

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

Debashis Dash<sup>1</sup>, Birendra Kumar<sup>2</sup> and Girijesh Singh Mahra<sup>3</sup>

1. Ph.D Scholar and 2. Professor, Department of Agricultural Communication,  
Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar, Uttarakhand

3. Scientist, Division of Agricultural Extension, ICAR-IARI New Delhi

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%) 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. 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, focused group discussion was also significantly conducted. Data were analyzed using frequency distribution, 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 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%) followed by mobile phones (99.20%), Newspaper

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

Category	No.	%	No. of Use (WMS)	Use for Farm Info. (WMS)
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
Computer with internet	56	46.7	1.75	1.37
Newspaper	69	57.5	2.23	1.95
Magazines	45	37.5	1.68	1.75

(57.5%), Computer with internet (46.7%), Magazines (37.5%), Fixed phones (20.0 per cent) and radio (25.0%) 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.

**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 watching television for information regarding agriculture and allied areas.

**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

**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

**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		Newspaper	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<i>Place of use of Mass media</i>										
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
<i>Time of use of Mass media</i>										
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

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%) as well as for work and academic purpose (14.2%). Newspaper was commonly used for a combination related with news (34.6%). 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%) as compared to non-acceptance of information (70.0%). 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%)

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

Category	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

**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

found that the tool was quite necessary in the modern time while the rest 8.3 per 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 per cent 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

The study indicated that notonly different types of

**Table 6. Correlation Coefficient (r) and t values of characteristics of rural youth and mass media usage in agriculture related areas**

Variables	(r)	t- value
Age	0.023 <sup>NS</sup>	0.241
Gender	-0.053 <sup>NS</sup>	-0.570
Caste	-0.125 <sup>NS</sup>	-1.316
Education	0.237 <sup>**</sup>	2.680
Family size	0.007 <sup>NS</sup>	0.072
Family type	-0.043 <sup>NS</sup>	0.438
Innovativeness	0.365 <sup>**</sup>	4.320
Achievement motivation	0.225 <sup>*</sup>	2.500
Leadership Ability	0.249 <sup>**</sup>	2.888
Cosmopolitaness	0.252 <sup>**</sup>	2.824

NS= Non-significant

\*Significant at 5 % level of significance

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

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

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

information are being used by the youth individually 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.

Based on the findings of the study it is recommended that media can be helpful in sharing technical information related to practical agricultural practices. Modules of training can be organized according to the felt-needs of the people and information packages disseminated to them in the most preferred media. Several multimedia approaches can also be followed by the extension workers along with traditional media for sharing information among the rural youth in a large extent. This will not only help in passing of agricultural information in time but also will help in creating job opportunities in communication sectors too.

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