

Mass Media Usage by Rural Youth in Agriculture Related Areas in Udham Singh Nagar District of Uttarakhand

Debashis Dash¹ and Birendra Kumar²

1. Ph.D Scholar, 2. Professor, Department of Agricultural Communication,
Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand
Corresponding author e-mail: debashis.agext@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Harnessing demographic dividend has become the greatest challenge before India which has aroused the demand for skilled youth especially in agriculture sector. Information technology has revolutionized Indian agriculture by opening door of enormous opportunities by playing a crucial role in scientific farming. Communication can help in motivating youth to take agriculture as a vocation by giving them right and customized information timely and location specific. The present study investigated communication behaviour of rural youth in Udham Singh Nagar District of Uttarakhand state, India. Data was collected through stratified random sampling with proportionate allocation for selecting 120 respondents from the study area. The study revealed that majority of respondents had medium level mass media exposure. Television was used mostly for entertainment, political and agricultural purpose in their own homes at night time. Majority of them were found satisfied with the information shown in the television via different agricultural programs and therefore inclined towards accepting that information. Mass media usage had a significant and positive relationship with education, innovativeness, achievement motivation, leadership ability and cosmopolitanism. The analysis of qualitative data indicated youth keenness to use information through mass media. The present study recommended that mass media infrastructure should be encouraged and utilized by rural youth in the rural areas to facilitate customized information delivery in a right time.

Key words: Demographic dividend; Communication behaviour; Vocation; Rural youth; Mass media usage;

Youth is a state of readiness in which an energized individual gets ready for action. History is full of examples where youth have revolutionized the nations, so the progress and prosperity of a nation to a great extent depends on its trained and disciplined youth. Global youth population is under the grip of unemployment. Agriculture as a vocation can solve this problem as majority of the youth population live in rural areas. About 70 per cent of India's population is below the age of 35 years, making India the youngest nation in the world. According to some estimates, the proportion of population under 25 years in India is 51 per cent and the proportion under 35 is about 66 per cent. Some experts refer to this large proportion of youth as "demographic dividend" because greater proportion of the population is young and in the working age-group

which can lead to economic growth. However, out of the youth population of 460 million, only 333 million youth in India are literate and unemployment rate is highest (10.6 per cent) among youth (CIA World Fact book, 2012). Leveraging the youth dividend for taking Indian agriculture to new heights can be the best option available. Rural youth are often referred as unfortunate cousins of urban youth as the latter enjoys better living conditions than the former. Even quality of school education is poor because of lack of proper infrastructure and other necessary facilities. They have poor facilities for sports and games too. Thus, it is pertinent to understand the extent of proliferation and use of mass media along with Information and Communication Technology. Strategies can be formulated to use newspapers, television, radio and other media for

dissemination of information on available opportunities, scholarships, youth programmes and job fairs. The paper aims to study the use of mass media by rural youth in terms of access to media, exposure, manner of utilization and acceptance of information.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is being conducted in Uttarakhand state as agriculture is considered as backbone of Uttarakhand economy as the main sources of income of the state are from tourism, forestry, horticulture, medicinal plant, fodder, mushroom, fishery, hydroelectricity, sheep rearing, livestock farming and household and cottage industries. Based on maximum geographical area and majority of population, Udham Singh Nagar district was selected purposively. Agriculture and allied activities such as animal rearing, milk production and horticulture are top priorities in the list of enterprises of the district. Three villages viz. Buksoura Netanaga and Durgapur were selected in such a manner that they represent the agricultural progressiveness in the Block. The villages so selected had sizeable population of youth. In village Buksoura, youth were actively engaged in the field of agriculture and many agricultural enterprises were already initiated by youth. Durgapur village youth were engaged in mixture of operations in the agricultural as well as non-agricultural sector. The youth of Netanagar were actively engaged in non-agricultural sector and few of them were in agriculture sector. Analytical research design was used for the purpose of study. Total number of respondents' was 120 selected through stratified random sampling using proportionate allocation. Out of the selected 120 respondents, 35 per cent were selected from "Agriculturally progressive" village named Buksoura, another 35 per cent belonged to the "Moderately progressive" village named Durgapur No. 1 and the rest 30 per cent from "Agriculturally less progressive" village named Netanagar. Apart from the interview schedule. Data were analyzed using frequency distribution, percentage, weighted mean, correlation and t- test for measuring the significant relationship with selected personal and socio-psychological variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Communication behaviour of rural youth was studied in terms of the variables like media ownership, mass media exposure, and use of mass media including

Table 1. Media ownership, frequency of use and mass media usage for assessing farm information by rural youth (N=120)

Category	No.	%	Cal. WMS ¹	Cal. WMS ²
Radio	30	25.0	1.40	1.24
Television	120	100.0	2.84	2.49
Mobile phones	119	99.2	2.83	1.83
Fixed phone	24	20.0	1.19	1.13

Cal. WMS¹ = Frequency of use (Calculated WMS)

Cal. WMS² = Use for assessing farm information (Calculated WMS)

place, time and purpose of mass media use as detailed below.

Media ownership: Table 1 clearly indicated that television was owned by all the respondents (100 per cent) followed by mobile phones (99.20 per cent), Newspaper (57.5 per cent), Computer with internet (46.7 per cent), Magazines (37.5 per cent), Fixed phones (20.0 per cent) and radio (25.0 per cent) respectively.

The above table also stated that on the basis of calculated weighted mean score television (2.84) was used most frequently followed by mobile phone (2.83), newspaper (2.23), computer with internet (1.75), magazines (1.68), radio (1.40) and fixed phone (1.19). Television (2.49) is the most accessible media for passing agricultural information in the study area. A similar finding was reported by (Singh *et al.*, 1999). It was followed by newspaper (1.95), mobile phones (1.83), magazines (1.75), computer with internet (1.37), radio (1.24) and fixed phones (1.13) for accessing farm services.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents on the basis of media exposure (N=120)

Category	No.	%
Low (<12)	7	5.83
Medium (12-20)	60	50
High (>20)	53	44.17

Mass media exposure: It can be depicted from the table 2 that 50 per cent of respondents had medium level of mass media exposure whereas 44.17 per cent of respondents had high level of mass media exposure. Only, 5.83 per cent of respondents had low level of mass media exposure. Similar findings were reported by (Gangwar, 2014). Rural youth are exposed to all forms of media and most importantly they are obsessed towards the use of mobile phones and are fond of

Table 3. Distribution of respondents on the basis of place and time of use of Mass media (Multiple responses) (N=120)

Particular	Radio		Television		Mobile		Computer		News paper	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No use	77	64.2	1	0.8	1	0.8	47	39.2	19	15.8
Home	31	25.8	119	99.2	118	98.4	62	51.7	71	59.2
Relative's home	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	6.7
Friend's home	3	2.5	0	0	0	0	3	2.5	0	0
Market	9	7.5	0	0	1	0.8	8	6.7	22	18.3

Distribution of respondents on the basis of time of use of Mass media

Particular	Radio		Television		Mobile		Computer		News paper	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
No Use	78	65.0	1	0.8	1	0.8	47	39.2	19	15.8
Morning	17	14.2	4	3.3	6	5.0	5	4.2	18	73.3
Daytime	5	4.2	6	5.0	36	30.0	15	12.5	12	10.0
Evening	4	3.3	31	25.8	12	10.0	6	5.0	1	0.8
Night	11	9.2	45	37.5	13	10.8	33	27.5	0	0
Anytime	5	4.2	33	27.5	52	43.3	14	11.7	0	0

Table 4. Distribution of respondents on the basis of purpose of mass media usage

Media	No.	%
<i>Radio</i>		
Entertainment	16	13.3
Entertainment + Political + Agricultural	7	5.8
<i>Television</i>		
Entertainment	51	42.5
Entertainment + Political + Agricultural	7	5.8
<i>Mobile</i>		
Call + Internet + Entertainment	29	24.2
Call + Internet + Entertainment + Chatting	25	20.8
<i>Computer with internet</i>		
Work related	28	23.3
Academic + Work related	17	14.2
<i>Newspaper</i>		
Entertainment + Economic + Agricultural + Sports	56	34.6
Social	35	21.6

watching television for information regarding agriculture and allied areas.

Place and Time of mass media usage: With reference to table no. 3, it was found that the homes served to be the comfortable place for rural youth in assessing mass media like radio, television, mobile phones, computer and newspaper. Similar findings have been reported by (Arulchelvan and Viswanathan, 2006), and (Subrahmanyam and Lin, 2007). Market place has a significant value too. The time for using mass media

varied as most of the rural youth preferred morning time for listening radio (14.2%) and reading newspaper (73.3%). Night time was preferred the most for watching television (37.5 %), operating computers (27.5%) and there was no particular time for using mobile phones. As the mobile phones (43.3%) are handy and flexible they used it at any time of the day. The findings are supported by (Roy et al. 2010).

Purpose of use of mass media: Table 4 depicted that the purpose of using radio and television was mainly entertainment. Mobile phones were commonly used for call, internet, chatting and entertainment purpose. The computer was used for work related purpose (23.3 per cent) as well as for work and academic purpose (14.2 per cent). Newspaper was commonly used for a combination related with news (34.6 per cent). Social news was being followed by 21.6 per cent of the respondents. Findings are in line with the findings of (National Youth Readership Survey, 2012).

Acceptance of information received through mass media: Table 5 revealed that acceptance of information through radio was less (20.8 per cent) as compared to non-acceptance of information (70.0 per cent). The respondents (62.5%) often accepted the information being presented in the television followed by 33.3 per cent, who rarely accepted the information. Mobile phone users (91.7 per cent) found that the tool was quite necessary in the modern time while the rest 8.3 per

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of acceptance of information from mass media

Category	No.	%
<i>Radio</i>		
Never	84	70.0
Rarely	11	9.2
Often	25	20.8
<i>Television</i>		
Never	5	4.2
Rarely	40	33.3
Often	75	62.5
<i>Mobile phones</i>		
Yes	110	91.7
No	10	8.3
<i>Computer with internet</i>		
Yes	67	55.8
No	53	44.2
<i>Newspaper</i>		
Never	27	16.7
Rarely	57	35.2
Often	78	48.1

Table 6. Correlation and t_{cal} values of characteristics of rural youth and mass media usage in agriculture related areas

Variables	(r)	t_{cal}
Age	0.023 ^{NS}	0.241
Gender	-0.053 ^{NS}	-0.570
Caste	-0.125 ^{NS}	-1.316
Education	0.237 ^{**}	2.680
Family size	0.007 ^{NS}	0.072
Family type	-0.043 ^{NS}	0.438
Innovativeness	0.365 ^{**}	4.320
Achievement motivation	0.225 [*]	2.500
Leadership Ability	0.249 ^{**}	2.888
Cosmopolitaness	0.252 ^{**}	2.824

NS= Non-significant

*Significant at 5 % level of significance

t- value at 0.05 level of significance (df =118) = 1.9803

**Significant at 1% and 5% level of significance

t -value at 0.01 level of significance (df =118) = 2.6181

cent had found unnecessary. Computer with internet was also found to be an important tool in the information transfer and 55.8 per cent admitted it. About 48.1 percent often accepted the information and 35.2 percent rarely accepted the same from the newspaper. Similar findings of (*Subrahmanyam and Lin, 2007*) and (*Bhojani, 2009*) supported the same.

Characteristics and Mass media exposure of rural youth in agriculture related areas: From the table 6, it was found that age (findings are in line with the study of *Uddin (2007) and Bhatia et al. (2016)*), gender, caste, family size and family type have non-significant relationship with the mass media exposure and the other variables like education (Similar findings were also found by *Uddin (2007), Islam (2005), and Nuruzzaman (2003)*), innovativeness (finding is in line with *Olaniyi et al., 2013*), achievement motivation (consistent with the findings of *Damor et al.(2015)*, leadership ability (study bear a consistency in the findings of *Ibagere, 2015*) and Cosmopolitaness has positive and significant relationship with mass media usage to agriculture related areas. Higher is the level of education of rural youth, higher is the level of use of mass media. The educated rural youth tends to have frequent contact with mass media to increase their power of understanding the agriculture sector as an enterprise than the individuals with less education background. The cosmopolite person having the capacity to lead at certain situations communicates with different external sources and visits many places to their worth. Media support also helps rural youth to achieve higher feet in the agriculture and allied sector. Positive relationship between the variables might be due to the fact that many rural youth gained information about agriculture related vocations from various media sources like newspaper, television, mobile phones and computers with internet. As education, innovativeness, achievement motivation, leadership ability and Cosmopolitaness (*Bhatia et al., 2016*) of rural youth improved, their involvement in using mass media for utilizing agricultural information also increased.

CONCLUSION

Mass media are the channels which are proved to be effective in disseminating information to a larger group of people in a shorter interval of time. This helps the rural youth to get more information about an agricultural innovation or technology at the door steps. This also widens the thinking capacity to start a vocational enterprise on their own. The study revealed that mobiles and televisions were seen almost in every home and are used mainly for entertainment purpose. Mobile phones were used mostly for connecting with friends and relatives, internet and entertainment. Computer was used frequently for work purpose. Youth in general had taken to audio-visual media (television in

particular), mobiles and computer. Similar findings by Roy *et al.* in their study on communication sources and utilization pattern of rural farm youth in Karnal District of Haryana are also reported. This also meant that they could be reached for education and development purposes through these communication media.

The study indicated that not only different types of information are being used by the youth individually (Mazaheri *et al.* 2014) but also shared with friends and adults. This is a very positive trend to use information and communication technologies to communicate information all needy members in agriculture sector.

Owing to their interest and frequent use, career opportunities could also be communicated to them in the village. Agricultural development rests in the shoulders of these future youth farmers and agricultural information can do wonders if supported in time. It was also found that mass media exposure had a significant and positive relationship with the variables like education, innovativeness, achievement motivation, leadership ability and cosmopolitaness. Those rural youth, who are in constant touch with mass media, they are likely to be in touch of new innovations and ideas in the agriculture and allied areas.

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