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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PARTICIPATORY VIDEO AS A TOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

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Abstract

Participatory video as an extension approach is bringing together the local communities with their own knowledge and capacity for research on one platform with the researchers and other professionals. In lieu with limitations of wider communication gap in agriculture extension to solve the production problems of a large majority of small farmers there is a frantic search for alternative approach to develop useful technologies. There is a need to make farmers more active partners in technology development process. It is a useful means of sharing knowledge with farmers, scientists, extension workers, agricultural journalists and other rural development professionals. The paper highlighted the impact of participatory video in specifically in agriculture through various cases. The functions and working of participatory video and its role in agriculture communication have also been studied. Finally, the study supports the use of participatory video as a means of knowledge sharing and information exchange among farmers and its future implication.

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Introduction:-

Participatory video is a useful means of sharing knowledge with farmers, scientists, extension workers, agricultural journalists and other rural development professionals. Here the extension professionals made video with the farmers in their realistic situation and share information among their peers. This process made the communication easier, accessible and cheaper. Realizing its need and importance various projects has been running all over the world to reduce the knowledge gaps between farmers and extension professional. The earliest root of participatory video making is found in 1967 the work of Donald Snowden and Colin Low. It is popularly known as The Fogo Process. It became a communication for development prototype in using media to promote dialogue and social change, and has since been used in many locations around the world. It has been used for capacity building, advocacy and empowerment of people. Participatory video can be defined as a tool for the facilitation of individual, group learning and communication, where participants use the creation of video materials to share and make sense of their experiences and relationships. Making a film becomes a learning process for participants, and the camera becomes a mode for directing the attention of participants rather than (or as well as) an audience (Nemes *et al.*, 2007). Participants are thereby presented with the opportunity to become the subjects rather than objects of a social learning process, and the methodology thus fits naturally in a participatory action research frame. The methodology requires a skill set amongst facilitators and researchers that encompasses technical capabilities, yet emphasizes social

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capabilities. It is therefore distinct from related applications of video to social issues, such as Harding's (2001) video activism, and to non-participatory applications of video in research.

Need for Participatory Communication:

FAO has defined Participation as an equitable and active involvement of all stakeholders in the formulation of development policies and strategies and in the analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development activities. To allow for a more equitable development process, disadvantaged stakeholders need to be empowered to increase their level of knowledge, influence and (have) control over their own livelihoods, including development initiatives affecting them. Access to and control over resources is a major reason for a participatory approach to development. It is important to recognize that citizen participation is the key to the sustainability of those initiatives and ownership of outcomes.

Nair and white (1987), participatory development communication is a two- way dynamic interaction, between "grass roots" receivers and the "information" source, mediated by development communicators, which facilitates participation of the "target groups" in the process of development. Participatory communication process is also key to and inherent in participatory development and sustainability, if projects are to be relevant and appropriately institutionalized.

Participatory Video around the world:

Participatory video around the world has been used in variety of ways. Some of the major project across is listed as follows;

Digital Green:

Digital Green is an international NGO registered in the U.S. and India that uses a mediated model to disseminate targeted agricultural information via digital media to small-scale and marginal farmers in India. To date, their partners in India have produced more than 2,000 videos and worked with almost 90,000 farmers. They are also working in partnership with Ethiopia to bring their system to farmers in Ethiopia as well. They work in partnership with existing extension systems, NGOs, and the private sector, which helps them to establish scale, generate trust, and leverage domain expertise. Their system is based on a hub (district-level) and spoke (village level) model, with multiple spokes benefiting from each nearby hub. All videos are locally produced using low-cost equipment and primarily follow a facilitated training format with farmers and experts directly explaining the topic to the viewer.

World Cocoa Foundation Video Viewing Clubs (VVCs):

The World Cocoa Foundation originally established the Video Viewing Clubs in Ghana under the Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP), which ran from 2006-2011. Over the course of the program, 95 VVCs were established, reaching more than 2,500 cocoa farmers. The videos are a mix of narrative, facilitated farmer interviews, and narrator-led instructional content. The program administered a formal survey to 32 randomly selected female program participants and 30 control female farmers at the end of its pilot phase in 2008 to assess changes in adoption, knowledge diffusion, and perception of the VVCs. Although the survey did not find any significant differences in the adoption rates or yields between the control and treatment groups, it did find a significant increase in knowledge of improved practices.

Agro-insight:

Agro-Insight is an enterprise based in Belgium that creates highly polished videos using a team of professional or locally trained videographers. Videos are well-researched and scripted in advance, and primarily in a narrator-led instructional format with some farmer interviews. Their model is based on the zooming-in, zooming-out (ZIZO) method, which considers both local and regional relevance when developing videos to maximize the number of farmers likely to be impacted by each video. Videos are created with the input of local farmers, who assist with identifying topics, providing input for script development, and demonstrating practices. The actual recording, editing, and publishing of videos is done by Agro-Insight staff or by locally trained counterparts. All of their videos are scripted and translated into English, French and multiple local languages (depending on demand).

Insightshare:

InsightShare is an organization based in the UK that focuses on participatory video (PV), which is a set of techniques used to involve groups or communities to shape and create their own videos. They work with development agencies, NGOs, and research institutions to help create their own PV activities and have helped to

establish community owned People's Video Hubs in nine countries across the world, including Cameroon, Kenya, and South Africa. Although their videos are not focused exclusively on agricultural topics, they have worked with farmers in several countries.

Participatory Video in Agriculture:

Indian conditions video can be the most suitable means of information and communication to which the disposed and the powerless can find access. It can help the disposed to analyse the problem of rural poor and formulate their grievances. Video technology is one of the very effective media of communication and moreover the farmers usually believe in seeing rather than just listening to a new idea (Singh, 1999). The agricultural extension videos are an effective tool for the accurate transmission of homogeneous information from a technical source to a low-literacy population, for instance when a technical expert or high-quality trainer is not available or too expensive. Van et al., (2017) in his study revealed that showing simple agricultural extension videos to individual potato farmers on portable devices significantly increased knowledge related to seed selection and seed storage and handling among potato farmers. Showing a video that explained Positive Seed Selection (PSS) increased the likelihood that farmers knew about the methods explained in the video. Similarly, showing a video that demonstrated Proper Seed Storage and Handling (PSSH) increased the likelihood that farmers knew about the information explained in the video. Similarly, Gandhi et al., (2007) had found Digital Green increased the adoption of certain agriculture practices seven-fold over a classic Training and Visit-based (T&V) extension approach. On a cost-per-adoption basis, Digital Green was shown to be 10 times more effective per dollar spent than a classical extension system.

Scope of participatory video:

Participatory video is proved to be an effective means of disseminating agricultural information. It has various opportunities. Some of them are listed below.

Growing interest in agricultural extension:

There is now a growing interest in agricultural services by governments, donors and the private sector. The Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services, formed in early 2010, represents an effort to provide a voice for extension in global policy dialogue, support the development and synthesis of evidence-based approaches and policies on extension, facilitate networking for institutional and individual capacity-strengthening, and promote an enabling environment for improved investment in extension (<http://www.g-fras.org>).

Increased attention to farmers' innovation:

Various initiatives, such as participatory radio campaigns (e.g. those organized by partners of FRI), Prolinnova, the Honeybee Network and the rapidly expanding video library of Digital Green, offer a great starting point for creating quality video programs that have a wider regional relevance and appeal.

International organizations want to enhance impact through video:

Following the example of AfricaRice, other international agencies such as ICRISAT, IRRI and IFDC have started to invest in producing quality farmer-to-farmer training videos. With the locally trained teams they will be able to contribute quality videos and local language translations.

Multiple initiatives to link to Apart from the initiatives mentioned in the previous section that have established databases on good agricultural practices in video, audio and PDF formats, there are numerous small-scale and various large-scale initiatives that would benefit a lot from a global web-based platform for videosharing. The platform will provide them simple tools to help them make better videos and allow them to have their own training videos hosted on the platform. Some of the organizations may see an opportunity to have the skills of their staff or partners further strengthened in multi-media productions.

Conclusion:-

Agricultural extension videos are an effective tool for the accurate transmission of homogeneous information from a technical source to a low-literacy population, for instance when a technical expert or high-quality trainer is not available or too expensive. Participatory video is an innovative solution to improve the efficiency of extension programmes by delivering targeted content to a wider audience and enabling farmers to better manage their farming operations with reduced field support.

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