INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOUR OF TRIBAL COMMUNITIES IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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It is known that certain farmers play a significant role in transfer of technology. They act as second line extension workers in transfer of agricultural and allied information to fellow farmers. They have the ability to influence a large part of the farming community in the villages. They often serve as local multipliers and sponsors of new agricultural information. There is a natural seeker or follower pattern among farmers to whom some other influential farmers act as advocators of new ideas in social settings of farming communities. Many a time, the influential act as informative screen or local legitimizes of new ideas for adoption of new innovations among the farmers in the villages.

There are many sources through which farmers seek or obtain information about the technological change in farming. The preference and selectivity for a particular source may vary with the clients. In addition, their personal attributes also influence the selection of a particular source. Nevertheless, interpersonal communication still plays an appropriate and important role in the communication of technologies in tribal areas.

Small, close-knit communities, endowed patriarchal authority, and traditional village leadership in taking decisions through consensus, characterize the tribal society. It has often been remarked that Interpersonal Communication Behavior (ICB) varies with individual sub-tribes. Several reasons account for this variance. Few of these are the socio-economic status, cultural differences and communication facilities available to different sub-tribes.

Objective of the study

Keeping this in view the present study was attempted with seven sub tribes spread over three districts viz., Adilabad, Khammam and East Godavari of Andhra Pradesh State in India, with the objective of understanding different categories of communicators among tribal farmers based on the interpersonal communication behavior scores.

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Methodology

Seven villages from 3 districts i.e Adilabad, Khammam and East Godavari in Andhra Pradesh state of India, were purposively selected based on the existence of predominant tribal communities. Each village represents a particular tribal community of that agency area. Ten per cent of the population from each village was selected based on the criteria of possessing own land and active involvement in farming by using simple random sampling method. Thus a total number of 300 tribal farmers were selected from 7 villages in three districts for the study as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Selected Villages and Respondents

S. No.	Sub tribe	Name of the district	Name of the village	Village population	Sample size (10 % of the village population)
1	Gond	Adilabad	Pipri	325	30
2	Kolam	Adilabad	K.K.Guda	278	30
3	Sugali	Khammam	Kolthur	403	40
4	Koya	Khammam	Raghavapuram	495	50
5	Kammara	E.Godavari	Cheruvupalem	325	30
6	Konda Reddy	E.Godavari	D.N.Palem	585	60
7	Konda kapu	E.Godavari	Madicherla	612	60

Interpersonal Communication Behavior (ICB)

Interpersonal communication behavior of farmers was measured by using sociometric data obtained on four messages viz. 1) Agriculture in general 2) Animal husbandry in general 3) Horticulture in general 4) Minor forest produce in general. The data obtained for four messages was processed by the following procedure indicated below to obtain interpersonal communication behavior scores. The scores of each respondent on four agricultural and allied fields were computed as suggested by Jennings (1950); Northway (1959) and Campbell (1960). The communication scores were obtained as mentioned below.

Communication score = F1·W1 + F2 W2 + F3 W3

Where,

F1 = Frequency with which any person is being chosen in primary sociometric choice

F2 = Frequency with which any person is being chosen in secondary sociometric choice

F3 = Frequency with which any person is being chosen in tertiary sociometric choice

W1 = Weightage given to the first choice (i.e.3)

W2 = Weightage given to the second choice (i.e.2)

W3 = Weightage given to the third choice (i.e.1)

The communication scores of four communication content areas were added to obtain the total communication score of each respondent. The Interpersonal Communication Behavior score for each respondent was obtained by dividing the total communication score by the number of communication content areas. The respondents were categorized based on the following procedure.

Categorisation based on ICB score

Low : Below scores of minimum score in a sub tribe + Class interval width*

Medium : In between low scores to the scores of Low + Class interval width

High : In between medium scores to the scores of medium + class interval Width

Class interval width = Maximum score in a sub tribe - Minimum score in a sub tribe / 3

Based on the overall interpersonal communication behavior scores obtained on four selected information areas (i.e. agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture and MFP) the respondents were classified into 3 categories namely high, medium and low. The results of this analysis in seven sub tribes are presented in Table 2.

From the table it can be seen that in 'Kammara' sub tribe more than half (54.55 %) of the respondents belonged to low ICB category followed by medium (27.27 %) and high (18.18 %) categories. More than half of the respondents in Kondareddy sub-tribe (54.55 %) were in low ICB category followed by high (36.36 %) and medium (9.09 %) ICB categories. In the Kondakapu sub-tribe 55.56% of respondents were in low ICB category, 33.33% medium and 11.11 respondents were in high ICB category. Similarly in Koya sub-tribe more than three fourth (77.78 %) of the respondents were in low ICB category.

Table 2. Categorisation of different sub Tribe respondents based on their ICB Scores

Sl. No.	Sub tribe	Categories			
		Low ICB	Medium ICB	High ICB	Total
1	Kammara	6 (54.55%)	2 (27.27%)	3 (18.18%)	11 (100%)
2	Kondareddy	6 (54.55%)	1 (9.09%)	4 (36.36%)	11 (100%)
3	Kondakapu	5 (55.56%)	3 (33.33%)	1(11.11%)	9 (100%)
4	Koya	7 (77.78%)	1 (11.11%)	1 (11.11%)	9 (100%)
5	Sugali	4 (57.14%)	1 (14.29%)	2 (28.57%)	7 (100%)
6	Kolam	3 (42.86%)	1 (14.28%)	3 (42.86%)	7 (100%)
7	Gond	4 (100%)	1 (11.12%)	4 (100%)	9 (100%)

The other respondents were in medium and high ICB categories with 11.11 per cent each. In Sugali sub-tribe 57.14 % of respondents were in low ICB category followed by high (28.57%) and medium (14.29%) ICB category. In Kolam sub-tribe 42.86 per cent respondents were in low ICB category, and 14.28 per cent and 42.86 per cent of respondents were in medium and high ICB categories respectively. In Gond sub tribe 44.44% of respondents were in low and high ICB category each and 11.12% of respondents were in medium ICB category.

Conclusion

It can be concluded from the above results that in all the 7 sub tribes the percentage of communicators with low ICB were more. This may be due to the reason that the ICB score of each respondent was dependent on the sociometric scores of the four content areas i.e agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture and minor forest produce. For a particular respondent the score was high in one content area and the score was less in other content area. Due to this reason the ICB score was less. This clearly indicates that the interpersonal relations exist differently for different content areas for a particular key communicator. It means that the key communicators who had more knowledge in one content area were influencing more that content area only and in the remaining areas his influence was less.

This has a greater implication for extension agencies working in tribal areas wherein they have to identify high ICB farmers not only in each one of the tribal groups, but also in each one of the subject matter areas, for making an entry into tribal development.

They can be used as a channel for communicating new technical information to the tribal farmers and can be used as para technicians / liaison workers to support the extension agency in tribal areas.

References

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