



Full Length Research Article

SUGGESTIONS EXPRESSED BY THE TRIBAL FARMERS TO IMPROVE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR BETTER AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN PACHAIMALAI HILLS.

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ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken with the objective of determining the suggestions expressed by the tribal farmers in Pachaimalai hills in Trichy district. Pachaimalai hills occupies a prominent position of Tamilnadu. A sample size of three hundred tribal farmers was selected from four blocks of Pachaimalai hills. From each block, five villages were selected based on their maximum population. The total number of respondents to be selected from twenty villages was on the basis of proportionate random sampling techniques. Collection of data was done with the help of pre-tested and semi structured interview schedule. The study revealed that majority of the tribal respondents suggested the need for strengthening agricultural extension services.

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is an integral part of development. Communication support is a vital necessity to inspire and help rural people to take full advantage of available opportunities for their all round development and thus helping in national development. Communication helps in imparting training to people, organizing community and farm related process and co-ordinating various activities from creation of awareness of new technology upto the final adoption of it. Communication has played a predominant role over the years, Berlo (1960) views communication as a dynamic ongoing ever-changing continuous act. The present day "knowledge explosion" the world has necessitated a "Communication explosion". The progress in any field of rural development largely depends on developing an effective technology on one hand, the skills of effectively communicating them to people through media mix on the other hand. In this process of communication lies the potentialities and hope for millions of rural people to overcome ignorance, poverty and activate socio-economic prosperity and progress. Tribal system is one of the earliest forms of society. Who lives in common unit in a particular area sharing a common language and often kinship. The tribal population in Tamilnadu state is about 5.2 lakhs representing 1.10 per cent of the total population of the state.

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The present study deals with the suggestions to improve effective communication for better agricultural production in Pachaimalai hills.

METHODOLOGY

Pachaimalai hills located in Trichy district of Tamilnadu. As the main objective of the study was centered around the tribal people, it was planned to select all the four blocks in Pachaimalai hills to have unique representation. From each block five villages were selected based on their maximum population. The total number of 300 respondents to be selected from 20 villages was arrived at on the basis of proportionate random sampling procedure. The data collected were processed, coded and tabulated for further statistical analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Suggestions to improve effective communication for better agricultural production: In accordance with the objectives, the various suggestions made by the tribal farmers for improving the communication behavior to better their agricultural prospects are presented in Table-1. From the perusal of Table 1 it may be noted that majority of the tribal respondents (75.00 per cent) suggested the need for strengthening agricultural extension services followed by allotment of more agricultural extension officials in the tribal

Table1.Distribution of respondents according to their suggestions to improve effective communication for better agricultural production (n=300)

S.No.	Category	Number of Respondents	Percent
1	Strengthening Agricultural Extension Services	225	75.00
2	Allotting more Agricultural Extension officials in tribal tract	210	70.00
3	Provision of need based location specific technologies to the farmers	203	67.66
4	Arranging the supply of farm related books, journals and magazines	170	56.66
5	Strengthening feedback	165	55.00
6	Arranging for more agricultural programmes in mass-media channels like radio, television, newspaper etc.,	150	50.00

tract (70.00 per cent), provision of need based location specific training to the farmers (67.66 per cent), arranging for the supply of farm related books, journals and magazines (56.00 per cent), strengthening of feed back (55.00 per cent) and arranging for more agricultural programmes on mass-media channels like radio, television, newspapers (50.00 per cent).

Three fourth of the farmers suggested the strengthening of the agricultural extension services in the study area, they wanted more demonstrations / campaigns, group discussions, farm and home visits and meetings by the extension workers in the study area. Such type of communication can be enable them to acquire more agricultural information to improve the agricultural production. Vijayaraghavan (1976) reported that such a suggestion was made by the farmers in his study area also. Nearly three fourth of the respondents wanted more extension officials in the study area because the farmers were unable to meet the block extension staff as the block office was far away and inaccessible due to lack of transport facilities. The farmers also felt that because of the lesser number of extension staff they were not meeting the farmers often. The farmers also wanted extension officials, who are more familiar with the agricultural practices of tribal tract.

Another major suggestion is that tribal framers be provided need based and location specific agricultural recommendations. The crops like Tinai, Samai, Panivaragu, Varagu etc., are cultivated here. The tribal farmers are practicing agriculture in a traditional way and in a eco-friendly manner. Hence, they needed location-specific recommendation. Instead of general recommendation these need based location specific recommendation to farmers can enable them to improve their agricultural productivity.

Slightly more than half of the respondents requested for making available the books, journals and farm magazines in the study area. As the literacy level is fairly good they wanted farm literature in the form of books and journals. Information in printed form have more credibility and these books and journals can be preserved for more time. This can improve their literacy level also. Vijayaraghavan (1976) has also made a similar observations in his study area. Feedback is the intended response from the intended audience. Feedback is an integral part of any communication. A successful communication needs a successful feedback. Hence for improving the communication behavior the feedback has to strengthened. Above 55.00 per cent of the respondents suggested for strengthening the feedback in agricultural communication, so, that communication can remain as a good two-way channel.

Exactly half of the respondents suggested for more agricultural programmes in mass-media channels like television, radio, newspapers, so that a better interaction can exist between scientists / agricultural extension workers and the farmers. The farmers believe that agricultural informations communicated through mass-media channels are more credible. Hence, such a suggestion was made by the respondents. Marimuthu (2001) and Prarthiba (2003) also made a similar observation. The communication constraints perceived by the tribal farmers may be viewed seriously and the suggestions as reported by them may be kept in mind for creating a still better communication situation among the tribal farmers for increasing the agricultural productivity.

Conclusion

Strengthening agricultural extension services, allotting more Agricultural Extension Officials in tribal tract, provision of need based location specific technologies to the farmers, arranging for the supply of farm related books, journals and magazines, strengthening feed back and arranging for more agricultural programmes in mass-media channels like radio, television and newspapers etc., were the measures suggested by the respondents for effective communication to improve agricultural production.

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