

ANALYSIS ON ASSOCIATION AND CONTRIBUTION OF PROFILE CHARACTERISTICS OF FARMER FRIENDS UNDER ATMA SCHEME WITH THEIR ROLE PERFORMANCE

Selvarani G.¹ and S. Mohanraj²

1 Corresponding Author and Associate Professor (Agricultural Extension),
Dept. of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, AC&RI, Madurai-625501

2 M.Sc. (Ag.), Dept. of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, AC&RI, Madurai-625501
Email : selvaranig27@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In the process of communication of agricultural innovations, the position of village level functionary i.e. farmer friend is very crucial. He first acts as a receiver of innovations and then as an intermediary to convey the messages to other farmers in the village. The role played by the farmer friend as communicator of information about improved agricultural practices is very vital. He gives advice to the farmers for production recommendations. He has to coordinate the work of supply and service agencies for effective implementation of farm production plans. He has to motivate, educate and guide farmers to adopt new ideas and practices. The role of the farmer friend who is at the grass roots is therefore, more important. Under ATMA, diffusion of message into the farming community is mediated through the farmer friends. All communication of innovation when passed from the extension workers through farmer friends in the community finds easy and extensive adoption. The success of Agriculture Development Programme to considerable extent depends on the role performance of farmer friend who is the key position at a village level to implement Agricultural Development Programmes. His service is available to the farmers in the villages and thus forms a strategic link between the research, the extension organization and the farmers. The efficiency and effectiveness of the system mainly depends upon the farmer friends who are expected to perform the duties assigned to them. It is, therefore, important that their proficiency in job performance has to be raised and maintained at a high level. In view of the crucial nature of the role that a farmer friend is expected to play in the new strategy of Agriculture Production, there is need for systematic analysis of his role performance. Hence, it was felt necessary to analyse the roles of the farmer friend while transferring Agriculture technology. As the whole tower of ATMA is standing on the pillar of farmer friend, it is necessary to study the role performance of these Grass root Level Worker and association and contribution of their characteristics with their role performance.

Keywords: ATMA, farmer friend. role performance

INTRODUCTION

Farmer Friends reported that training other farmers was their principle responsibility, followed by advising and monitoring As reported by organizations, training, advising, monitoring/follow-up contacts, organizing meetings and demonstrations in support of technology dissemination objectives were the most common roles carried out by Farmer Friends. Farmer friends had weekly or biweekly contact with their groups. The frequency of meetings often varied by season with a majority of farmer friends they meet with groups upon demand, which occurred more frequently during the growing season. (*Planning Commission, Government of India; 2011*).

Farmer Friend (FF) will serve as a vital link between extension system and farmers at village level (one for every two villages). The FF will be available in the village to advice on agriculture and allied activities. The FF will mobilize farmers' groups and facilitate dissemination

of information to such groups, individual farmers and farm women directly through one to one interaction individually or in groups and also by accessing information / services on behalf of farmers as per need through Common Service Centres (CSC) / Kisan Call Centres (KCC). Farmer Friend is expected to perform the role of grassroot level worker. (Revised ATMA guidelines-Department of Agriculture & Cooperation Ministry of Agriculture , Government of India , 2010; Pauline and Karthikeyan. 2015).The field staff monitored farmer friends performance in terms of numbers of farmers contacted, and the numbers of trainings, meetings held or demonstrations carried out. The field staff monitored the adoption of technologies or practices promoted by their farmer friends. Attendance and the numbers of farmers trained, numbers of activities and demonstrations carried out, are the most common types of information recorded. Similarly, the organization representatives reported farmer friends kept records of the number of farmer adopting the technologies promoted.

OBEJCTIVE

To analyse the profile characteristics of farmer friends and their role performance

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in Madurai East, Melur, Thiruparankundram, Thirumangalam, Vadipatti and Alanganallur blocks of Madurai district with the sample size of 120 farmer friends. The respondents were drawn through random sampling method. Data were collected through pre-tested and well-structured interview schedule which were properly interpreted by using suitable statistical tools like correlation and multiple regression. The findings were meaningfully interpreted and relevant conclusions were drawn.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Association and contribution of independent variables with role performance

The independent variables selected for this study were Age (X_1), Gender (X_2), Educational status (X_3), Farm size (X_4), Farming experience (X_5), Annual income (X_6), Social participation (X_7), Economic motivation (X_8), Information seeking behaviour (X_9), Time management (X_{10}), Job satisfaction (X_{11}), Organization commitment (X_{12}), Self confidence (X_{13}), Technical knowledge (X_{14}), Feedback behaviour (X_{15}), and Trainings participation (X_{16}). One dependent variable role performance of farmer friend was selected for the study. To find out the association and contribution of independent variables with role performance, correlation-coefficient and multiple regression analysis were carried out and the results are presented in Table 1.

From Table 1, it could be observed that out of Sixteen variables taken for the study, seven variables namely farming experience (X_4), economic motivation (X_8), Information Seeking behaviour (X_9), Time management (X_{10}), Job satisfaction (X_{11}), and Organization commitment (X_{12}) exhibited positive and significant association with role performance at one per cent level of significance.

Feedback Behaviour (X_{15}) exhibited positive and significant relationship with role performance at five per cent level of significance.

The data presented in Table 1 indicates that farming experience had shown positive and highly significant relationship with role performance. This showed that experienced farmer will share information and influence other farmers to adopt latest technologies.

Table 1 : Association of farmer friends characteristics of respondents with role performance (n = 120)

Variable number	Variables	'r' value	'P' value
X_1	Age	0.44	0.636
X_2	Gender	0.174	0.058
X_3	Educational status	0.161	0.78
X_4	Farming experience	0.260**	0.004
X_5	Farm size	0.131	0.154
X_6	Annual Income	0.105	0.252
X_7	Social participation	0.031	0.734
X_8	Economic motivation	0.260**	0.004
X_9	Information Seeking	0.427**	0.000
X_{10}	Time management	0.343**	0.000
X_{11}	Job satisfaction	0.240**	0.008
X_{12}	Organization commitment	0.407**	0.000
X_{13}	Self confidence	0.010	0.916
X_{14}	Technical Knowledge	0.063	0.497
X_{15}	Feedback	0.189*	0.039
X_{16}	Training participation	0.165	0.071

*Significant at five per cent level

** Significant at one per cent level

Economic motivation of the respondents had positive and highly significant relationship with role performance of farmer friends. Economic motivation was found to be the basic character upon which other motives and drives were built-up. When one develops higher level of economic motivation and wants to achieve it, he would strive hard and get internalize himself about different aspects of profit maximization. Hence, the variable had positive relationship with role performance. Information seeking behaviour had shown a positive and highly significant relationship with role performance. More information seeking behaviour could have provided more possibilities to interact with various officials working in the field of agriculture, which could have helped them to acquire more knowledge on technical aspects and performed their role better. Job satisfaction of the respondents had positive and highly significant relationship with role performance. Farmer friends felt very proud to be leading farmers and guiding them to acquire technical knowledge. Hence they were highly satisfied with their job.

Organization commitment had shown positive and highly significant relationship with their role performance. It is evident that a person with organization commitment used to derive pleasure by performing the jobs assigned by the organizations. As the work satisfaction itself a motivational force for organization commitment, the variable

had shown positive association with role performance. Feedback behaviour had shown positive and significant relationship with role performance. The respondents being the representatives of other farmers maintain regular contact with extension personnel which would enhance their role better. Hence, feedback behaviour exhibited positive and significant relationship with role performance of a farmer friends. The other variables namely age (X₁), Gender (X₂), Educational status (X₃), farm size (X₅), Annual Income (X₆), Social participation (X₇), Self confidence (X₁₃), Technical knowledge (X₁₄) and Training participation (X₁₆) were

found to be non-significant with the role performance of the respondents.

Contribution of profile characteristics towards role performance

Correlation analysis will explain only association between the characteristics of the farmers and their role performance. Hence, the multiple regression analysis was carried out to find out the extent of contribution of each variable towards the role performance and the findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 : Relationship of characteristics of respondents with role performance of farmer friends (n = 120)

Variable number	Variables	Partial regression co-efficient	Test statistic 't' value	P value
X ₁	Age	1.088	1.926	0.057
X ₂	Gender	6.674	1.296	0.198
X ₃	Educational status	-2.045	-1.051	0.296
X ₄	Farming experience	-0.476	-1.123	0.264
X ₅	Farm size	-0.815	-0.724	0.471
X ₆	Annual Income	0.0001	0.637	0.525
X ₇	Social participation	4.531	1.542	0.126
X ₈	Economic motivation	-0.343	-0.558	0.578
X ₉	Information Seeking behaviour	2.738**	4.227	0.000
X ₁₀	Time management	-0.117	-0.072	0.943
X ₁₁	Job satisfaction	-0.763	-1.05	0.297
X ₁₂	Organization commitment	0.287	0.454	0.651
X ₁₃	Self confidence	2.872*	2.39	0.019
X ₁₄	Technical Knowledge	1.13	0.714	0.477
X ₁₅	Feedback Behaviour	-1.539	-1.044	0.299
X ₁₆	Training participation	4.85*	2.177	0.032

R² = 0.837 F = 7.982** ** Significant at one per cent level * Significant at five per cent level

NS : Non-significant

The R² value 0.837 revealed that all the variables contributed 83.70 per cent variation in the role performance. The 'F' value was found to be significant at one per cent level of probability.

It could be observed from the above table that out of sixteen variables taken for the study, three variables namely Information Seeking behaviour (X₉) was positively significant at one per cent level of probability and contributed towards role performance. Self confidence (X₁₃) and Trainings undergone (X₁₆) were positively significant at five per cent level of probability. Therefore, it could be inferred that one unit increase in the variables namely information seeking behaviour (X₉), self confidence (X₁₃) and training

participation (X₁₆) would result in consequent increase of 2.738, 2.872 and 4.85 units respectively in role performance of farmer friends.

CONCLUSION

Out of the 16 independent variables studied, seven variables viz., farming experience, economic motivation, information seeking behaviour, time management, job satisfaction and organization commitment showed a positive and highly significant relationship with their role performance. The results of multiple regression analysis indicated that information seeking behaviour, self confidence, training participation had a positive and highly significant contribution to role performance. The total contribution of

the independent variables was 83.70 per cent towards the dependent variable role performance of the farmer friends. Medium level of information seeking behaviour and more training participation would have sensitized the farmers to perform their role better. Providing necessary information and adequate trainings on agriculture and allied sectors will enhance the performance of Farmer friends.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest

REFERENCES

- Pauline, A and Karthikeyan. 2015. Farmer to Farmer extension through farmer friend. *Indian Res. J. Ext. Edu.* 15 (2): pp-9
- Rao, N.V., Ratnakar, R and Jain, P.K. 2012. Impact of Farmer Field Schools in KVK adopted villages on level of knowledge and extent of adoption of improved practices of paddy (*Oryza sativa* L.). *Journal of Research*, Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University. Hyderabad. 40(1): 35-41.
- Singh, M., Dwivedi, A.P., Mishra, A., Singh, R.P., Singh, D., Singh, S.R.K. and Chand P. 2013. Adoption level and constraints of soybean production technology in Sagar District of Madhya Pradesh. *Journal of Community Mobilization and Sustainable Development*. 8(1): 94-99.
- Soni, Monika. 2011. A study on Agricultural Technology Management Agency(ATMA) Project in context to beneficiaries of soybean demonstration under Sanwer Block of Indore District, M.P. Unpublished. M.Sc. (Ag.). Thesis. Rajmata Vijayaraje Scindia Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya, Gwalior.
- Rao, N.V., Ratnakar, R and Jain, P.K. 2012. Impact of Farmer Field Schools in KVK adopted villages on level of knowledge and extent of adoption of improved practices of paddy (*Oryza sativa* L.). *Journal*
- Wolf, I.C.J. 2015. The lead farmer approach: an effective way of agricultural technology dissemination, N2Africa - Putting nitrogen fixation to work for smallholder farmers in Africa.

Received : October 2023 : Accepted : December 2023