

Research Article

Study on representative farmers in the activities and constraints of Agricultural Technology Management Agency

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SUMMARY : Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA) at district level is increasingly responsible for all the technology dissemination activities in various blocks within the district. It has linkage with all the line departments, research organization and agencies associated with agricultural development in the district. Hence, present investigation was undertaken with an objective to study personal characteristics of the representative farmers in the light of their socio-economic conditions, to assess the knowledge about the function and activities related to ATMA and to study the constraints of representative farmers in their involvement in various programmes and activities. The present study was conducted in the Amravati District which comes in the vidharbha region of Maharashtra State during the year 2005-2006. For the present research work the Amravati District ATMA was purposively selected. Thus a list of representative farmers was obtained from the office of the Project Director ATMA Amravati. The method of personal interview was used for the data collection and the data from all the selected sample respondents was collected. The respondent farmers were personally contacted for their interview purpose. Present study concluded that 13 per cent respondents were also having up to 5 ha of land. The social participation level of most of respondents was medium and about one third of the respondents had higher level, showing a trend that most of the representative farmers were with social interest in the village development. The knowledge level of the respondents about ATMA activities was medium shown by majority (62.6%) of the respondents. It is further noted in the same table that about one-fifth farmers also, had higher level of knowledge. It is also seen that a good number of respondents (16.53%), had also shown low level of knowledge. About 30 per cent showed medium level involvement and the least number among the respondents was that of those with low level of involvement.

KEY WORDS :

ATMA,
Representative,
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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The developing technologies in the field of agricultural production and marketing have given real impetus to increase the rate of production but it is also observed that the technological management is equally important in the process of fast development in the beginning of this 21st Century. Since independence there are several structural or organizational changes in the public sector extension. Public sector extension is a governments responsibility (Lohar, 2003). Verma *et al.* (1994) shows that it is needless to say that the agricultural economy is an important aspect of national progress.

ATMA is a registered society of key

stakeholders involved in agricultural activities for sustainable agricultural development in the district. It is a focal point for integrating research extension activities and decentralizing day to day management of the public agricultural system. ATMA is a registered society responsible for technology dissemination of the district level (Nurul *et al.*, 1997).

The ATMA at district level is increasingly responsible for all the technology dissemination activities in various blocks within the district. It has linkage with all the line departments, research organization and agencies associated with agricultural development in the district. Research and extension units within the project districts

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such as Zonal Research Station (ZRS) or their substations, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs), the key line departments of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture, Fisheries etc. are constituent members of ATMA, Each unit (R-E) retains its institutional identity and affiliation, but programmes and procedures concerning district wise Research-Extension activities are determined by the ATMA governing board to be implemented by its management committee. Hence, present investigation was undertaken with an objective to study personal characteristics of the representative farmers in the light of their socio-economic conditions, to assess the knowledge about the function and activities related to ATMA and to study the constraints of representative farmers in their involvement in various programmes and activities.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in the Amravati District which comes in the vidharbha region of Maharashtra State during the year 2005-2006. For the present research work the Amravati District ATMA (agency) was purposively selected which was started in the year 2000-01. Amravati district ATMA (agency) works in fourteen Tahsils and the representative farmers. From the fourteen Farmers Advisory Committee (FAC) were selected along with the other seven representatives from the Governing Board at the district level. Thus a list of representative farmers was obtained from the office of the Project Director ATMA Amravati. The method of personal interview was used for the data collection and the data from all the selected sample respondents was collected. The respondent farmers were personally contacted for their interview purpose.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The observations made by the investigator were classified and grouped to form the tables for their interpretation. The tables so formed are presented under the following heads for their discussion and interpretation.

A close look at Table 1 show that 70 per cent respondents were of middle age group and 16 to 18 per cent were in the old and young age groups. It is further observed that maximum number of respondents (37.39%) was found to be educated above 12th standard. It is also seen in the Table 1 that 23 per cent were higher secondary educated whereas, one-third of the respondents were 5th to 10th standard educated. It is also observed that a negligible number of respondents was also in the sample who were found to be educated up to 4th standard only.

With regard to be income group it is found that most of the respondents (60%) were in the income group of Rs. 51,000 to 1,00,000, but the number of higher income respondents was also found to be noticeable (37%). It is also noted that there

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to personal characteristics

Personal characteristics	No. of respondents (n= 115)
Age - Young	18 (15.65)
Middle	81 (70.43)
Old	16 (13.92)
Total	115 (100.00)
Education -upto 4th Std.	7 (6.08)
5th to 10th Std.	38 (33.05)
11th to 12th Std.	27 (23.48)
Above 12th Std.	43 (37.39)
Total	115 (100.00)
Income-up to Rs. 50,000/-	3 (2.61)
Rs. 51,000 to Rs.1,00,000	69 (60.00)
Above Rs. 1,00,000/-	43 (37.39)
Total	115 (100.00)
Land holding- 2.5 to 5 ha.	15 (13.04)
5.1 to 8 ha.	23 (20.00)
8.1 ha and above	77 (66.96)
Total	115 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage

were only three respondents in the lower income group.

In the land holding characteristics of the respondents it is noticed that maximum respondents (about 67 %) were large holding-farmers and about one fifth of the respondents had also 5 to 8 ha of land. It is also noted that 13 per cent respondents were also having up to 5 ha of land.

It is observed in Table 2 that the social participation level of most of respondents was medium and about one third of the respondents had higher level, showing a trend that

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to situational characteristics

Situational characteristics	No. of respondents (n= 115)
Social participation	
Low	16 (13.92)
Medium	63 (54.78)
High	36 (31.30)
Total	115 (100.00)
Cosmopolitaness	
Low	39 (33.91)
Medium	54 (46.96)
High	22 (19.13)
Total	115 (100.00)
Agricultural progressiveness	
Low	29 (25.22)
Medium	52 (45.22)
High	34 (29.56)
Total	115 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage

most of the representative farmers were with social interest in the village development.

The Table 2 further reveals that the cosmopolite character of the respondents was found to be not higher in the majority but only about 20 per cent of them had higher cosmopolite character.

The same table with regard to agricultural progressiveness of the respondents indicates that, 45 per cent belonged to medium agricultural progressiveness; about 30 per cent belonged to higher level of progressiveness and about 25 percent, to lower level of progressiveness. These observations indicate that on the representative farmers were not equally progressive but maximum number of them was found to be comparatively progressive.

It is indicated in Table 3 that the knowledge level of the respondents about ATMA activities was medium shown by majority (62.6%) of the respondents. It is further noted in the same table that about one-fifth farmers also, had higher level of knowledge. It is also seen that a good number of respondents (16.53%), had also shown low level of knowledge. All these observations lead to show that knowledge about this agency (ATMA) was lacking to some extent among the representative farmers in general. The above observations agree with the findings of Lohar (2003) indicating similar trend of knowledge level.

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to the knowledge possessed about ATMA

Sr. No.	Knowledge level	No. of respondents (n = 115)
1.	Low	19 (16.53)
2.	Medium	72 (62.60)
3.	High	24 (20.87)
Total		115 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage

Table 4 represents the figures, indicating the involvement level of respondents in ATMA activities. It reveals that most of the farmers were being highly involved in the ATMA activities. It is also observed that about 30 per cent showed medium level involvement and the least number among the respondents was that of those with low level of involvement. These findings, therefore, indicate that most of the

Table 4 : Distribution of respondents according to involvement of respondents in ATMA activities

Sr. No.	Involvement level	No. of respondents (n = 115)
1.	Low	21 (18.26)
2.	Medium	34 (29.56)
3.	High	60 (52.18)
Total		115 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage

representative farmers know their role and involvement in various activities expected by ATMA.

It is clearly revealed in Table 5 that, about 50 per cent of the farmers had the problem of tight schedule prepared by the ATMA Project Director. It is also seen in the Table 5, that according to 35 per cent of the respondents, the activities of ATMA crossing with their own farming activities of the respondents. It is also noticed that adequate knowledge about grant-sanction, was a problem to 50 per cent of the representative farmers to take part in decision making at the time of grant distribution and sanction.

Table 5 : Distribution of respondents according to constraints of respondents in their involvement

Sr. No.	Constraints	No. of respondents (n = 115)
1.	Too tight schedule of farming and no time for other work	57 (49.57)
2.	Crossing of Farm and other activities	40 (34.79)
3.	Adequate knowledge about grant sanction.	58 (50.43)
Total		115 (100.00)

Note: Figures in parenthesis show percentage

With the above observations it can be concluded that due to too tight schedule of Government machinery and some crossing of farmers own activities with ATMA activities, they are not fully able to take full part in all the activities of ATMA.

Conclusion:

In the land holding characteristics of the respondents, it is noticed that maximum respondents (about 67 %) were large land-holding-farmers and about one fifth of the respondents had also 5 to 8 ha of land. It is also noted that 13 per cent respondents were also having up to 5 ha of land. The social participation level of most of respondents was medium and about one third of the respondents had higher level, showing a trend that most of the representative farmers were with social interest in the village development. The knowledge level of the respondents about ATMA activities was medium shown by majority (62.6%) of the respondents. It is further noted that about one-fifth farmers also, had higher level of knowledge. It is also seen that a good number of respondents (16.53%), had also shown low level of knowledge. About 30 per cent showed medium level involvement and the least number among the respondents was that of those with low level of involvement. It is also noticed that adequate knowledge about grant-sanction, was a problem to 50 per cent of the representative farmers to take part in decision making at the time of grant distribution and sanction.

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