

COMMUNICATION SOURCES CREDIBILITY AND UTILIZATION PATTERN AMONG FARMERS

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in two blocks of Sriganganagar district of Rajasthan to investigate the utilization pattern of different communication sources and their credibility as perceived by them. Communication sources were categorized into three broad heads namely mass media, personal localite and personal cosmopolite and response were taken from selected farmers. The findings of the study revealed that ARS/KVK scientists, VLWs/ Gramsevak, progressive farmers, krishi mela/exhibition, radio, television were the sources most often used by the farmers. The possible reason behind this was the accessibility and easy approach of the sources as most of the farmers have good economic status and have progressive mind set. It was also concluded that private input dealers, cooperative officials, local leaders were rarely contacted by farmers for seeking information on agricultural technology. As regard of credibility of information sources, it was found that ARS/KVK scientists ere perceived as most credible followed by extension officials of the State Department of Agriculture. On the other hand private input dealers, mass media sources were perceived as least credible sources and their information were used at awareness stage.

INTRODUCTION

Technical information in agriculture play an important role in the increasing acceptance of modern production technology among farmers. An effective and credible source of information motivates farmers to adopt the recommended package suited to his/her local farm situation. Selection of appropriate sources of technical information in agriculture is the basic requisite for having good performance of extension service. If right source is not accessible to farmers, there will be poor acceptance of agricultural technology. In addition to this credibility-faith ness in source is equally important for higher utilization of modern technical information among farmers.

This has direct bearing on the gain of knowledge and adoption of recommended practices. In this context, a study was planned with the specific objectives to find out the utilization pattern of information sources by farmer and to find out the credibility of information sources as perceived by farmers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in agro-

climatic zone 1-b of Rajasthan state. Sriganganagar district was selected purposively as the district is the working place of the author. Two blocks of this district namely Sadulsahar and Sriganganagar were selected. Five villages selected from each selected block were chosen randomly and from each selected village, 20 farmers were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Hence, the study sample composed of 200 respondents. The researcher collected data through structured schedule employing personal interview technique. Collected data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in the light of the objectives set for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the respondents: Data presented in Table 1 reveal that majority of the respondents (65%) were of the middle age group, 38 per cent were having education up to secondary and above, 30 percent respondents were having large land holding, about half the respondents were having low level of social participation, canal is the main source of irrigation (65%).

The overall economic status of the

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respondents was good (51%). Most of the respondents (70%) were having positive attitude towards farming as their occupation while 8 percent showed dissatisfaction.

Table 1. Profile of the respondents

(n=200)

S.No.	Socio-economic variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Age	Young <30 years	20	10
		Middle (30 to 50 years)	130	65
		Old (above 50 years)	50	25
2.	Education	Up to primary	102	51
		Up to middle	22	11
		Secondary and above	76	38
3.	Family - type	Nuclear	72	36
		Joint	128	64
	Family - size	Small	46	23
		Medium	108	54
		Large	46	23
4.	Land holding	Small	52	26
		Medium	88	44
		Big/Large	60	30
5.	Social participation	Low	112	56
		Medium	56	28
		High	32	16
6.	Herd size	Low	94	47
		Medium	54	27
		High	52	26
7.	Source of irrigation	Canal	130	65
		Tube well	12	6
		Both	58	29
8.	Agri. implements	Tractor & Accessories	148	74
9.	Overall economic	Poor	20	10
		Average	78	39
		Good	102	51
10.	Attitude towards farming	Positive	140	70
		Neutral	44	22
		Negative	16	8

Utilization pattern of Information Sources: Under this study, information sources in agriculture which were used by the farmers were categorized broadly into three categories viz: mass media, personal localite and personal cosmopolite. Responses of the farmers were taken on four point continuum as per their accessibility.

The data presented in the Table 2 indicate that radio, progressive farmers, VLW/ Gramsevak/ AAO were the sources often used by the farmers. This may be due to their accessibility and easily approachable as most of the farmers have good

economic status and know the benefits of adopting latest agricultural technology on their fields. It is also noted that ARS/KVK scientists were also preferred by farmers for receiving guidance on agricultural matters.

On the other hand, it is worthy to note that private input dealers, cooperative officials, local leaders, relative were rarely contact by farmers for seeking information regarding agriculture. The findings are in line with the findings of Bareth (1991) and Jat & Sharma (2003) who reported that VLW, progressive farmers and friends were the important

Table 2. Utilization of agricultural information sources

(n=200)

Source	Used frequencies							
	Most often		Often		Sometime		Never	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
A. Mass Media								
1. Radio	38	19	92	46	56	28	14	7
2. Television	38	19	58	29	82	41	22	11
3. News paper	10	5	20	10	68	34	102	51
4. Farm Magazine	2	1	20	10	52	26	126	63
5. Demonstration	18	9	6	3	72	36	103	52
6. Krishi Mela/Exhibition	22	11	36	18	74	37	68	34
B. Personal Localite								
1. Friends/Neighbours	16	8	52	26	44	22	88	44
2. Relatives	4	2	24	12	34	17	138	69
3. Local Leaders	0	0	14	7	40	20	146	73
4. Progressive farmers	22	11	64	32	26	13	88	44
C. Personal Cosmopolite								
1. VLW/Gramsevak/AAO	56	28	78	39	48	24	18	9
2. ARS scientists	38	19	52	26	74	37	36	18
3. KVK scientists	36	18	48	24	56	28	60	30
4. Private Input dealers	8	4	18	9	30	15	143	72
5. Cooperative officials	0	0	0	0	4	2	196	98

f = frequency; % = Percent

sources of agricultural information to the farmers.

Credibility of Information Sources:

Credibility refers to the trustworthiness of information perceived by farmers as important and gave weightage in adoption of the information/technology. This influenced the adoption of agricultural technology as farmers think them as worthy. Results Table 3 reveal that farmers preference for getting agricultural information is based on the credibility of the source as they perceived based on the institutes/person/authority's general image. An effort has been made to rank different important sources most frequently used by farmers as per their perception.

From Table 3, it is clear that extension officials of State Departments of Agriculture was considered as a most credible source and ranked first followed by scientists of ARS and KVKs. Progressive farmers/friends were also perceived as credible for getting agricultural information. On the other hand, private input dealers and mass media sources were perceived as least credible and their information was used at awareness stage of the adoption of

agricultural technologies.

Table 3. Credibility ranking of information sources

S. No.	Information Sources	Rank	Rank Coefficient
1.	VLW/AAO/AD Agril.	I	0.40
2.	ARS/KVK scientists	II	0.27
3.	Progressive farmers/Friends	III	0.10
4.	Demonstrations	IV	0.08
5.	Private Input Dealers	V	0.06
6.	Mass Media	VI	0.05
7.	Kisan Mela/Exhibition	VII	0.04

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that extension officials, ARS/KVK scientists, progressive farmers, radio, television and exhibition were the sources most often used by the farmers for seeking agricultural information, This may be due to the accessibility and easy approach as most of the

farmers have good economic status and have progressive attitude. This study also revealed that farmer's preference for getting agricultural information is based on the credibility of the source as they perceived based on the institutes/person/authority's general image. Extension officials of State Department of Agriculture were found most credible followed by scientists of agricultural university.

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