of the member farmers of FIGs according to their group cohesiveness (n=150)

Sr. No.	Group cohesiveness	Frequency	Per cent
1	poor (Up to 18.00 score)	00	00,00
2	Fair (18.01 to 26.00 score)	03	02,00
3	Good (26.01 to 34.00 score)	20	13,33
4	Very good (34.01 to 42.00 score)	105	70,00
5	Excellent (42.01 and above score)	22	14,67

It is obvious from the data presented in Table 4 that more than majority (70,00 per cent) of the member farmers had a very good group cohesiveness, followed by 14,67 per cent, 13,33 per cent, 2,00 per cent of the respondents had excellent, good and fair cohesiveness. Whereas, none of them had poor group cohesiveness, respectively.

Table 5: Distribution of the member farmers of FIGs according to their interpersonal communication

(n=150)

Sr. No.	Interpersonal communication	Frequency	Per cent
1	Poor (Up to 18.00 score)	05	03٬33
2	Fair (18.01 to 26.00 score)	20	13٬33
3	Good (26.01 to 34.00 score)	31	20٬67
4	Very Good (34.01 to 42.00 score)	82	54٬67
5	Excellent (42.01 and above score)	12	08٬00

The data depicted in Table 5 revealed that more than half (54٬67 per cent) of the FIGs members had a very good level of interpersonal communication, followed by 20٬67 per cent, 13٬33 per cent, 8٬00 per cent and 3٬33 per cent had a good, fair, excellent and poor level of interpersonal communication, respectively.

Table 6: Distribution of the member farmers of FIGs according to their awareness (n=150)

Sr. No.	Awareness (per cent score)	Frequency	Per cent
1	Very Low (Up to 20.00)	00	00٬00
2	Low (22.01 to 40.00)	04	02٬66
3	Medium (40.01 to 60.00)	37	24٬67
4	High (60.01 to 80.01)	88	58٬67
5	Very High (80.01 and above)	21	14٬00

From the Table 6 we can be inferred that more than half (58٬67 per cent) of member farmers had a high awareness, followed by 24٬67 per cent, 14٬00 per cent, 2٬66 per cent had a medium, very high and low awareness, respectively. Whereas, none of them had a very low level of awareness

CONCLUSION

From the above overall discussion, it can be concluded that among all the respondents majority (68٬00 per cent) of member farmers falls under middle age group,

nearly half (47٬00 per cent) of the FIGs members had taken secondary school level of education, one third (33٬33 per cent) of member farmers had low experience in FIG, majority (70.00 per cent) of the member farmers had very good group cohesiveness, more than half (54٬67 per cent) of the FIGs members had very good level of interpersonal communication. Whereas, in case of overall awareness more than half (58.67 per cent) of member farmers had high awareness about significance of ATMA.

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