

MESSAGE DISTORTION RELATED TO FEEDING PRACTICES OF DAIRY ANIMALS BY THE FARMERS OF JHANSI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

An exploratory study to find out the message distortion was conducted in Jhansi district of Bundelkhand region. Proportionate random sampling technique was applied in the selection of respondents of different holding categories. The information was gleaned by interviewing 240 farmers from 8 villages. Three messages of dairy animal feeding representing more complex, complex and simple were employed to ascertain the distortion of message from the research station to farmers' situation. The 77.50 per cent respondents were in medium category of message distortion. The over all extent of message distortion was 57.67 percent in the study area. Further, It was observed that maximum distortion of message was found in the information related to milch animal feeding i.e. 80.00 percent whereas, the lowest (39.50 %) distortion was observed in the message of colostrums feeding and the distortion of message in case of round the year fodder production was 54.78 per cent. Marginal and small farmers were distorted the messages up to 59.76 and 59.10 per cent, respectively.

Key Words : Message, Complex, Distortion, Milch Animal, Feeding.

INTRODUCTION

The application of science and technology for increasing the productivity per unit of time, land and animal can never be overstressed. Realising the significance of science and technology, a number of research institutes and universities have been established by the Government of India, not only to generate manpower but also to develop technologies. The technologies are now becoming available but the mechanism for transferring it to the illiterate and small users in an effective manner does not exist. Ironically, there is a global communication network, which makes the latest findings of science available almost immediately to research workers in any corner of the world; but what is urgently needed is such a communication network meant for the poor farmers in our country. The main problem, as it exists today, is the low rate of dissemination of available technologies related to feeding of dairy animals.

Message distortion has been recognized as one of the important components in the overall agricultural development system of the country. Still in reality, no major steps are being taken to enforce the transfer of technology system and strengthen the infrastructures facilities wherever they are weak. Effective transfer of farm innovations and their practical application in the field situation is the key to the economic development of India. Therefore, an effort was made to find out the distortion of message in transfer of recommended feeding practices of dairy animals in Jhansi district of Bundelkhand region.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Jhansi district of Bundelkhand region. The district has been divided in 8 strata based on the soil type, fertility status, milk production and forest cover. One village from each stratum was selected randomly to represent the strata. A proportionate random sampling technique was applied for the selection of 30 respondents from different land holding categories. The respondents were those having at least one milch animal at the time of investigation. Relevant information was gleaned by interviewing 240 respondents with the help of pre-tested interview schedule.

The extent of message distortion in the present study has been operationally conceptualized as the extent of message distorted from the source i.e. the extension agencies involved in disseminate of dairy production technologies to the farmers. This variable has been measured by modifying the method adopted by Rao (1987).

For the present investigation, three messages were selected i.e. milch animal feeding (More complex), round the year fodder production (Complex) and Colostrum feeding to newborn calves (simple). One score was assigned, when the respondents gave wrong answer or no reply to the particular item and zero score for the correct answer. The total scores obtained by the respondents for each message separately were the scores indicating the extent of total message distortion of the respondent.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Message distortion was considered as one of the most important constraints in adoption of recommended feeding practices for dairy animals. Though the extent of message distortion depends, upon all the four constituents of communication viz. Source, Message, Channel and Receiver, but in the present research work the emphasis was laid upon message. The hypothesis formulated was that more complicated the message higher is the distortion. Conversely stated that simpler the message lower is the distortion.

Level of Message Distortion—Three messages of dairy animal feeding representing more complex, complex and simple were employed to ascertain the distortion of message from the research station to farmers’ situation. The respondents were categorized into three categories based on the extent of message distortion (low, medium and high). The findings of the same were presented in table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents based on message distortion N=240

Category	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	S.D.	Range
Low (<9.97)	31	12.92	12.11	2.14	6-19
Medium (9.97-19.25)	186	77.50			
High (>19.25)	23	9.58			

It could be observed from the table-1 that 77.50 per cent of the sampled respondents were in medium category of message distortion as against 12.92 and 9.58 per cent in low and high categories, respectively. The mean distortion score was 12.11 with a standard deviation of 2.14 indicating that the distortion of message was to a high extent and there was less variation among the respondents as observed from the table. The observation of the study fully agrees with the findings of Rao (1987) who reported a high distortion in all the messages at farmers’ level.

Extent of Message Distortion Related to Feeding Practices of Dairy Animals—The data were further, analyzed to know the extent of distortion of message among the farmers’ categories and results were presented in table-2. The over all extent of message distortion was 57.67 percent in the study area. Further, It was observed from the table that maximum distortion of message was found in the information related to milch animal feeding i.e. 80.00 percent, whereas, the lowest (39.50 %) distortion was found in the message of colostrums

feeding and the distortion of message in case of round the year fodder production was 54.78 per cent. These results indicated that farmers’ retained low knowledge on milch animal feeding as it had complex practices such as quantity and quality of ration for different type of animals. Side by side it involved money for purchasing the concentrate. Whereas feeding of colostrum to calves was easy practice, no involvement of money and three days job only, as a result farmers received more information with less distortion of messages. It was also noticed that marginal and small farmers were distorted the messages up to 59.76 and 59.10 per cent, respectively, where as, medium farmers were found to distort the message up to 54.76 per cent. These findings were logically true because the experts rating during the selection of message that the information related to milch animal feeding was more complex where as colostrums feeding to the calves was a simple message. Hence, the hypothesis formulated for the study was proved that more complicated the message higher was the distortion.

Table 2. Extent of message distortion by different category of farmers N = 240

S. No.	Farmers’ Category	Colostrums feeding		Round the year fodder production		Milch animal feeding		Pooled	
		Score	%	Score	%	Score	%	Score	%
1.	Land less	2.77	46.17	4.92	54.67	4.46	74.33	12.15	57.86
2.	Marginal	2.51	41.83	4.98	55.33	5.06	84.33	12.55	59.76
3.	Small	2.35	39.17	5.07	56.33	4.99	83.17	12.41	59.10
4.	Medium	2.02	33.66	4.82	53.56	4.66	77.67	11.50	54.76
5.	Large	2.50	41.67	4.74	52.67	4.43	73.83	11.67	55.57
6.	Pooled	2.37	39.50	4.93	54.78	4.80	80.00	12.11	57.67

CONCLUSION

It was concluded that if the messages are complex in nature there should be more distortion of messages. Hence, it is suggested that the message must be simple and short so that an illiterate farmers could understand the whole messages. The extension agencies must organize Kisan Mela, Kisan gosthi, livestock field day, campaigns, demonstrations and farmers’ training to minimise the message distortion. Finally it is suggested that in order to introduce new techniques successfully, it is necessary that the person engaged in dairy development programme should himself or herself be considered as motivator and become an active disseminator of the technologies.

REFERENCES

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