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Role Performance of Krishak Mitra

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ABSTRACT

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The technological development in the field of agriculture has broadened the need for farmers. This calls for the use of local leaders who can act as linkers between farmers, extension personnel and exercise influencing in bringing about accelerated adoption of technologies. The Krishak Mitra is also one type of leaders/opinion leaders and they communicate the recent technologies to farmers and also bring the problems of farmers to concerned authorities. The effectiveness of Krishak Mitra in terms of their ability to perform the roles entrusted to them depends upon their performance as well as the satisfaction from their role as Krishak Mitra, besides that it also depends upon their profile characteristics affecting them. Keeping this in mind, the present study on Role performance of Krishak Mitra was conducted in Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh. The findings of the study revealed that majority of Krishak Mitra were in medium category of role performance followed by high and low. As far as constraints faced by Krishak Mitra in performing their roles is concerned, low payment was one of the major constraint responded by majority of the Krishak Mitra.

Introduction

Agriculture extension services were established in India to provide rural clientele with practical and useful information relevant to solving their agricultural problems. Over the years, India has made progress in the area of agricultural development. Soon after the T & V programme there were no VLWs at the village level for assisting the farmers in solving their problems and transfer of improved technologies to the farmers. Involvement of farmers can be achieved at the village level through farmer's interest group (FIGs), at block level as a member of farmer's

advisory committee (FAC) and at district level as the member of Agriculture Technology Management Agency (ATMA) governing board.

The concept of ATMA envisages paradigm shift from "top down" to "bottom up" in the planning and implementation of agriculture development programmes. There is a need of a person who acts as extension worker in a village, so a farmer's friend from the same village is selected under ATMA schemes for this purpose through the Gram Sabha of Gram Panchayat and locally known as "Krishak Mitras".

It is generally accepted that the effectiveness of any set of people is largely dependent on the quality of its leadership – effective leader behaviour facilitates the attainment of the follower's desires, which then results in effective performance (Maritz, 1995). The effectiveness of extension services is also highly dependent on the ability of extension workers who are competent as the whole extension process is dependent on them to transfer information from extension organizations to the clients. The important position of this crucial change agent in the extension approach makes it necessary to understand his/her all dimensions. Previous studies have identified various competencies needed by extension workers in technical areas and human development areas as well. It was found that these competencies should be possessed by extension workers in order to effectively perform their role (Gibson and Hillison, 1994; Cooper and Graham, 2001; Miller and Cox, 2006). In view of recent advancement in the agricultural technologies and more and more involvement of Krishak Mitra in agriculture, the role of Krishak Mitra is not just to educate the Krishak Mitra regarding agriculture technologies but they have to pay equal attention towards dissemination of agro-based technologies for the socio-economic upliftment of the rural families. As a result, it was found that there is a necessity to investigate performance and factors that might contribute to the understanding of Krishak Mitras' performance. In view of this, the present study entitled "Role performance of Krishak Mitra was conducted.

Materials and Methods

The present investigation was carried out in Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh. Tikamgarh district comprises of six blocks i.e. Tikamgarh, Niwari, Prithvipur, Baldeogarh, Palera, and Jatara. All six blocks of

Tikamgarh district were selected for the study purpose. List of the Krishak Mitra was obtained from the Department of Farmers Welfare and Agriculture Development. From each blocks, 20 Krishak Mitra were selected randomly thus, total 120 respondents were selected for the present investigation.

Results and Discussion

Profile of Krishak Mitra

Majority of the Krishak Mitra (67.50%) belonged to middle age group followed by young age (18.33%) and old age (14.17%). The results might be due to that the young farmers might have been engaged in other developmental activities, whereas the selection committee of Krishak Mitra might have considered middle aged farmers as Krishak Mitra due to maturity and experience of Krishak Mitra. The findings of the present study are in line with the findings of Rao (2002), Roy (2003).

In case of educational qualification, maximum number of respondents (42.50%) were found to be educated upto higher secondary followed by high school and middle school. The importance of formal and higher education for one's development in today's competitive world as realized by the parents might have induced them to send their children to schools and colleges. This finding is in accordance with the results obtained by Okwoche *et al.*, (2015).

The result indicates that majority of the Krishak Mitra (84.16%) were male. The result is in consonance with the findings of Oladele (2006).

The results indicated that majority of the respondents (60.84%) had medium experience in present position. This might be due to that majority of selected farmers as Krishak Mitra

were middle aged, thus their experience is also moderate. This finding is in line with the findings of Padmavathi (1996) and Praveen (2010).

The finding regarding land holding revealed that nearly half of the Krishak Mitra (45.84%) were having medium size of land holding i.e. between 1 and 3 hectare. The probable reason might be due to fragmentation of farm families and increase in number of nuclear families. It is evident from the study that maximum Krishak Mitra (83.34%) was having medium level of annual income. The possible reason may be that since majority of the respondents were having land between 1 and 3 ha. as indicated in the data. It is a proven fact that land is main source of income in agrarian society and large percent of Krishak Mitra have medium land holding. Hence more number of Krishak Mitra belonged to medium income groups. This finding is similar to the findings of Padmavathi (1996), Roy (2003) and Mishra (2005).

It was recorded in the study that most of the respondents (68.33%) belonged to the category of medium mass media exposure. This might be due to the fact that mass media plays an important role in acquiring the latest information about agriculture and allied enterprises which are essential for Krishak Mitra in performing their job effectively in rural areas. This finding is also supported by Kumar and Sailaja (2012).

Majority of Krishak Mitra (72.50%) came under medium level of extension agency contact. This might be due to the fact that Krishak Mitra were having medium level of contact with extension agency. Only those Krishak Mitra who were educated and rich might have subscribed to newspaper, farm magazine, books on agriculture and possessed television. This might be the reasons for medium extension contact of Krishak Mitra.

Further majority of Krishak Mitra belonged to middle age group. So, it is quite natural that their curiosity to participate in field visit and to visit exhibition would be low. This findings in accordance with the findings of Kumar (1995), Padmavathi (1996), Chatterjee (2000), Kiran (2000), Praveen (2000), Roy (2003) and Nambiar (2013).

The results indicated that majority (77.50%) of the respondents had medium level of information seeking behaviour. The medium information seeking behaviour might be attributed to medium mass media exposure and medium level of contact to the extension agency. The findings of the present study agree with the findings of Mishra (2005). Majority 54.17 per cent of the respondents had medium level of social participation. It can be concluded that the respondents had fairly good educational status. They either realized the importance of social participation or got opportunities of social participation.

Results indicated that majority of Krishak Mitra (60.82%) had medium achievement motivation; this may be due to their medium social participation. This finding is in agreement with that of Chatterjee (2000), Roy (2003), Mohan (2003), Babu (2005) and Mishra (2005).

Role performance of Krishak Mitra

In the present study, the role performance of Krishak Mitra was taken as dependent variable and was measured on the basis of performance of their job description. In the study role performance was operationalised as the degree in which Krishak Mitra carried out or actually performed their roles. Twenty seven roles of Krishak Mitras were finalized after consultation with the experts. The 27 roles as given in appendix was administered to Krishak Mitra (respondents) who were asked to respond on three point continuum viz.

maximum extent, to some extent and to minimum extent. A score of 3 for maximum extent, 2 for some extent and 1 for minimum extent was given. The possible score range was 27 to 81. The 27 roles were summed up and the respondents were categorized into three categories based on mean and standard deviation viz. low, medium and high.

The data in Table 1 revealed the extent of role performance of Krishak Mitra. It can be inferred from the table that the roles performed by majority of the Krishak Mitra up to maximum extent were “inform about various government schemes for farmers benefit” (65.00%), “provide information about agriculture technology to farmers and convincing them to adopt it” and “motivate farmers about the use of new technology in farming” each (60.83%), “make planned visit to farmers’ fields” and “assist in providing various services and input like seed, fertilizers, insecticide etc. in time” each (60.00%), “provide special attention to study the needs and problems of small and marginal farmers” and “establish linkage between farmers and Agriculture Development Officers” each (51.66%), “participate in meetings organised by agriculture development officers” (50.00%), “gather information regarding personal details of farmers and their farm production” (48.33%), “participate in village level meeting” (46.66%), “develop implementation plan at village level for agriculture and related department” (42.50%), “assist farmers in availing solution to technological issues in agriculture” (41.66%) and “assistance in organizing demonstration, kisan gosthi and extension of researches at village level” (40.83%).

It is also clear from the data that the roles as “organize farmers interest group” (60.83%), “provide information about requirement of farmers regarding new technology in the

monthly meeting” (54.16%), “ensure implementation of cost cutting technologies in presence of farmers as per guidelines” (52.50%), “ensure the dissemination of information through multi-media”, “timely organization of farmers meetings and discussion to share information about different programmes”, “maintain contact with local officials and organizations associated with Agriculture Department” and “carry out the demonstration on farmers field and keep records of demonstration” each (48.33%), “maintain regular contact with RAEO and other officials of Agriculture Department regarding sharing of farmers problems and getting consultancy and guidance” (44.16%), “assistance developing extension work plan at block level” (41.66%) and “identify progressive farmers and local leaders and coordinate in adoption of technologies among other farmers through them” (40.00%) were performed up to some extent by majority of Krishak Mitra.

Further, the data in Table 1 revealed that the roles like “maintaining input register to record the input needs and services required by farmers” (62.50%), “attend regular training session organized by various department” and “assist in availing loan by farmers” each (43.33%) and “maintaining record of work done and take follow up action as per instruction” (41.66%), were performed to minimum extent by most of the Krishak Mitras.

An overall role performance of Krishak Mitra presented in Table 2 revealed that 58.34 per cent were in medium role performance category and nearly equal percentage i.e. 21.66 and 20.00 per cent belonged to high and low role performance category. Therefore, it may be concluded that majority of Krishak Mitra 58.34 per cent had medium level of role performance.

Table.1 Profile of Krishak Mitra

S. No.	Attributes	Frequency	Percentage	
1.	Age	Young (up to 30 year)	22	18.33
		Middle (31 to 45 years)	81	67.50
		old (above 45)	17	14.17
2.	Education	Illiterate	0	0
		Only read & write	0	0
		Primary education	0	0
		Middle school	13	10.83
		High school	37	30.83
		Higher secondary	51	42.50
		Graduation/More	19	15.84
3.	Gender	Male	101	84.16
		Female	19	15.84
4.	Experience in present position	Low (up to 4 year)	29	24.16
		Medium (5 to 12 years)	73	60.84
		High (Above 12 years)	18	15.00
5.	Land holding	Small (Up to 1 ha.)	53	44.16
		Medium (1.01 to 3 ha.)	55	45.84
		Large (Above 3.01 ha.)	12	10.00
6.	Annual income	Low (Up to Rs.10,000)	0	0
		Medium (Rs.10,001 to 1,90,000)	100	83.34
		High (Above Rs.1,90,001)	20	16.66
7.	Mass media exposure	Low (upto 8 score)	32	26.67
		Medium (9 to 12 score)	82	68.33
		High (Above 12 score)	6	5.00
8.	Extension agency contact	Low (upto 23 score)	25	20.83
		Medium (24 to 31 score)	87	72.50
		High (Above 31 score)	8	6.67
9.	Information seeking behaviour	Low (16 to 34 score)	20	16.66
		Medium (35 to 44 score)	93	77.50
		High (Above 44 score)	7	5.84
10.	Social participation	Low (Up to 10 score)	31	25.83
		Medium (11 to 14 score)	65	54.17
		High (Above 14 score)	24	20.00
11.	Achievement motivation	Low (21 to 45 score)	22	18.34
		Medium (46 to 55 score)	73	60.82
		High (Above 55 score)	25	20.84

Table.2 Extent of role performance of Krishak Mitra

S. No.	Role performance	Response categories		
		Maximum Extent	To some extent	Minimum extent
1.	Make a planned visit to farmers' fields	72 (60)	48 (40)	0 (0)
2.	Organize farmer interest group	34 (28.33)	73 (60.83)	13 (10.84)
3.	Assistance in organizing demonstration, kisan gosthi and extension of researches at village level	49 (40.83)	42 (35)	29 (24.17)
4.	Assistance in developing extension work plan at block level	45 (37.50)	50 (41.66)	25 (20.84)
5.	Develop implementation plan at village level for agriculture and related department	51 (42.50)	48 (40)	21 (17.50)
6.	Participate in village level meeting	56 (46.66)	50 (41.66)	14 (11.68)
7.	Ensure the dissemination of information through multi-media	28 (23.33)	58 (48.33)	34 (28.34)
8.	Provide information about agriculture technology to farmers and convincing them to adopt it	73 (60.83)	28 (23.34)	19 (15.83)
9.	Gather information regarding personal details of farmers and their farm production	58 (48.33)	32 (26.67)	30 (25)
10.	Maintain record of work done and take follow up action as per instruction	44 (36.66)	26 (21.68)	50 (41.66)
11.	Maintain input register to record the input needs and services required by farmers	25 (20.84)	20 (16.66)	75 (62.50)
12.	Attend regular training session organised by various departments	28 (23.34)	40 (33.33)	52 (43.33)
13.	Participate in meetings organised by Agriculture development officers	60 (50)	32 (26.66)	28 (23.34)
14.	Provide information about requirement of farmers regarding new technology in the monthly meeting	32 (26.66)	65 (54.16)	23 (19.18)
15.	Assist farmers in availing solution to technological issues in agriculture	50 (41.66)	48 (40)	22 (18.34)
16.	Identify progressive farmers and local leaders and coordinate in adoption of technologies among other farmers through them	37 (30.84)	48 (40)	35 (29.16)
17.	Timely organization of farmers meetings and discussion to share information about different programmes	44 (36.67)	58 (48.33)	18 (15)
18.	Provide special attention to study the needs and problems of small and marginal farmers	62 (51.66)	36 (30)	22 (18.34)
19.	Maintain regular contact with RAEO and other officials of Ag. Department regarding sharing of farmers problems and getting consultancy and guidance	49 (40.84)	53 (44.16)	18 (15)
20.	Maintain contacts with local officials and organizations associated with agriculture department	47 (39.17)	58 (48.33)	15 (12.50)
21.	Assist in providing various services and inputs like seed, fertilizers, insecticide etc. in time	72 (60)	32 (26.66)	16 (13.34)
22.	Assist in availing loan by farmers	45 (37.50)	23 (19.17)	52 (43.33)
23.	Carry out the demonstration on farmers field and keep records of demonstration	26 (21.67)	58 (48.33)	36 (30)
24.	Ensure implementation of cost cutting technologies in presence of farmers as per guideline	42 (35)	63 (52.50)	15 (12.50)
25.	Inform about various government schemes for farmers benefit	78 (65)	30 (25)	12 (10)
26.	Motivate farmers about the use of new technology in farming	73 (60.83)	32 (26.67)	15 (12.50)
27.	Establish linkage between farmers and Agriculture Development Officers	62 (51.66)	38 (31.66)	20 (16.68)

This might be due to the fact that most of the Krishak Mitra had medium level of medium level of achievement motivation. The other reasons that can be attributed for this trend might be working environment, encouragement, cooperation of extension functionaries and related departments and availability of services etc. The finding of the present study is in line with the studies conducted by Kumar (1995), Padmavathi (1996), Praveen (2000), Mohan (2000) and Mishra (2005).

Relationship of profile of Krishak Mitra with their role performance

It could be seen from Table 1, that variables namely experience in present position, mass media exposure, information seeking behaviour and social participation were significant and positively correlated with role performance of Krishak Mitra while remaining seven variables namely age, education, gender, land holding, annual income, extension agency contact and achievement motivation were found to be non-significant. The null hypothesis was therefore, accepted with respect to seven variables i.e. age, education, gender, land holding, annual income, extension agency contact and achievement motivation.

Constraints faced by Krishak Mitra in role performance

It is evident from the data that main problems faced by the Krishak Mitra was low payment (87.50%) followed by lack of literacy and technical knowledge of farmers (80.83%), unavailability of latest technical literature (77.50%), lack of awareness and traditional attitude of farmers (65.83%), problem of mobility (52.50%), lack of guidance by concerned staff (50.83%), unavailability of contact farmers as per schedule (47.50%), and local leader pressure (30.00%).

In conclusion, the findings regarding role performance of Krishak Mitra revealed that majority of the respondents were having medium level of role performance. It was also found that role performance was affected by the experience, mass media exposure, information seeking behaviour and social participation of Krishak Mitras. Regarding the constraints faced by Krishak Mitra in role performance, low payment towards performance of their role was the main problems responded by the Krishak Mitra. An understanding of the factors and constraints faced by Krishak Mitra in discharging their roles may serve as a feedback to the planers, extension personnel, scientist and development agencies while implementation of any scheme.

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