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Perception Of Reseachers About Extension Clientele Linkage Activities

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Abstract

The past experience of the extension system revealed that the communication of agricultural information was inefficient and ineffective, leading to an increased gap between innovation in the lab and the adoption in the fields by the farmers. Therefore, it is felt vital to study indepth the concept of information management behaviour of the extension personnel and farmers engaged in development and transfer of technologies. So far no systematic study has been conducted in this area. This study was undertaken to assess the information management behavior and extent of linkage between extension and clientele systems. The study was conducted in cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu with a sample size of 60 extension personnel and 60 sugarcane farmers. Majority of the extensionists were found under high category of information management behaviour. Assistant director of agriculture, superiors and farm and home visits were the regularly contacted channels for information acquisition. Majority of farmers belonged to high category of information management behaviour. Cane development officer, neighbours/fellow farmers and viewing telecasts were found to be their regularly used channels for information acquisition.

Key words: Information system. Extension personnel, sugarcane Clients.

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Introduction:

Sugarcane (*Saccharumofficinarum* L.) belongs to the Andropogoneae tribe of poaceae (Grass family), which includes sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor* L.) and maize (*Zea mays*). Saccharum is characterized by high chromosome number and high level of polyploidy, which has been largely responsible for the genetic complexity and taxonomic difficulties. Modern cultivated sugarcanes are mostly hybrids of different species of the geneussaccharum which is placed in sub-tribe of saccharinae and sub family of Panicoidae.

The earliest references of sugarcane are from India and China, several centuries before the Christian era. Kishore (1986) Detailed sugarcane agriculture was described in Tamil literature "Agananouru" and Purananooru". The flowering habits, agronomic traits, harvest and transport and extraction of sugar were well stated. It is also found in the sacred book, "Atharva-Veda", (3000 B.C), which was composed during pre-christian era. Sugar was also used extensively in Sidda and Ayurvedic medicines. Tamil literature (Silapathigaram, 120 B.C) illustrated the sugar trade between India, Thailand, South-East Asia, Indonesia, Philippines, Egypt and Middle East.

Sugar from cane accounts for approximately 70.00 per cent of the world's sweetener and is an economically important cash crop in the tropical and subtropical regions of many countries. In India, sugar industry is the second largest industry. Sugarcane is cultivated in 4.4 million hectares in India and in Tamil Nadu, it occupies 0.33 million hectares. India produces 300 million tonnes of sugarcane and 18 million tonnes of sugar in 2001-02. Tamil Nadu produced 36 million tonnes of sugarcane and 1.64 million tonnes of sugar during 2001-02. The average cane yield in India is 68.2 tonnes per hectare in India and 111.4 tonnes per hectare in Tamil Nadu (Rolling, 1988)..

India has a long history of cane growing. The growth of Indian sugar industry has been fairly steady and rapid since 1930. In the early years,

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sugarcane varieties did not possess good milling quality, yields per unit area was low and sucrose content of juice was poor. This was overcome by researches carried out by Sugarcane Breeding Institutes (SBI) and Plant breeding scientists around the world.

Research Methodology

It was decided to have a sample size of sixty sugarcane registered farmers as that of researchers and extensionists based on random sampling procedure. Among sixty farmers, thirty registered farmers of M.R.K Co-operative sugar factory were selected from the villages situated nearer to the sugarcane research station, Cuddalore. Accordingly,two villages viz., Srimushnam and Solatharam of Keerpalayam block which had the maximum area under sugarcane cultivation as well as with highest number of registered farmers of M.R.K Co-operative sugar factory were selected (Arunmozhi Devi, 2004). Accordingly, fifteen sugarcane farmers were selected at random from each of the villages. The same procedure was followed for the selection of registered sugarcane farmers of EID Parry (India) Ltd, Nellikuppam. Fifteen registered sugarcane farmers were selected from each of the selected villages viz., Valayamadevi and Annagramam of Annagramam block.

PERCEPTION TOWARDS LINKAGE ACTIVITIES

Perception towards linkage was operationalised as the degree of importance of linkage activities as perceived by the respondents. The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the linkage activities as perceived by them on a four-point continuum, Very Important (VI), Important (I), Less Important (LI) and Not Important (NI) and scores of 4, 3, 2 and 1 were given respectively. The respondents were categorized based on the individual perception scores on linkage activities into 'low', 'medium' and 'high'. The cumulative frequency method was used for categorization. Perception about research- extension and research - clientele linkages as perceived by researchers.

Findings and Discussion

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PERCEPTION OF RESPONDENTS ABOUT LINKAGE ACTIVITIES

Researchers' perception about research – extension linkage

Results on the distribution of respondents according to their perception about research-extension linkage activities are presented in Table1.

Table 1. Researchers' perception about research – extension linkage activities.

(n=60)

Sl. No.	Linkage activities	VI		I		LI		NI	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A. Technology Development									
1.	Involving extension personnel in identifying research problems	51	85.00	6	10.00	3	5.00	-	-
2.	Involvement in developing technologies	30	50.00	18	30.00	9	15.00	3	5.00
3.	Findings solutions to research problems	30	50.00	17	28.33	11	18.33	2	3.34
4.	Conducting field trails	54	90.00	4	6.67	2	3.34	-	-
5.	Evaluation of technologies	17	28.33	41	68.33	2	3.34	-	-
6.	To get feedback from clients	29	48.33	31	51.67	-	-	-	-
B. Technology dissemination									
1.	Involving extension personal monthly workshops	6	10.00	30	50.00	18	30.00	6	10.00
2.	Involvement	15	25.00	45	75.00	-	-	-	-

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	in training programmes								
3.	Involvement in awareness campaigns for introduction of new technologies	23	38.33	37	61.67	-	-	-	-
4.	Involvement in field demonstration	15	25.00	39	65.00	4	6.67	2	3.34
5.	Involvement in exhibition	17	28.33	41	68.33	2	3.34	-	-
6.	Involvement in sugarcane production technology	18	30.00	42	70.00	-	-	-	-

VI – Very Important, I- Important, LI- Least Important and NI – Not Important

Among the technology development activities, majority of the researchers perceived to involve the extension personnel in conducting field trials (90.00 per cent) and in identifying research problems (85.00 per cent) as very important linkage activities. Most of the respondents (68.33 per cent) perceived the involvement of extension personnel in the evaluation of technologies as important. Equal percentage of respondents (50.00 per cent) perceived involvement of extension personnel in developing technologies and in finding solutions to research problems and in getting feedback from clients as very important linkage activities This finding is in line with the findings of Prasad,(1996).

Among the technology dissemination activities, majority of the respondents perceived the involvement of the extension personnel in training programmes (75.00 per cent) as importantThis finding is in line with the findings of Sampath(1994).

Majority of the researchers perceived involvement of extension personnel in exhibitions (68.33 per cent) as important. Involvement of

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extension workers in field demonstrations (65.00 per cent) and involvement in awareness campaigns for introduction of new technologies was perceived as important by most of the respondents (61.67 per cent).

The possible reason could be that the researchers perceived the technology development activities as important as the main objective of their research is to evolve technologies. Hence, their perception of involvement of extension workers in technology development was comparatively higher than their involvement in technology dissemination activities. This finding is in line with the findings of Arunmozhi Devi (2004).

Researchers' perception on research – extension and research – clientele linkage

The results on the overall perception of researchers on research – extension and research – clientele linkage activities are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Researchers' perception about research – extension.

Category	R-E	
	No.	%
Low	9	15.00
Medium	31	51.67
High	20	33.33

R-E : Research – extension; R-C : Research – clientele

It could be seen from the above table that medium level of perception was expressed by 51.67 per cent of the researchers in case of research – extension linkage. The obtained result of 51.67 per cent R-E linkage under medium level may be due to the importance of R-E linkage activities perceived by the researchers based on the nature of their work, personal interest and frequency of contact with the extension workers. This finding is line with the findings of Arunmozhi Devi (2004).

Researchers' perception about research – clientele linkage

Results on distribution of researchers according to their perception on research – clientele linkage activities are presented in Table 33.

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Table 2. Researchers' perception about research – clientele linkage activities

(n=60)

Sl. No.	Linkage activities	VI		I		LI		NI	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
A. Technology Development									
1.	Identifying field problems	24	40.00	30	50.00	6	10.00	-	-
2.	Finding solution to field problems	7	11.67	26	43.33	15	25.00	12	20.00
3.	Conducting field trials	27	45.00	24	40.00	6	10.00	3	5.00
4.	Involvement in technology refinement	21	35.00	27	45.00	9	15.00	3	5.00
B. Technology dissemination / utilization									
1.	Involvement in transfer of new technologies	23	38.33	33	55.00	4	6.67	-	-
2.	Involvement in training programmes	18	30.00	30	50.00	12	20.00	-	-
3.	Involvement in farmers' days / field days	11	18.33	42	70.00	7	11.67	-	-
4.	Involvement in exhibition	15	25.00	27	45.00	9	15.00	9	15.00
5.	Interaction during village visits	12	20.00	33	55.00	6	10.00	9	15.00
6.	Interaction during institution visits	13	21.67	27	45.00	12	20.00	8	14.33
7.	Involvement in farm broadcast	9	15.00	27	45.00	18	29.00	6	11.00

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8.	Involvement in farm telecast	12	20.00	30	50.00	12	20.00	3	10.00
9.	Involvement in writing farm articles	15	25.00	33	55.00	9	15.00	3	5.00
10.	Answering mail queries / phone calls	6	10.00	39	65.00	9	15.00	6	10.00

Among the technology development activities, 45.00 per cent of the researchers perceived that involving farmers in conducting field trails and in finding solutions to field problems (40.00 per cent) as very important.

Among the technology dissemination activities, majority of the respondents perceived involvement of farmers in farmers days / field days (70.00 per cent), in writing mail queries / phone calls (65.00 per cent) for technical advice as important. An equal percentage of researchers (55.00 per cent under each) perceived involvement of farmers transfer of new technologies, in interaction during village visits and in writing for farm articles as important. Half of the researchers (50.00 per cent) perceived involvement of farmers in training programmes as important.

It could be seen from the above results that the researchers' perception was found to be more in technology dissemination than technology development activities. The possible reason could be that the farmers involvement is very vital in the dissemination activities as they are the end-users of the technologies. Hence, the researchers' perception of involvement of farmers would have been more in technology dissemination activities.

Summary and Conclusion

Medium level of perception was expressed by 51.67 per cent of the researchers in case of research – extension linkage and 40.00 per cent in case of research - clientele linkage activities. Moderate level of linkage was

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found between research – extension, while the linkage between research - clientele was found to be weak. Hence, efforts should be taken to strengthen the linkage between research-extension and research – clientele systems by way of policy decisions.

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