CHAPTER - VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.00 Introduction

Technology change in agriculture has enhanced immensely capability of rural poor to invest in growth promoting inputs and infrastructure development. The invisible force behind this rapid rural change has been the role of opinion leaders in the village economy. The opinion leader has been playing a vital role in the process of technological changes in the various operations of the agriculture. In other words, the process of technological change is govern through the qualities of opinion leaders. In India very few studies is carried out to understand the dynamics of opinion leadership role in the process of technological change. Some of the leading and dependable studies conducted on "Opinion Leaders" and their various roles on the reconstruction of rural economy are by L.K. Sen (1968), B.C. Muthayya and K.N. Raju (1973), V.R. Gaikwad and B.C. Tripathi (1974) etc. even then, the studies on OLs in India, particularly on rural development and agricultural processes are scanty, scattered and insignificant. This study was, therefore, undertaken to understand the role of opinion leadership in the adoption of various components of agricultural technology. It was assumed that such an in-depth study will help in understanding the role of opinion leadership and subsequently in policy formulation. This microstudy was conducted to fulfill
the following objectives.

Objectives:

a. To map out the biographical status in the villages under study of Chhattisgarh with special reference to farming community i.e. male, female, land owners, agricultural labours, their children and other rural folk engaged in agricultural work or helping them in some way or other.

b. To identify agents of change in agricultural process particularly changes with reference to soil testing the use of fertilizer, pesticides and improved variety of seed over a period of time. This is pertaining to the opinion leadership which matters much in agricultural innovations. The who, what and how of agricultural adoption.

c. To locate sources of information utilized by farmers at various stages with respect to their effectiveness in media, method and content in agricultural communication.

d. To identify relative elements of the village social system as potential forces of change in leadership behaviour and communication system.

e. To study factors influencing interpersonal communication, opinion leaders and their characteristics.
f. To examine whether educational status of the farmers has any impact on their opinion leadership behaviour and interpersonal communication.

6.20: Hypotheses:

With a view to identifying various attributes associated with opinion leadership several, hypotheses have been postulated for empirical verifications. These hypotheses have helped in determining the role of opinion leadership in various systems and subsystems of agricultural transformation. The following hypotheses were empirically tested.

A: Hypotheses (H₁ to H₁₀) TESTING VARIOUS AGRICULTURAL PACKAGES AND PRACTICES

Hypotheses (H₁): Identification of O.L.

"The farmers of different villages would select their O.Ls. on the basis of their educational qualifications as an index of their mental maturity rather than other considerations, namely, their caste affiliation, political affiliation, their richness, their experience, their age, their bodily strength and their values, their knowledge on agriculture, their leadership qualities etc.

Verification of effectiveness of various roles played by change agents and O.Ls. in extension education
programme: Agricultural Adoption Processes By Change Agents.

Hypothesis (H2) : Soil Testing:

"There would be a significant difference in the effectiveness of the roles played by various change agents in soil testing as novel agricultural process adopted by the farmers in their villages".

Stated otherwise, "The role played by O.Ls. in disseminating the extension education with respect to soil testing would be significantly more effective than roles played by other change agents".

Hypothesis (H3) : Selection of Improved Seeds and Seed Treatment and Sowing Practices.

"There would be significant difference in the effectiveness of the roles played by various change agents in selection of improved seeds and seed treatment process as novel agricultural process adopted by farmers in their villages".

Stated otherwise, "The roles played by O.Ls. in disseminating the extension education with respect to selection of improved seeds and seed treatment process as novel agricultural process adopted by farmers in their villages would be significantly more effective than those by other change agents".
Hypothesis (H₄) : SOWING PRACTICES

"There would be a significant difference in the effectiveness of the roles played by various change agents in sowing practices as modern adoption processes adopted by farmers in their villages".

Stated otherwise, "The roles played by O.Ls. in disseminating the extension education with respect to sowing practices would be significantly more effective than roles played by other change agents".

Hypothesis (H₅) : Water Management:

"The farmers of the different villages would display significant difference in their water management system to their fields indicating the effective role played by the O.Ls. in the adoption of modern water management system and would be characterised by being independent in the adoption of water management system".

Stated otherwise "The effectiveness of the roles played by O.Ls. in the adoption of independent water management practices for irrigation of their fields would be more significant than those by other change agents or by those farmers who do not seek any advice from any change agent ".
Hypothesis (H₁₀) : Application of Agricultural Implements

"There would be a significant difference in the effectiveness of the roles played by various change agents in the application of agricultural implements as an improved agricultural practice adopted by the farmers."

Stated otherwise, "The role played by O.Ls. in disseminating the extension education with respect to application of agricultural implements would be significantly more effective than roles played by other change agents".

Hypothesis (H₁₁) : Application of Fertilizer:

"There would be a significant difference in the effectiveness of the roles played by various change agents in the application of fertilizer as modern adoption process adopted by farmers in their villages."

Stated otherwise, "The roles played by O.Ls., in disseminating the extension education with respect to application of fertilizer would be significantly more effective than roles played by other change agents".

Hypothesis (H₁₂) : Application of Pesticides:

"The farmers of different villages would display significant difference in the application of pesticides in their fields indicating the effective roles played by the O.Ls. in the
adoption/application of pesticides as being independent in the adoption/application of pesticides.

Stated otherwise, "The effectiveness of the roles played by O.Ls. in the adoption of independent application of pesticides in their fields would be more significant than those by other change agents or by those farmers who do not seek any advice from any change agent".

Hypothesis ($H_9$) : Threshing :

"There would be significant difference in the effectiveness of the roles played by various change agents in threshing process as a novel agricultural process adopted by farmers in their villages".

Stated otherwise "The roles played by O.Ls. in disseminating the extension education with respect to threshing would be significantly more effective than roles played by other change agents".

Hypothesis ($H_{10}$) : Storage :

"The roles played by different change agents in different villages would not differ significantly so far as the adoption of latest system of storage for their grains is considered".
B: HYPOTHESIS (H₁₁ - H₁₅) TESTING THE ROLE EFFECTIVENESS OF CHANGE AGENTS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY ADVANCEMENT

Role of change agents in community advancement:

Effectiveness of the roles played by different change agents in community advancement and farmer welfare schemes through various extension education programmes.

1. Generating general awareness among farmers on various aspects of rural life and occupational development.

Hypothesis (H₁₁): Generating General Awareness among Farmers

"Among the various change agents, the O.Ls. of the village would generate more effective general awareness on various aspects of the rural development and community advancement among farmers of the respective villages through extension education programmes organised by them."

2. Helping the farmers in various ways in various welfare schemes of the Govt.

Hypothesis (H₁₂): Role of Change Agents in various Welfare Schemes

"Among the various change agents, the O.Ls. of the villages would promote more effective help to the farmers of their village in the matters of various welfare schemes launched
by the Govt. than the other change agents".

3. Generating sources of additional financial resources by opening agro-industrial organisation or small scale industries.

Hypothesis (H$_{13}$) : Role of Change Agents In Pooling up additional Financial Resources.

"The O.L.s. of the villages would provide significantly more effective sources of additional financial resources to the farmers of their villages by helping them to start various kinds of agro-industrial organisations.

4. Solving various problems of the villages; namely, educational, rural health, transportation, communication, recreational, drinking water, sanitation, housing, marketing and such other problems.

Hypothesis (H$_{14}$) : Role of Change Agents in solving various Rural Problems.

"The O.L. of the villages would display significantly more effectiveness than other change agents in solving various problems of the farmers of the village; namely, educational, rural health, transportation, communication, recreation, drinking water, sanitation, housing, marketing, etc".
5. Evaluating effectiveness of media of communication in disseminating agricultural adoption process and other extension services.

Hypothesis (H₁₅): Role of Change Agents in Rural Development and Community Advancement.

"Among the various media of communications employed for the extension services with reference to rural development and community advancement, the agriculture extension programmes in disseminating knowledge and information through T.V. would be most effective followed by newspaper".

VI.2 : Sample:

This study was carried out in six villages; namely, Labhandi, Jora, Pirdha, Chhedikhadi, Dharampura and Tulsi of Dharsewa Block of Raipur district in Madhya Pradesh, purposive sampling technique was employed for the selection of these villages located near and around the Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, Raipur. Twenty five farmers from each of the villages, categorised into three strata on the small strength of their land-holdings, i.e. marginally small and big, were selected employing Purposive Sampling technique. On the strength of a socio-metric technique, those sample farmers identified 30 Opinion Leaders from the six villages in different fields who functioned as one of the Change Agents in disseminating knowledge and
information to the farmers of their respective villages. The relative roles played by other change agents, eg. Govt. Officials, Agriculture University, Gram Sewak etc. were also evaluated. In addition to these change agents, the effectiveness of mass-media of communicating in disseminating agricultural information and knowledge to farmers through various 'Lab to Land' programmes were also evaluated.

Instrument:

An Interview Schedule, consisting of 27 structured items, was constructed. Data were conducted by the investigator himself, personally. Besides the verbal responses being recorded on the Interview Schedule by the investigator, a tape recorder was also used for recording the responses of the respondents without their knowledge. This procedure helped the investigator to cross-check the responses, thereby enhancing the creditibility of the data.

Statistical Treatment

Data collected from the various sources in the present study were processed in the accordance with the statistical requirements of the hypothesis. Most of the data required two-fold treatments; namely, processing for rank-order technique and computation for $X^2$ test.