

ATTITUDES OF FARMERS TOWARDS "SCHOOL ON AIR" PROGRAMME RUN BY NRCRM ON MODERN RAPESEED-MUSTARD TECHNOLOGIES

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ABSTRACT

The attitude acts as precursor of adoption, hence plays an important role in adoption of improved practices. The present investigation was carried out in September 2003 to measure the attitude of farm listener towards "School on AIR" programme run by NRC on Rapeseed-mustard. The data were collected from 130 farmers, representing from Bharatpur and Dholpur district of Rajasthan and Agra & Mathura District of U P. The study revealed that majority of the farmer respondents expressed favourable attitude towards "School on AIR" programme on modern rapeseed-mustard technologies run by NRCRM. They expressed that the programme would greatly benefit all the listening farmers.

Key Words Adoption, Attitude, Programme, Radio.

INTRODUCTION

What radio can offer to farmers through farm radio programmes cannot be accomplished by any other media. Radio is cosmopolite in approach and is suitable for communication to millions of people widely dispersed and situated in remote areas.

Radio is suitable for creating general awareness amongst the people, help change their attitude & reinforce learning. Farm radio programmes enjoy wide popularity and a high credibility in the minds of farmers. Keeping this importance of radio, National Research Centre on Rapeseed-Mustard, Bharatpur made use of All India Radio, Agra for bringing the improved rapeseed-mustard technologies to the door of the farmers. The NRCRM run "School on AIR" programme during Sept 2002 to Jan 2003 through All India Radio, Agra, under which, 20 episodes prepared by NRCRM scientists were broadcasted on different aspects of rapeseed-mustard production at 7.30-8.00 PM on every Friday and rebroadcast at same time on Tuesday. The farmers of Bharatpur, Dholpur and Karoli in Rajasthan and Agra, Mathura and Ferozabad in Uttar Pradesh heard the programme.

The attitude acts as precursor of adoption, hence plays an important role in adoption of improved practices. As corollary of this fact, farmers' attitude towards "School on AIR" programme on modern rapeseed-mustard technologies will largely determine the nature and extent of their involvement and participation in the programme. It affects their interest and motivation to listen and adopt the programme recommendations. Keeping in view the importance of attitude in success of the "School on AIR" programme, the present study was

undertaken after completing the programme with the following specific objectives.

1. To study the attitude of the farmers towards "School on AIR" programme on modern rapeseed-mustard technologies.
2. To get the feed back from the farmers for further improvement of the programme.

The present investigation was carried out in September 2003 during Beej Pakhwara to measure the attitude of farm listener towards school on AIR programme run by NRC on Rapeseed-mustard.

METHODOLOGY

A standardized scale consisted 20 statements (10 positive & 10 negative) was prepared to record the responses of farmers. The data were collected from 130 farmers, representing from Bharatpur and Dholpur district of Rajasthan and Agra & Mathura District of U P who visited the NRCRM during Beej Pakhwara 2003 organized by the centre from September 16 to September 30, 2003. The attitude response was recorded on a five point continuum viz. "strongly agree" 'agree', undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with the weightage scores of 5,4,3,2,1 for positive statements and reverse scoring system was employed for negative statements. The collected data were processed, tabulated and analyzed.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

1. Distribution of Farmer Respondents on the Basis of Attitude Score—To get an overview of degree of attitude towards "School on AIR" programme, the farmers were grouped into three categories on the basis of mean & standard deviation viz., less favourable (MS below 63.02), favourable (MS 63.02 to 87.84) and most

1. Scientist, (Ag. Extension), 2. Scientist, Senior, Scale (Ag. Extension), 3. Scientist (Computer Application in Ag.) & 4. Director, NRC on Rapeseed-Mustard, Bharatpur.

favourable (MS above 87.84). The attitude score obtained by respondents in each groups is given in table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of Farmer Respondents Based on their Attitude score Towards "School on AIR" Programme

S.No.	Mean Score	Kind of attitude	Frequency	%
1	Upto 63.02	Less favourable	14	10.76
2	63.02 to 87.84	Favourable	98	75.38
3	More than 87.84	Most favourable	18	13.84

It is evident from table 1 that percentage of respondents having less favorable attitude was only 10.76 and respondents having most favourable attitude were 13.84. These two categories together constitute about one fourth of the total respondents and remaining 75.38 percent respondents showed favourable attitude towards "School on AIR" programme. Hence, it may be inferred that most of the farmers had their attitude in positive direction towards "School on AIR" programme on modern rapeseed-mustard technologies run by NRCRM.

This might be due to the fact that the farmers realized the importance of such programme for increasing their knowledge about modern rapeseed-mustard technologies and thus help in greater adoption of these technologies.

2. Attitudes of Farmer Respondents Towards Various Aspects of "School on AIR" Programme-

Table 2 visualizes the attitude of respondents on different aspects included in the scale. It is apparent from the table that respondents have strongly agreed that the "School on AIR" programme listening would greatly benefit all the listening farmers, as it occupied top position with MPS 93.23. The farmers showed strong disagreement with the statement that the programme listening is waste of one's time, as this statement received second rank with MPS 89.84. Likewise farmers expressed most favourable attitude towards statement No. 7 that important messages on pests, diseases, weather condition, etc. are of much use to farmers and accorded third rank with MPS 87.69. Further study of data reveals that farmers strongly agreed that regular programme listening leads to increased rapeseed-mustard yield (statement no. 5). They accorded fourth rank to this statement No. 5 with MPS 85.84.

The most of the farmers also expressed most favourable attitude towards the statement No. 3 with fifth rank and MPS 85.23 that one can become very progressive if he listens to the programme regularly. The majority of the farmers strongly felt that the recommendations given in programme are applicable to their farm also as they awarded sixth rank to the statement No. 11 with MPS 84.30. The farmers expressed strong

disagreement to the statement No. 6 that the programme does not give any useful information. They awarded seventh rank to the statement with high MPS 84.15. It means farmers were in opinion that the programme is useful for the farmers and they would certainly advise other fellow farmers to listen the programme.

Table 2. Attitudes of Farmers (Radio listener) Towards "School on AIR" Programme Run by NRCRM on Modern Rapeseed-Mustard Technologies

SN	Statements	MPS	Rank
1	The 'school on AIR' programme listening would greatly benefit all the listening farmers.	93.23	1
2	The recommendations of the programme involve high cost	54.30	18
3	One can become very progressive if he listens to the programme regularly	85.23	5
4	The programme listening is waste of one's time	89.84	2
5	Regular programme listening leads to increased rapeseed-mustard yield	85.84	4
6	You would not advise your friends to listen to the programme as it does not give any useful information	84.15	7
7	Important messages on pests, disease, weather condition, etc are of much use to farmers	87.69	3
8	Technical information of the programme is beyond the comprehension of an ordinary farmers	80.30	10
9	One can get more profit if he follows the programme recommendations	78.15	11
10	There is no use of listening to the programme as one forgets it quickly	75.07	13
11	You strongly feel that the recommendations given in programme are applicable to your farm also	84.30	6
12	The programme recommendations are suitable only for big farmers.	60.61	17
13	The programme always gave timely information	63.07	16
14	Listening to the programme is for those who do not have any work.	81.53	9
15	No other medium can be compared to farm broadcast giving new agriculture information	54.00	19
16	You don't consider the radio programme as a credible (trustworthy) source of information	76.76	12
17	Differential use of modes & techniques in the programme made information very interesting	52.15	20
18	The programme time (7.30 to 8.00 pm) was not suitable for the farmers.	72.92	14
19	The programme disseminated latest useful technology	83.84	8
20	The programme gave only superficial knowledge of the improved rapeseed-mustard technology	63.84	15

As the statement No. 19 were awarded 83.84 MPS with eighth rank. It can be discerned that respondent farmers strongly agreed that the programme disseminated latest useful technology. The respondent farmers showed

strong disagreement to the statement No. 14 that listening to the programme is for those who do not have any work. As it received high MPS 81.53 with ninth rank. The high MPS 80.30 to the statement No. 8 with tenth rank expressed that farmers were in opinion that the technical information of the programme was not beyond the comprehension of an ordinary farmers, i.e. the everyone can understand the technical message of the programme. The farmers were also in agreement to the statement No. 9 that one can get more profits after adopting the recommendations of the programme as they accorded eleventh rank to this statement with MPS 78.15.

Further, the MPS 76.76 to the statement No. 16 showed that majority of the farmers consider the radio programme as a credible source of information and awarded it twelfth rank according to the relative importance in the scale. The majority of the farmers also disagreed to the statement No. 10 that there is no use of listening to the programme as one forgets it quickly, as it received thirteenth rank with MPS 75.07. The farmers expressed disagreement with the statement No. 18 that the programme time was not suitable for the farmers (MPS 72.92 with fourteenth rank), it means majority of the farmers prefer the present programme time (7.30 to 8.00 PM)

The farmers also expressed disagreement to the statement No. 20 with MPS 63.84 and accorded fifteenth rank that the programme gave only superficial knowledge of improved mustard technology. The farmers expressed somewhat less favourable attitude about the timeliness of information. The statement No. 13 received MPS 63.07 with sixteenth rank, as some of the farmers opined that some information or lessons were broadcasted after the time of their field operations. Most of the farmers also expressed disagreement to the statement No. 12 that the programme recommendations are suitable only for big farmers, as it received MPS 60.61 with seventeenth rank.

Table 2 further reveals that almost 50 percent farmers expressed agreement that the recommendations of the programme involve high cost with MPS 54.30 along with eighteenth rank to statement No. 2. The majority of the farmers were not agreed that there is no other medium as effective as radio to give new agricultural information. (Statement No. 15 with nineteenth rank and MPS 54.00). They opined that there are other media through which new agriculture information can be disseminated among the farmers.

When asked about the mode of presentation it was surprised that majority of the farmers expressed unsatisfactory / unfavorable attitude towards the modes and techniques of presentation. They were in opinion that all lessons were broadcasted in straight talk way, while it would have more effective if the program was prepared and broadcasted in various other ways like discussion, question-answers format or interview style etc.

3. Suggestions Offered by the Farmers to Increase the Effectiveness of "School on AIR" Programme

The study devoted to factors associated to increase the effectiveness of farm broadcast revealed that majority of the farmer (81.53%) have suggested that information in respect of rapeseed-mustard production technologies be given in discussion or question-answers format or interview style. Discussion or question-answer/interview format of presentation is more effective than straight talk. Discussion mode of presentation is more effective in gaining knowledge, possibly it has an emotional appeal to farm broadcast listeners to listen to the fellow farmers who would identify himself with listeners in respect of the dialect used, the problems posed, doubts cleared and information given. It would have brought greater satisfaction and gain in knowledge to the listeners in this mode of presentation. Moreover, in discussion / question-answer/interview style, two voices are introduced to break the monotony, as against one in a straight talk.

Further, most of the farmers (73.07%) have suggested that music of farmers' choice / interest or folk songs should be included in the programme. The voice /talk and pronunciations of the speaker should be clear as suggested by 69.23% farmers. Speakers should be able to speak language understandable and appealing to the farmers. The speakers should have good expression power, speakers should know the level and type of listeners for whom the programme is being presented. The majority of the farmers (66.92%) also suggested that important points should be repeated, while 65.38 percent demanded for increase of broadcasting time as per seasonal requirements.

About 53.84 per cent farmers indicated that the programme should be broadcasted slowly, whereas, 52.30% demanded inclusion of farmers quarry and answers to their questions to meet doubts. However, nearly half of the farmers (48.46 percent) suggested that the gist of the programme should be circulated to the farmers. The farmers (46.15%) also wanted inclusion of farmers' experiences in the programme. About 43.07% indicated for more focus on problems of farmers, followed by 41.53% who reported that recommendations should always be applicable to their farm and home situation. About one third of farmers suggested that programme should be in local dialects and included other related areas like bee keeping vermin-compost, etc, followed by 20 per cent farmers who opined the programme should be telecasted on TV also.

All these findings are in conformity of the findings of Fulzele, R.M., K.N., Kumar, S., Panjabi, N.K. & Mohammad, A, Kumar, P and Se, N.V., Singh, A.K and Mishra, O.P, Reddy, P and Kumar, Ramesh, Sexena, A.K., Thakur, P. and Shrivastava, A., Singh, A.K and Mishra, O.P.

Table 3. Suggestions Offered by the Farmers to Increase the Effectiveness of "School on AIR" Programme

SN	Suggestions	Frequency	%
1	Mode of presentation should be in discussion/question - answer format or interview style	106	81.53
2	Inclusion of music of farmers' interest and folk songs	95	73.07
3	Voice of the speaker should be clear	90	69.23
4	Repetition of important points	87	66.92
5	Increase the broadcasting time	85	65.38
6	It should be broadcasted slowly	70	53.84
7	Inclusion of farmers query	68	52.30
8	Gist of the programme should be circulated to the farmers.	63	48.46
9	Farmers experiences should also be discussed with farmers (Farmers' interview)	60	46.15
10	More focus on problems of farmers like termite control, etc.	56	43.07
11	Technology recommendations should always be applicable to their farm and home situation	54	41.53
12	Use local dialects	46	35.38
13	Inclusion of other related areas like bee keeping, vermicompost, etc.	48	36.92
14	The programme should be telecasted on TV also.	26	20

CONCLUSION

It is inferred from the study that majority of the farmer respondents were satisfied with the programme and expressed favourable attitude towards "School on AIR" programme on modern rapeseed-mustard technologies run by NRCRM. The farmers suggested that programme should be broadcasted in discussion or question- answers / interview mode of presentation and folk songs or music of farmers' interest should be

included in the programme. The majority of the farmers reported that after listening to the programme they discussed with family members neighbours and extension workers. They expressed that the programme would greatly benefit all the listening farmers.

The majority of the farmers (programme listeners) opined that radio, as an information medium was highly useful in receiving agricultural innovations. Therefore, it can be concluded that radio can play a significant role in the rural areas in diffusing technical information on various aspects of agriculture. The "School on AIR" programme run by NRCRM was considered to be an effective vehicle for getting technical messages.

IMPLICATIONS

Though radio has some limitations, it is considered to be a useful information medium to farmers. In recent past, the establishment of "local" radio regional broadcasting stations and FM transmitters has opened the new opportunities/ possibilities to bring area/ regional specific technologies to the farmers. Therefore, AIR/ Govt. may take initiative to allot more time on radio to broadcast agricultural information and personnel engaged in transfer of agriculture technology should make the effective use of radio for creating awareness among farmers about improved and new agriculture technologies. Messages conveyed through Radio are open to selection to the listeners and there is no direct feedback. Therefore, maximum care must be taken to make the radio broadcast effective and interesting to the radio listeners and to improve the modes of presentation as far as practicable. Since this programme was found to be very effective in disseminating messages among farmers, it should be broadcasted every year and contents of the programme should be extended on wider perspective.

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