



Research Article

Knowledge level of ATMA beneficiaries towards the activities of Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA)

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SUMMARY : This study was carried out in randomly selected 10 villages of three purposively selected blocks *i.e.* Ambikapur, Lundra, Surajpur located in the Surguja district of Chhattisgarh state during 2011- 12. The study aims to assess the risk orientation and level of knowledge of beneficiaries about the different activities of ATMA. A total of 100 beneficiary and 50 non-beneficiaries farmers were selected randomly. Thus the total 150 farmers were selected as respondents. The data collection was done by the use of interview schedule through personal interview. Data were analyzed with help of suitable statistical tools. The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents had medium risk bearing capability and the findings revealed that majority 79 per cent of the beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge about programme scheme, 46 per cent beneficiaries had no knowledge about training programme in ATMA. About 50 per cent beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge about demonstration programme, 36 per cent had no knowledge about visit schedule in ATMA and 76 per cent had low level of knowledge about others programme in ATMA.

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KEY WORDS :

ATMA, Knowledge level, Risk bearing capability, Tribal farmers

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Agricultural Technology Management Agency (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 and extension activities and decentralizing day-to-day management of agricultural extension system.

ATMA is a centrally sponsored scheme support to state extension programmes for extension reforms was launched by ICAR in 1999. This scheme is major initiative towards revitalising agricultural extension in the states to make extension system decentralised and demand driven. The scheme is implemented through autonomous district level institutions established in the states in the form of agricultural technology management agency (ATMA). The Principle Agricultural Officer (PAO) of the concerned

district acts as the project director of ATMA. The ATMA at district level would be increasingly responsible for all the technology dissemination activities at the district level. It would have linkage with all the line departments, research organizations, non-governmental organizations and agencies associated with agricultural development in the district. Research and extension units within the districts such as Zonal Research Stations (ZRS) or substations, Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and the key line departments of Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Horticulture and Fisheries etc. would become constituent members of ATMA. Each research-extension (R-E) unit would retain its institutional identity and affiliation but programmes and procedures concerning district-wise R-E activities would be determined by ATMA Governing Board to be implemented by its management committee (AMC). As a society, it would be able to receive

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and expend funds, entering into contracts and agreements and maintaining revolving accounts that can be used to collect fees and thereby recovering operating cost. Rogers (1983) stated that knowledge is of three types namely awareness knowledge, how to knowledge and principle knowledge. In the present study awareness knowledge was studied and the study was confined, to the technical information possessed by the respondents about different ATMA activities. The same was measured by constructing a teacher made knowledge scale.

Knowledge about innovation may be an important factor affecting the adoption behavior of farmers. Bloom (1979) defined knowledge as “those behaviour and best situation which emphasized the remembering either by recognition or recall of ideas, materials on phenomenon.” Operationally knowledge was used in this study as actual knowledge of farmers regarding five selected activities *i.e.* planning of ATMA programme, training, demonstration, exposure visit and others.

Keeping this in view, the present study was under taken to study the risk bearing capability and level of knowledge of beneficiaries about different activities of ATMA.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

This study was conducted in Surguja district of Chhattisgarh, during the year 2011. During the period of this study Chhattisgarh state had 18 districts out of which Surguja district was selected purposively because this district has got highest fund for the ATMA programme. From this district only three blocks *i.e.*, Ambikapur, Lundra and Surajpur were selected purposively. From each selected block out of total villages, only 14 villages in Ambikapur, 12 villages in Lundra and 15 villlages in Surajpur block have been selected by Government of Chhattisgarh for carrying out the various activities under ATMA project. Out of these beneficiary villages, only 25 per cent villages in each block *i.e.* Rakeli, Darima, Nawanagar (Ambikapur), Lamgaon, Kot, Dorna (Lundra), Ajirama, Kalyanpur, Dwrikanagar and Jagatpur (Surajpur) were randomly selected (Total 10 villages) for the study. From each farmers interest groups, 10 tribal farmers were randomly selected those were beneficiaries of ATMA programme from each selected village as respondent. In this way, 30 farmers from Anbikapur, 30 farmers from Lundra and 40 farmers from Surjupur (30+30+40=100 beneficiary farmers) were selected to determine the risk orientation and knowledge level beneficiaries

about various activities of ATMA programme. The 5 non-beneficiary farmers were also selected from same village as non-beneficiary respondents (15+15+20=50). Thus, total of 150 (100 beneficiaries and 50 non-beneficiaries) farmers were selected as respondents for the present study. Respondents were interviewed through personal interview. Prior to interview, respondents were taken in to confidence by revealing the actual purpose of the study and full care was taken in to consideration to develop good rapport with them. For the data collection well designed and pre-tested interview scheduled were used. Collected data were analyzed by the help of various statistical tools *i.e.* frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, etc.

A device was developed to measure the knowledge level of farmers regarding selected five activities for ATMA programme. To assess the knowledge of beneficiaries respondents about different aspects of ATMA programme a three point continuum scale was used *i.e.* ‘Full’, ‘Partial’ and ‘Nil’ with score of ‘2’, ‘1’ and ‘0’, respectively. A knowledge index was worked out to assess the level of knowledge of each respondent with the help of following equation:

$$K.I. = \frac{O}{S} \times 100$$

where,

KI = Knowledge index of respondent

O = Total obtained score by respondent

S= Total obtainable score

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads:

Risk orientation:

The finding revealed that risk bearing capability of the respondents in Table 1. The table indicated that majority of the ATMA beneficiaries 91 per cent had medium risk bearing capability, followed by 8 per cent of the beneficiaries had low level of risk bearing capability and only 1 per cent were taking the high risk. Whereas, the maximum 94 per cent of the non-beneficiaries had medium risk bearing capability, followed by 4 per cent non-beneficiaries had high level of risk bearing capability and 2 per cent were taking the low risk bearing capability. Similar results were reported by Sharma (1994), Khan

Table 1 : Distribution of the respondents according to their risk bearing capability

Risk orientation	Beneficiary (n=100)		Non-beneficiary (n=50)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Low (up to 8)	8	8	1	2
Medium (8.1 to 16)	91	91	47	94
High (16.1 to 24)	1	1	2	4

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their level of knowledge about different activities of ATMA (n=100)

Activities of ATMA	Level of knowledge			
	Nil	Low (Up to 33.33%)	Medium (33.34 - 66.66%)	High (Above 66.66%)
Programme scheme	0	12	79	9
Training related	46	9	30	15
Demonstration related	10	12	50	15
Visit related	36	10	23	31
Others	0	76	13	11

Note: Figures in parenthesis shows percentage

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to their overall level of knowledge about different activities of ATMA (n=100)

Extent of knowledge	Frequency	Percentage
Low (<33.33)	27	27
Medium (33.34-66.66)	59	59
High (>66.66)	14	14

(1996), Gupta (1998) and Shrivastava (1999).

Extent of knowledge of beneficiaries about different activities of ATMA:

The findings on extent of knowledge regarding programme scheme, training related, demonstration related, visit related and others are presented in Table 2. The data revealed that majority 79 per cent of the beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge about programme scheme, followed by 12 per cent and 9 per cent of beneficiaries had low and high level of knowledge, respectively.

As regards to training related, the majority 46 per cent of the beneficiaries had no knowledge about training programme in ATMA, followed by 30 per cent of the beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge, 15 per cent of the beneficiaries had high and 9 per cent beneficiaries had low level of knowledge.

Regarding demonstration related, 50 per cent of the beneficiaries had medium level of knowledge, followed by 15 per cent had high level of knowledge, 12 per cent had low level of knowledge and 10 per cent had no knowledge about demonstration in ATMA. Whereas, 36 per cent had no knowledge about visit programme in ATMA, followed by 31 per cent had high level of knowledge, 23 per cent had medium level of knowledge and 10 per cent had low level of knowledge.

As regards to others activities, 76 per cent of the beneficiaries had low level of knowledge, followed by 13 per cent and 11 per cent had medium and high level of knowledge, respectively.

It could be concluded that majority of ATMA beneficiaries 79 per cent had medium level of knowledge about programme scheme, 46 per cent had no knowledge about training, 50 per cent had medium level of knowledge about demonstration, 36 per cent had no knowledge about visit and 76 per cent had low level of knowledge about others activities

in ATMA programme.

The overall extents of knowledge regarding different activities of ATMA are present in Table 3. The data reveal that the majority of the beneficiaries (59%) had medium level of knowledge regarding different activities of ATMA. Whereas, 27 per cent and 14 per cent of beneficiaries were having low and high level of knowledge, respectively.

It could be concluded that majority of the beneficiaries (59%) had medium level of knowledge about the different activities of ATMA programme. This indicated that the beneficiaries did not have enough knowledge about the different activities of ATMA programme. In other words principles of the programme was least concerned but its practical implication was more important for the beneficiaries. This study is strongly supported from the findings of Rao (2001), Prakash and De (2008).

Conclusion:

From the above research findings it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents had medium risk bearing capability. The findings also revealed that majority of the beneficiaries (59%) were having medium level of knowledge regarding different activities of ATMA. About 65 per cent of the beneficiaries showed the medium level of participation in different ATMA activities.

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