

ABSTRACT

Background of the study:

The study has pointed out that the conventional process of development planning in India is sectoral in nature; and it overlooks the intimate relationship between the four major dimensions of the quality of a population i.e. nutrition, education, health, and productivity. This has resulted in the ignorance of the policy-makers about the close relationship between Culture of the participants in a development programme and the acceptance of the goals and contents of the latter by the participants.

The study proposes that any planned effort to take up the resource mobilization for nutritional improvement in India should begin at the village community level. It is emphasized that any such exercise must include an analysis of the social relationships; communication patterns in a village community; and also include the perceptions of the community about its own ecosystem.

Statement of the problem:

It was decided by the researcher to study the exchange of nutritional information in Communication networks of an agrarian village community in its socio-cultural context for developing the framework of a nutrition education programme for the village community.

Objectives:

It was primarily an exploratory and interpretative study which aimed to

- (i) Identify the cultural schemata of nutrition;

- (ii) Identify the range of interpersonal communication networks;
- (iii) Identify the flow of nutrition related information;
- (iv) Identify the referential nodes which control exchange of nutrition related information; and
- (v) Analyze structurally the differential communication schemata by means of construction of graph models.

Methodology:

The methodological framework was defined in the interdisciplinary context of Education and Anthropology. The sampling was a combination of three steps each of which selected less and less number of villages resulting in the selection of village Ghera Mordari for the study. The village community was subjected to three steps and types of investigation viz.

- (i) Ethnographic investigation;
- (ii) Socio-economic survey; and
- (iii) Exploration of the interpersonal communication networks.

Findings:

- (i) The village Ghera Mordari was socio-culturally and economically homogeneous compared to the neighbouring villages.
- (ii) The village was affected by scarcity of nutritional resources.
- (iii) The village did not have access to development resources as compared to the neighbouring villages.
- (iv) There was a close connection between the conditions of nutritional impoverishment and socio-economic backwardness of the village.
- (v) The entire community could be organized into Mobilization Groups and Diffusion Groups for adoption of scientific

nutritional information based on the structure of interpersonal communication networks in the village.

Recommendations

(i) An action-research programme based on the present study can be implemented in the study village to test the propositions in the nutrition education programme formed in the study.

(ii) A number of studies related to application of the same techniques used in the present study can be taken up. This effort can be based on the need to improve the specific aspects of the paradigm of development.

(iii) Procedures to integrate cultural data with ecological data should be initiated.

(iv) The techniques used in the present research would prove as effective tools of monitoring and evaluation of development and commercial projects.

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