

COMMUNICATION CORRELATES OF COMMERCIALIZATION OF VEGETABLE CULTIVATION

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Agricultural Development programme in India had been given prime consideration in the National plans. Though vegetable production index in India has been constantly moving up but the productivity of various vegetable crops still falls short of the levels support with some facts to be attained. However, in the recent past the introduction technologies seems to have added new dimensions in Indian vegetable farming system particularly for small and marginal farmers who command limited land resource. The magnitude of benefits of vegetable production programmes is reflected in the creation of additional man days employment and remunerative source of income through vegetable cultivation among small and marginal farmers.

It has been proposed that the farmers' communication variables may play an important role in the commercialization of vegetable cultivation. Review of research studies done in the past on vegetable cultivation shows that all these attributes of farmers have not been studied together to give comprehensive picture. There are hardly any studies on commercialization of vegetable cultivation as well. Therefore, it was felt necessary to examine the factors affecting commercialization of the vegetable among vegetable growers in the present investigation. Keeping this in view, the present study was planned to investigate the relationship between the commercialization of vegetable cultivation and the different communication sources utilized by the vegetable growers. The specific objectives of the study were : To study the communication profile of the vegetable growers and to study the communication correlates of commercialization of vegetable cultivation.

METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out in purposively selected Alipur block of Delhi where more than 60 per cent area is under vegetable cultivation. Two villages namely Palla and Bakhtawarpur were selected purposively because fruit and vegetable scheme of mother dairy was in operation in the villages. A list of farmers was collected from vegetable collection centres of mother dairy from both the villages. A total of 100 vegetable growers, 50 mother dairy members from both the villages and 50 non-members of mother dairy, 25 each from each village were selected randomly. An interview schedule was developed and field tested. The data was collected by the first investigator directly from the selected respondents. The data analysis was carried out using SPSS package.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The extension contact and mass media exposure were two communication variables analysed in the investigation. The extension contact of the vegetable growere was categorized into three categories i.e. low (<12), medium (12,14) and high (14). The frequency and percentages are presented in Table 1. From Table1, it is evident that about one-third of the vegetable growers i.e. 56 per cent were having medium level of extension contancts. The respondents having low and high-level extension contanct were found to be 20 and 24 per cent respectively. It was encouraging sign that majority of the farmers were

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consulting. The Centre for Agricultural Technology Assessment and Transfer (CATAT) officials of IARI regarding agricultural related issues, because CATAT has opened its offices in these villages.

Table-1 : Distribution of vegetable growers by their extension contact.

S.No.	Extension contact	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (<2)	10	20
2.	Medium (12-14)	28	56
3.	High above (14)	12	24
	Total	50	100

Table-2 : Distribution of vegetable growers by their mass media exposure.

S.No.	Extension contact	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Low (< 8)	3	6
2.	Medium (8-12)	35	70
3.	High above (>12)	12	24
	Total	50	100

2. Mass media exposure

The mass-media exposure is presented in Table-2.. It was found that majority of the vegetable growers (70 per cent) were having medium level of mass media exposure. It may be inferred from this table that more than 94 per cent vegetable growers are exposed to mass media from medium to high level. It may be because these villages are well connected by road with Delhi and also not very far from city.

B. Communication correlates of commercialization of vegetable cultivation.

1. Communication Variables

The communication variables yielded positive but very small correlation coefficients. The two major mass media available to the farmers in the area are Television and Radio. Both the mass media broadcast farm technology programmes at specified time for five days a week. Almost all the vegetable growers were the viewers and listeners of these two broadcasts. There was little inter-respondent variability in this respect due to which correlation coefficient was found to be so low for the vegetable growers of this study and their interpersonal variability was also in a very narrow range. Out of 36 possible score, most of the vegetable growers got scores between 12 and 14 with an average of 13.98. May be that because of this narrow range of variability of the some the correlation coefficient was found to be so low.

Table-3: Correlation between commercialization of vegetable cultivation and selected communication variables of vegetable growers.

Communication Variables	Correlation coefficients Values of
Extension contact	0.0700
Exposure to mass-media	0.1520

* Significant at 0.01 level of probability

CONCLUSION

The vegetable growers were exposed to mass media much more than interpersonal contact. This brings to light that radio and TV coverage of vegetable production technology at Delhi is quite good and farmers roles on that for new knowledge. One the other hand, extension change agents do not seen to maintain adequate contact with the farmers. This requires to be corrected. The extension agency should be more active to have close contact with vegetable growers to hklp them produce more since Delhi is an excellent vegetable market.

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