

A Study on Public Relations of Deputy Agricultural Officers in Madurai

By

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ABSTRACT

The study showed that the Deputy Agricultural Officers maintained public relations in fifteen out of twenty aspects. Aspects like reporting their achievements and improved technique through news paper, radio talk and magazine, office location and sign board, cleanliness and equipping the office, providing space for visitors and giving privacy for discussion are lacking.

INTRODUCTION

Agricultural extension worker's role and activities are many-fold. He must acquaint himself with farmers and learn their problems, needs and capabilities. He must adjust to villagers, circumstances. He must be aware of the problems, cultural backgrounds and the value systems of farmers. Agricultural extension workers must be simple, polite, familiar and cordial to the farmers. All these constitute extension public relations. The objective of the study was to know the extent to which the Deputy Agricultural Officers keep up these aspects to maintain a satisfactory public relation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Madurai City. All the Deputy Agricultural

Officers working in the development programmes with their headquarters at Madurai constituted the sample for the study. The sample consisted of twenty Deputy Agricultural Officers comprising 9 extension, 2 plant protection, 1 plant protection squad, 1 horticultural development, 1 high yielding varieties programme, 1 coconut development and 1 seed development officers.

Collection of available literature regarding public relations was done. This coupled with experience and discussion with the experts in agricultural extension, a rough draft was prepared. The draft consisted of 50 questions. The draft was critically examined and pretested on 15 per cent of the sample which was used in the final study. Based on the pretesting omission of some of the questions was made

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and the final schedule consisted of 20 questions. Each question represented one aspect of public relation. For the maintenance of each aspect of public relation one weightage was given. The total score of each respondent was obtained by summing his scores for all the aspects. Thus, the total score either for an individual aspect or for a single respondent was 20. The mean public relations score for every aspect was worked out by summing the scores of all respondents on a given aspect divided by the number of respondents. Data were collected both

by the interview schedule method and by observation whenever necessary. The data were tabulated and analysed. Mean calculations and the Kolmogorov-Smirnov one sample test was used for analysing the data and for testing the null hypothesis (H_0) and research hypothesis (H_1).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The various aspects of public relations and the corresponding mean public relations scores are given in Table 1. The mean scores of aspects 1, 2, 4, 17, 18 and 20 were one indi-

Table 1. Mean public relations scores

S No.	Aspects	Mean score
1.	Knowing people and their problems	1.000
2.	Knowing about the organisation	1.000
3.	Area at which united effort is required	0.805
4.	Informing people regarding reasons for and activities of the department	1.000
5.	Having a sound plan of work	0.805
6.	Maintaining enthusiastic attitude	0.805
7.	Dependability	0.700
8.	Training subordinates to meet people with a spirit of courteous efficiency and desire to serve	0.900
9.	Reporting through news paper, radio, magazine about their achievements, improved techniques	0.300
10.	Having good office location and sign boards on door	0.500
11.	Soliciting assistance to farmers	0.705
12.	Encouraging tendency	0.700
13.	Acknowledging letters promptly	0.900
14.	Keeping office clean and well equipped	0.200
15.	Providing comfortable place for the visitors to wait	0.500
16.	Providing privacy for visitors if necessary for discussion	0.000
17.	Informing office staff about his tour and when he returned to the office	1.000
18.	Keeping appointment, remembering promises made during tours	1.000
19.	Starting and closing meeting promptly	0.705
20.	Maintaining good relations with co-workers	1.000
Total		14.525

cating cent per cent maintenance of public relations. The Deputy Agricultural Officers maintain cent per cent public relations on six aspects i. e. 1, 2, 4, 17, 18 and 20 as the mean for these aspects was one ranking first. Aspects 8 and 13 ranked 2nd. Third rank went to aspects three, five and six. Soliciting assistance to farmers (11) and starting and closing meeting (19) ranked fourth (0.705). Dependability (7) and encouraging tendency (12) have got a fifth rank (0.700). But the remaining aspects, namely reporting through news paper, radio and magazine about their achievements, improved techniques, office location and sign board, cleanliness and equipping the office, providing comfortable place for visitors to wait and providing privacy for visitors to discuss are the aspects which need improvement. Out of 20 aspects the results are encouraging relating to 15 aspects. The overall maintenance of public relations by the Deputy Agricultural Officers is encouraging as the total mean score is 14.525.

Testing the hypothesis : The second part of the study is to test the below mentioned null hypothesis by the Kolmogorov-Smirnov one sample test. H_0 —Public relationships exist between Deputy Agricultural Officers

and farmers. P_1 0.05 (two-tailed test). To test the null hypothesis, the theoretical distributions of public relations scores for the officers must be determined. Since there are 4 categories into which public relations score may be ranked and if $N=20$, then given the null hypothesis N/K or $20/4$ or 5 frequencies in each of the four categories should be expected. Dividing the number of observations by the number of categories into which the observations are ranked will give the expected number of frequencies per category. Next, a cumulative frequency distribution for both the observed and expected frequencies was set up. It is observed that a discrepancy exists between what is observed and what is expected by chance (Table 2).

The primary concern here is the largest absolute difference between the observed and the expected cumulative frequencies. The largest absolute difference is $7/20$ and let this difference be D . Thus D can be defined as the largest absolute difference between expected and observed and cumulative frequencies. The critical value of D as given in the table at 0.05 level of significance is 0.294. Observed D value is 0.305, which is greater than the table value (0.294), the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2. Cumulative frequency distribution of observed and expected frequencies

Frequencies	Public relations bank			
	Low	Moderately low	Moderately high	High
Observed frequencies	0/20	3/20	7/20	10/20
Expected frequencies	5/20	5/20	5/20	5/20
Cumulative observed F	0/20	3/20	10/20	20/20
Cumulative expected F	5/20	10/20	15/20	20/20
Difference between observed cumulative and expected cumulative frequencies	5/20	7/20	5/20	0/20

At 0.05 level observed value : 7/20 = .305 significant. 't' value : 294

As the null hypothesis is rejected it is concluded that public relationship exists between Deputy Agricultural

Officers and farmers. And thus, the research hypothesis is accepted.