

Role Perception and Role Performance of the Contact Farmers

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INTRODUCTION

The Training and Visit system of Agricultural Extension in Gujarat State is working since 1978-79 with a view to provide timely advice to the farmers on recommended farm technology so as to them enable to increase their farm production and thereby increasing their prosperity. The system is introduced in Mehsana district in 1978. The system is based on the concept of technology transfer. Contact farmer selected under the system occupy a key position between village level worker and other farmers in respect of diffusing production recommendations to the farm community.

If they have clear understanding of their role to be performed, there is a possibility of getting success in the system. It was therefore, felt necessary to know the activities taken up by the contact farmers, role performed by them in communicating the messages and in motivating other farmers to adopt new agricultural practices on their farm. Keeping this in view, the present study was conducted under the title, "Role perception and Role performance of the contact farmers of Mehasana district". The specific objectives were as under :

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To study the knowledge of the contact farmers regarding their selection as contact farmers and their fellow farmers.
- (2) To study the perception of the contact farmers regarding the expected role performance.
- (3) To assess the actual role performed by the contact farmers in the process of transfer of production messages.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation was carried out in Mehsana district of Gujarat State. The district was selected purposively for the reason that both the investigations belongs to Mehasana district and are familiar with the area. Hence, it was expected that strong co-operation and reliable information would be available from respondents. The district has three sub-divisions of Training and Visit system located at Vijapur, Patan and Kherlu. All the three sub-divisions were selected to cover the whole area of district.

Form sub-division, one taluka was selected at random. Four villages were randomly selected from each taluka.

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Thus, 12 villages from three talukas were selected. From each village, five contact farmers were selected at random making a sample size of 60 contact farmers.

By reviewing the literature, a set of seven roles was framed to study the perception of the contact farmers about the roles to be performed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Knowledge of contact farmers regarding their selection as contact farmers :

The sampled contact farmers were enquired whether they know their selection as contact farmers and their fellow farmers. The responses so received are depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 : Contact farmers knowledge about their selection as contact farmers and their fellow farmers (N=60)

Sr. No.	Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Knolwedge about selection as contact farmers	46	76.66
2.	Knowing their fellow farmers	27	45.00

Data presented in Table-1 clearly reveal that about 77 per cent of the farmers knew about their selection as contact farmers. However, it is unfortunate to note that 55 per cent of the contact farmers did not know their fellow farmers.

3.2 Role perception of the contact farmers :

Role perception is related with the role performance of the contact farmers.

Data in respect of role perception of the contact farmers are presented in Table 2.

A perusal of data presented in Table 2 indicate that a great majority of the contact farmers had a proper perception of their expected roles viz., remaining present on their farms on the day of visit of village level workers (85.00 per cent), obtaining information about improved agricultural technologies from village level worker (93.33 per cent) and adoption of improved agricultural technologies (88.33 per cent). On the other hand, they had poor knowledge regarding their expected roles like co-operating the village level worker in conducting farm trials, minikits and demonstration on their fleds (45.00 per cent), convicing fellow farmers for adopting

improved agricultural technologies (35.00 per cent) and arranging visit of other farmers on their own farms for showing the improved methods of farming and their improtance (31.66 per cent).

3.3 Role performance of the contact farmers :

The information on extent of role performance by the contact farmers is depicted in Table 3.

Table 2 : Role perception of the contact farmers

(N=60)

Sr.No.	Role	Frequency	Percentage
1.	To remain present on their farms on the day of visit of village level workers	51	85.00
2.	To obtain the information about improved agricultural technologies from village level workers	56	93.33
3.	To adopt improved agricultural technologies	53	88.33
4.	To co-operate the village level workers in conducting farm trials, minikits and demonstrations in their fields	27	45.00
5.	To convince the fellow farmers for adoption of improved agricultural technologies	21	35.00
6.	To arrange visits of other farmers on their own farms for showing improved methods of farming and their importance	19	31.66

It can be stated from the Table that majority of the contact farmers were found in the category of medium role performance in respect of remaining present on their farms on the day of visit of village level worker (71.67 per cent), obtaining information on improved agricultural technologies from village level worker (76.66 per cent), adoption of improved agricultural technologies (65.00 per cent), passing information on improved agricultural technologies to other farmers (63.33 per cent), and providing feedback about production problems to training and visit officials (61.67 per cent). Majority of the contact farmers had a low level of role performance in co-operating village level workers in conducting farm trials, minikits and demonstrations (60.00 per cent), and arranging visit of other farmers on their

own farms for showing the improved methods of farming and their importance (70.00 per cent). A very few percentage of contact farmers were at high level of role performance in all the identified roles.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the finding discussed above, following conclusions can be drawn.

- (1) A large majority of the contact farmers (76.66 per cent) knew about their selection as contact farmers and 45 per cent of them were knowing their fellow farmers.
- (2) Most of the respondents had better perception of the various roles to be performed by them as contact farmers.

Table 3 : Role perception of the contact farmers (N=60)

Sr. No.	Role	Extent of role performance					
		LOW		MEDIUM		HIGH	
		Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.	Fre.	Per.
1.	To remain present on their on the day of visit of VLW.	14	23.23	43	71.67	3	5.00
2.	To obtain information on improved agril. techno. from VLW.	7	11.67	46	76.66	7	11.67
3.	To adopt improved agricultural technologies	11	18.33	39	65.00	10	16.67
4.	To co-operate the VLW. in conducting farm trials, minikits and demonstrations	36	60.00	21	35.00	3	5.00
5.	To pass on information on improved agricultural technologies to the other farmers	14	23.33	38	63.33	8	13.34
6.	To arrange visits of other farmers on their own farms for showing improved methods of farming their importance	42	70.00	11	18.33	7	11.67
7.	To provide feedback about production problems to Training and visit officials	17	28.33	37	61.67	6	10.00

Fre. = Frequency

Per. = Percentage

(3) So far as role performance was concerned majority contact farmers were found in the medium category of the various role performance.

IMPLICATIONS

Under Training and visit system, contact farmer occupy a key position between the village level workers and the fellow farmers in respect of communicating production technologies. But it is sad to say that only 45 per cent contact farmers were knowing their fellow farmers. Further, it was

observed that a very few percentage of contact farmers were at high level of role performance in all the identified roles. The identity cards having details such as list of fellow farmers, expected roles to be performed as contact farmers, day of visit of VLW. etc. should be given to each of the contact farmers. This may help to increase their awareness of the fellow farmers allotted to them and improving there by their expected role performance. Proper selection of the contact farmers and providing them the incentives are also necessary.