Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology

39(11): 146-149, 2021; Article no.AJAEES.75159
ISSN: 2320-7027

Role of Key Communicators in Disseminating Agricultural Information in Nilayur Village of Thiruparankundram Block in Madurai District

P. Rajapandi[1*], C. Karthikeyan[1] and M. Nirmala Devi[1]

[1]Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, TNAU, Coimbatore, India.

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/AJAEES/2021/v39i1130735
Editor(s):
(1) Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (LUVAS), India.
Reviewers:
(1) Clement Okechukwu Attamah, University of Nigeria, Nigeria.
(2) Tikon, Fomati Usman, Federal University of Wukari, Nigeria.
Complete Peer review History: https://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/75159

Original Research Article

Received 09 August 2021
Accepted 19 October 2021
Published 23 October 2021

ABSTRACT

The present study was taken up to identify the role of key communicators in the dissemination of agricultural information. The study area was Nilayur village of Thiruparankundram block located in Madurai district. A total of 60 respondents were sampled randomly for the study. Sociometric technique was used to identify the role of key communicator. The responses were noted and the identified six key communicators were classified as low, medium and high using the sociogram scores and cumulative percentage. Among the six key communicators, only one key communicator was identified as high levelcommunicator with a cumulative percentage of 100 per cent. Thus, the key communicator should be identified and they can be a handholding support for the extension personnel for dissemination of the technology to reach large farmers.

Keywords: Key communicator; sociogram; cumulative percentage; communication network.

1. INTRODUCTION

In agricultural extension, the role of key communicator is important as many farmers sought information from these key communicators. Individuals who play a critical role in speeding up the transmission of change are crucial factors in the process of person-to-

**Corresponding author: E-mail: rajapanditpk07@gmail.com;*

person communication. They are known as key communicators because they play an important role in spreading innovative farm ideas to other farmers. Identifying these key communicators is worthwhile which will provide a strong firm handholding support to the extension functionaries in executing the training and other schemes in the respective area. According to Planning Commission [1], the ideal ratio of extension personnel and farmers is 1:500 but the present ratio of extension personnel and farmers is 1:1500. Sarker and Itohara [2] reported that organic farmers in Bangladesh received organic related information mostly from their fellow farmers and neighbours who were treated as key communicators. Verma and Sharma [3] stated that whenever extension personnel are to disseminate information to the farming community it is always beneficial to disseminate it through the key communicators. Jyothi and Suresh Kumar [4] inferred thatfarmers mostly relied upon the fellow farmers for agricultural related information and felt that fellow farmers give suggestions based on their practical experience. Farmers trust guidance and information from model farmers, opinion leaders, and other fellow farmers more than any other source, according to Kashem and Halim [5]. Sashikant Divakar (2019) stated that farmers believe much on their fellow farmers in matters of agriculture and related aspects. They feel that fellow farmers are the key communicators who give suggestions based on practical knowledge and experience. Manohari [6] inferred that the tribal village of the 'Koya' sub tribe has a high degree of communication integration with just a few important leaders, which would be beneficial in channelling agricultural information in general. To double their extension efficacy, the development professionals in this hamlet should focus their efforts through important communicators with a huge following. Keeping this, the present study was taken up with the following objective of identifying the key communicator in disseminating the agricultural information.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted purposively in Nilayur village of Thiruparankundram block in Madurai district. The concerned area was selected because of the higher production of agricultural produce in south of the Madurai district. A total of 60 farmers was drawn randomly for the sample. The respondents were asked whom do they approached consultation regarding agricultural information in general. Six communicators were identified through the farmer discussions. Later the respondents were asked to give their preference to whom they go for the advice as first, second and third choices respectively. Their responses were noted and key communicators were identified and diagrammatically depicted using target sociogram technique proposed by Northway, [7]. For one key communicator the sociometric score was calculated using the formula SS = (3× N1) + (2×N2) + (1×N3) where, N1= No. of respondents giving the 1st choice; N2= No. of respondents giving the 2nd choice and N3= No. of respondents giving the 3rd choice. Sociometric score, percentage and cumulative percentage were the statistical tools used. The methodology used here is in the lines of Sashikant Divakar et al., (2019) and Jyoti V (2013).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the total sociometric scores obtained, the key communicators are classified into low (0-25%), medium (25-75%) and high (75-100%) communicator categories using the cumulative percentages. Table 1 shows the number of responses by the farmers and their preferences of selection of the key communicators. Six key communicators were identified. High sociometric score of 166 was obtained for 6th key communicator and a low sociometric score of 10 was obtained for 1st key communicator based on the preferences given by the farmers. The sociometric score cumulative percentage ranged from 2.77% to 13.04%for low communicator category. It may be due to the fact that only few farmers consulted them for agricultural and related aspects and also because of the unreliable information. The two medium level communicators sociometric score cumulative percentage were 20.28% and 53.89%. Few of them consulted the medium communicator categories as they provide some information on specific aspects like cultivation of vegetables, pesticides. One communicator was identified as high communicator with 100 cumulative percentages of sociometric scores.

This is because of the more experience of the key communicator and also he gave more reliable information often to the fellow farmers. So, majority of the farmers preferred the high communicator on all the three perferences. The findings are in line with that Sashikant Divakar et al., (2019) and Jyoti and Kumar (2013).

3.1 Communication Network

Concentric circles represent the target sociogram, with the most chosen individual at the centre and patterns of relationships depicted with arrows as normal. Because concentric circles are pre-established to resemble a bulls-eye target and symbols are placed in them, it is termed a target. The centre circle's key communicators are more central in the sense that they are more visible. The respondents' first choices were taken into account for this reason and it is depicted in the Fig. 1. High communicators were in the centre, followed by medium communicators in the second circle, and low communicators in the third circle from the centre. As seen in the sociogram, symbols were employed to symbolise several essential communicators. The key communicator with 100 per cent cumulative occupied the inner circle and the two medium communicator with the cumulative percentages 53.89% and 20.28% occupied the second circle or middle circle and the other three with the cumulative percentages 2.77%, 6.38%, 13.04%occupied the outer circle (edge) which represented the low communicator category.

Table 1. Categorisation of key communicators based on sociometric scores

Identified key communicator	Preference by no. Of respondents			Socio-metric scores	%	Cumulative %	Category
	1st	2nd	3rd				
1	2	1	2	10	2.77	2.77	Low
2	3	1	2	13	3.61	6.38	Low
3	6	2	2	24	6.66	13.04	Low
4	5	3	5	26	7.24	20.28	Medium
5	15	26	24	121	33.61	53.89	Medium
6	29	27	25	166	46.11	100	High
Total	60	60	60	360	100		

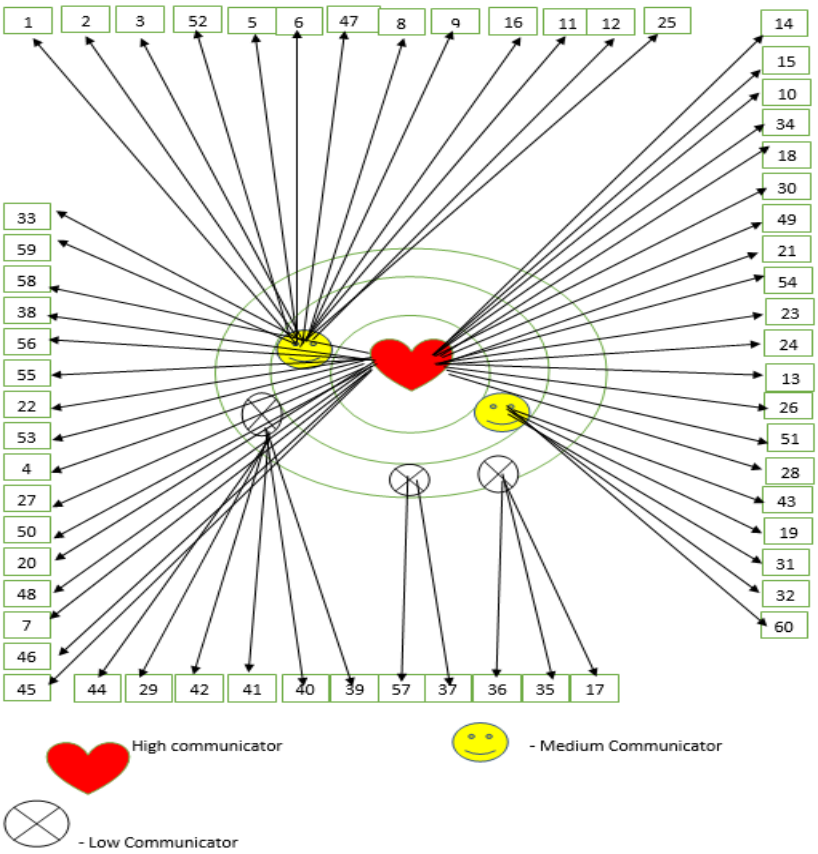

Fig. 1. Communication network among the fellow farmers (Target sociogram)

4. CONCLUSION

It is clearly evident that the farmers relied upon the fellow farmers i.e., the key communicator for agricultural information and other aspects. According to the farmers, the key communicators are more experienced and gives more reliable information which often give them success in their field. The ratio of extensi+on – farmer gap can be filled by the key communicators for disseminating the latest technology to the farmers. It is clearly evident that the key communicators are important for the dissemination of the latest technology and other information related to agriculture. Hence, the extension personnel should identify key communicators and should disseminate technologies with their help such that it reaches more number of farmers.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES

1. Planning Commission. Government of India. Twelfth plan working group on disadvantaged farmers, including women-Final report. 2011;7-35.
2. Sarker A, Itohara Y. Information Sources Used by the Farmers Regarding Practice of Organic Farming A Study from Bangladesh. Journal of Rural Problems. 2007;43(1):234-239.
3. Verma D, Sharma G. Communication Network of Women Vegetable Growers of Nainital District of Uttarakhand. Indian Journal of Extension Education. 2017;53(3):58-62.
4. Jyothi V, Kumar MS. Socio-metric study for dissemination of agricultural information. Indian Research Journal of Extension Education. 2013; 13(1):136-138.
5. Kashem M, Halim A, Rahman MZ. Farmers' Use of Communication Media in Adopting Agricultural Technologies-A Farm Level Study in Bangladesh. Asia-Pacific Journal of Rural Development. 1992;2(1): 94-112.
6. Manohari P. Key communicator networks used in dissemination of agricultural information: a study in Koya sub-tribe setting. Manage Extension Research Review. 2002;3(1): 36-41.
7. Northway ML. A method for depicting social relationships obtained by sociometric testing. Sociometry. 1940; 144-150.
8. Divakar S, Jaisridhar P, Paswan A, Kumar C. Role of key communicator in dissemination of tomato production technology.

Peer-review history:
The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
https://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/75159