

MASS MEDIA UTILIZATION AMONG FARMERS : A STUDY IN UTTAR PRADESH

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Proliferation of mass media around the world created unique situation for quick dissemination of information to one and all. India is one of the developing nations with large network of mass media along length and breadth of the country. Use of radio, television and print media for the benefits of the farmers were promoted since long time to spread message about innovative technologies. However, it is generally labeled that mass media are class media and largely urban biased both in use of language and choice of content.

In our country, reach of radio and television has extended to more than 80 per cent of its population and the area. It aims at promoting national integration, dissemination of message, educating people, providing healthy entertainment and dissemination of essential knowledge to stimulate agricultural production.

AIR presently has 208 radio stations and 327 transmitters. These includes 149 medium wave, 55 short wave and 123 FM transmitters and provide radio coverage to 98.8 per cent population of the country. On the other side ,flagship of doordarshan reaching over 80 per cent of the population through 10,042 terrestrial transmitters of varying power. Newspaper on the other hand are published from all the states and union territories.

New papers are brought in 101 languages and dialects including 18 principal languages

with highest number (19,685) in Hindi followed by English (5,712) and 2,848 in Urdu. Among the states, uttar pradesh with 8,750 newspapers retained the prestigious position of publishing the largest number of newspapers in any state. In case of dailies also U. P. held the top position with 873 newspapers.(India, 2002) However, the availability and utilisation of various mass media are not similar in all parts of the country (Panday,1997 and Kukreti,1990) . Besides, the utilisation of media may greatly be affected by the access of media for various sections of population including farmers (Yadav,1985 and Maizy,1986)

So, keeping this background in mind the present study was designed to assess the pattern of utilisation of mass media viz.; newspaper, magazine, radio and television among farmers.

METHODOLOGY :

The study was conducted in Kannauj block of Kannauj district of Uttar Pradesh. There were 73 gram sabhas in Kannauj block, out of which eleven gram sabhas were randomly selected for the study. List of all the households living in selected gram sabhas were obtained from block office and out of them five per cent farmers were selected randomly as respondents for the study. Thus, 126 farmers served as respondents of the study. The data for the study were collected through a comprehensive and duly pretested

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interview schedule. The data were also collected through non-participant observation and focused group discussion. The collected data were tabulated and analysed by using appropriate statistical techniques. Number of media users/non-users were considered as respondents (N) for concern table.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION :

The extent and utilisation pattern of different selected mass media namely newspaper, magazine, radio, television were studied. Under this extent of use, purpose, time of utilisation, duration spent with media and content preference media were incorporated and have been presented below.

Extent of Utilisation :

Newspaper—General newspaper were found to be read by majority of the respondents (72.22 per cent) while only 27.78 per cent were non-readers (Table-1). Among the readers, majority of the respondents (45.24 per cent) were found to be casual readers followed by regular news readers (26.98 per cent).

In case of agricultural newspapers only 3.17 per cent respondents were the reader and they were also casual readers.

Magazine—The number of magazine readers were about half (38.10 per cent) of the newspaper readers and all of them were casual readers (Table-1). This number was much less (4.76 per cent) in case of agricultural magazines and they were also found to be casual readers.

Radio—Radio listeners were more in numbers (85.71 per cent) as compared to newspapers and magazines (Table-1). Among the radio listeners, 48.41 per cent respondents were regular listeners followed by casual listeners (37.30 per cent).

Television—The data in Table-1 revealed that the number of TV viewers were equal to radio listeners (85.71 per cent) but the number of regular TV viewers were less (40.48 per cent) as compared to the number of radio listeners (48.41 per cent). About 45 per cent TV viewers were casual in viewing.

Table 1. Extent of utilization of mass media

Sl.No.	Regularity	No of Respondents (N=126)				Radio	Television
		Newspaper		Magazine			
		General	Agriculture	General	Agriculture		
1.	Regular	34 (26.98)	-	-	-	61 (48.41)	51 (40.48)
2.	Sometimes	57 (45.24)	4 (3.17)	48 (38.10)	-	47 (37.30)	57 (45.23)
3.	Non-user	35 (27.78)	122 (96.83)	78 (61.90)	6 (4.76)	18 (14.29)	18 (14.29)
					120 (95.24)		

te : Values in parentheses are percentages of the respondents

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Purpose of Utilisation :

Newspaper—The data presented in Table-2 shows that the majority of the readers (3.41 per cent) read newspapers for gaining news and information followed by entertainment (32.98 per cent) and passing time (24.18 per cent). However, few readers (2.09 per cent) read them as habit.

In case of agricultural newspaper all the

readers read it for agricultural news and information.

Magazine—Maximum numbers of magazine readers (54.17 per cent) read it for entertainment (Table-2) followed by news and information (37.50 per cent) and passing time (27.08 per cent), while only 6.25 per cent readers read magazines as a habit. In case of agricultural magazines 100.00 per cent

readers read them for agricultural news and information.

Radio—Data presented in Table-2 shows that most of the listeners (98.15 per cent) listened radio for news and information followed by entertainment (42.59 per cent). Small percentage of listeners reported to listen radio to pass time (4.63 per cent) and as a habit (0.93 per cent).

Television—In case of television it was found that 69.44 per cent viewers viewed it for the purpose of entertainment whereas 68.81 per cent viewed it for news and information. only 2.78 per cent viewers reported to view the television for passing the time while remaining 1.85 per cent viewers reported to view TV as a habit (Table-2).

Table 2. Purpose of utilisation of mass media

Sl.No.	Purpose	No of Respondents				Radio	Television
		Newspaper		Magazine			
		General	Agriculture	General	Agriculture		
1.	News & Information	85 (93.41)	4 (100.00)	18 (37.50)	6 (100.00)	106 (98.15)	70 (68.81)
2.	Entertainment	30 (32.98)	-	26 (54.17)	-	46 (42.59)	75 (69.44)
3.	Pass time	22 (24.18)	-	13 (27.08)	-	5 (4.63)	3 (2.78)
4.	Habit	11 (12.09)	-	3 (6.25)	-	1 (0.93)	2 (1.85)
		N=91	N=4	N=48	N=6	N=108	N=108

Note: Values in parentheses are percentages of the respondents

Time of Utilisation :

Newspaper—Maximum number of readers (47.25 per cent) read newspaper in the fore noon (Table-3) while 19.78 per cent readers read it in the after noon. 30.77 percent readers reported to read newspapers as and when they were free. However, very less number of readers (2.20 per cent) read it in

the evening. The agriculture newspaper was read as and when they were free and newspapers were available.

Magazine—The reading time of magazines indicated by the readers showed that most of them (87.50 per cent) read it at any time when they were free (Table-3) while only 12.50 per cent readers read it in the afternoon.

Table 3. Time of utilisation of mass media

S.No.	Segment of Night	No of Respondents				Radio	Television
		Newspaper		Magazine			
		General	Agriculture	General	Agriculture		
1.	Morning (6 am to noon)	43 (47.25)	0	0	0	15 (13.89)	21 (19.44)
2.	Afternoon (12 noon to 4 pm)	18 (19.78)	0	6 (12.50)	1 (16.67)	22 (20.37)	7 (6.48)
3.	Evening (4pm. to 8 pm)	2 (2.20)	0	0	0	101 (93.52)	102 (94.44)
4.	Night (8 pm onwards)	0	0	0	0	1 (0.93)	2 (1.85)
5.	At ani time when free	28 (30.77)	4 (100.00)	42 (87.50)	5 (83.33)	0	0
		N=91	N=4	N=48	N=6	N=108	N=108

Note: Values in parentheses are percentages of the respondents

Most of the readers of agricultural magazines (83.33 per cent) read it any time when they free while only 16.67 per cent readers read agricultural magazines in the after noon.

Radio—The data revealed that most of the radio listeners (93.52 per cent) listened to radio in the evening (Table-3), while 20.37 per cent listened radio programmes in the after noon. Some listeners (13.89 per cent) also listened radio in the morning. A small percentage (0.93 per cent) of listeners were listening radio at night.

Television—The viewing time of television is reported by the respondents indicated that most of the television viewers (94.44 per cent) viewed television at evening followed by those who also view it in the morning (19.44 per cent). The number of viewers viewing TV in the afternoon and night were only to the tune of 6.48 and 1.85 per cent, respectively (Table-3).

Duration of Utilisation :

Newspaper—Table-4 clearly indicates that 40.66 per cent readers spent 1/4 to 1/2 hrs per day on reading general newspaper. 15.38 per cent readers (15.38 per cent) devoted more than 1/2 hour per day for reading the newspaper. Very few readers (3.30 per cent) spent 1-2 hours in reading newspaper.

In case of agricultural newspaper, number

of readers were only four. Out of four readers one reader devoted up to 1/4 hr., two readers devoted 1/4 to 1/2 hr. and rest one devoted 1/2 to one hour per day on reading agricultural newspaper.

Magazine—It is evident from the table 4 that maximum number of magazine readers (60.42 per cent) devoted 1/4 to 1/2 hour, 25.00 per cent readers devoted only up to 1/4 hour while 14.58 per cent readers devoted more than half an hour time per day on reading general magazine.

The duration devoted to reading agricultural magazines was found to be on lower side as half of the readers reported to devote 1/4 hour while rest half of the readers reported to spend more than 1/4 hour but less than 1/2 hour.

Radio—Table 4 shows that time spent in listening to radio varied from 1/4 to more than two hours. Maximum number of listeners (42.59 per cent) devoted only 1/4 hour in listening radio, in contrast a meagre 3.70 per cent listeners devoted more than two hours in listening radio.

Television—Maximum number of TV viewers (85.19 per cent) viewed television more than half an hour to one hour while 23.15 per cent viewers devoted time between one to two hours. Non of the viewers devoted more than two hour on TV viewing.

Table 4. Amount of time (Duration) spent with mass media

Duration in hr./day	No of Respondents				Radio	Television
	Newspaper		Magazine			
	General	Agriculture	General	Agriculture		
up to 1/4 hr.	37 (40.66)	1 (25.00)	12 (25.00)	3 (50.00)	46 (42.59)	5 (4.63)
1/4 to 1/2 hr.	37 (40.66)	2 (50.00)	29 (60.42)	3 (50.00)	25 (23.15)	10 (9.26)
1/2 to 1 hr.	14 (15.38)	1 (25.00)	4 (8.33)	0	43 (39.81)	92 (85.19)
1 to 2 hr.	3 (3.30)	0	3 (6.25)	0	21 (19.44)	25 (23.15)
More than 2 hr.	0	0	0	0	4 (3.70)	0
N=91	N=4	N=48	N=6	N=108	N=108	

Values in parentheses are percentages of the respondents

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Content preference by the media subscribers/owners :

The preference of the newspaper and magazine readers, radio listeners and TV viewers in respect of the content of the respective medium was sought from those possessing these media. The frequencies of the people giving preferences for respective contents for different media were converted in the form of weighted mean score(WMS) to clearly found out the rank of each content.

The results revealed that the media users gave their first preferences to political information in newspapers and magazines (8.86 and 9.30 WMS,respectively). The

second position was obtained by social information (7.68 WMS) in newspaper while in magazines religious content was given second preference (8.85 WMS). The entertainment (6.60 and 8.45 WMS, respectively) was given third rank for both the media. In case of radio and television, news obtained first rank (11.80 and 11.05 WMS, respectively) while the second position went to entertainment in case of radio and religious content in case of TV (10.60 and 10.88 ,respectively).All other subject areas were given subsequent ranking. It is surprising to note that the villagers did not gave any preferential ranking for agricultural information (Table-5).

Table 5. Content preferences by the media subscribers/owners

Sl.No.	Media Content	Weighted Mean Score (WMS) and Rank							
		Newspaper		Magazine		Radio		Television	
		WMS	Rank	WMS	Rank	WMS	Rank	WMS	Rank
1.	Political	8.86	I	9.30	I	10.51	III	9.48	IV
2.	Social	7.68	II	8.23	IV	9.48	V	8.80	VII
3.	Economical	6.26	V	7.37	VI	8.93	VIII	8.11	XI
4.	Health	5.80	VI	6.50	VIII	9.70	IV	9.60	V
5.	Entertainment	6.60	III	8.45	III	10.60	II	10.44	III
6.	Sports	6.46	IV	7.46	V	7.56	X	8.55	IX
7.	Crime	6.26	V	6.83	VII	9.15	VI	-	-
8.	Scientific	4.33	VII	6.00	IX	7.50	XI	9.50	XI
9.	Tourism	1.00	VIII	5.00	X	6.00	XII	8.00	XII
10.	Religious	-	-	8.85	II	-	-	10.88	II
11.	News	-	-	-	-	11.80	I	11.05	I
12.	Agriculture	-	-	-	-	8.63	IX	8.73	VIII
13.	Education	-	-	-	-	9.00	VII	8.16	X

CONCLUSION :

Thus, it can be said that maximum number of farmers listened to radio and viewed TV casually, while the number of respondents reading the newspapers and magazines were quite less. Most of the farmers used mass media for news and information while magazines were read mostly for entertainment purposes. Farmers used media in their free

time, accept some newspaper readers who used to read newspapers in the morning. More than half of the newspaper and magazines readers read them for half an hour while radio and TV were mostly switched on for half an hour to one hours. Political news content were preferred by most of the newspaper and magazine readers whereas radio and TV were preferred for news.

The study clearly indicates that radio and TV were used by majority of the farmers though casually. However, magazines were the least utilised source. This is a happy trend that farmers are being exposed to electronic media but this is heartening to know that they are being used for seeking news

and entertainment alone. This point out towards the grey area i. e. choice of content and treatment is not according to their needs. Though availability of radio and TV sets have increased over the years but their use have been limited for agricultural development.

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