

## Reading Behaviour of Livestock Farmers and Factors Affecting their Behavior in Haryana

Ruchi Singh<sup>1</sup> and S.P. Singh<sup>2</sup>

1. Assit. Prof., Dept. of VAHE, CoVSc & AH, Nanaji Deshmukh Pashu Chikitsa Vigyan Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur, MP., 2. Prof., Dept. of VAHEE, CoVS, Lala Lajpat Rai Uni. of Veterinary and Animal Science, Hisar, Haryana

Corresponding author e-mail: drruchivet@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

*Animal Husbandry plays an important role for agricultural and national development as reflected by its 4.09 per cent contribution to the national GDP. The present study was conducted on 140 livestock farmers randomly selected from two villages of Hisar district to assess the reading behaviour and to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables of livestock farmers. The data were collected through pre-structured interview schedule developed for this purpose and by holding personal interview with the farmers during 2010-11. The findings regarding various aspects of reading behaviour depict that majority of farmers (47.86%) read Dainik Bhaskar followed by Dainik Jagran (35.72%). As high as 65 per cent of the respondents read and subscribe the newspaper from last four years. Higher percentage of the respondents read the newspapers partially (47.86%) followed by completely (45%) and 74.29 per cent of total respondents preferred to read news related to animal health whereas 89.29 per cent of respondents exchanged information with other farmers. Overall pictures highlighted that, majority of respondents read newspapers in morning (45%), daily (72.14), silently (89.28%) and in sitting posture (70%). Further, education, herd size, total income, place of reading, extension contact and mass media exposure showed positive and significant correlation with reading behaviour of farmers. However, age of the farmers exhibited negative and significant relationship. Out of the twelve antecedent variables, four variables viz. education, place of reading, extension contacts and family structures emerged as potential contributors towards the overall reading behaviour of respondents. From the research findings, it is concluded that reading behaviour of middle age farmers were found to the satisfactory level, so it is further suggested that the contents which was preferred by the middle aged farmers should be given more space by the newspaper agencies particularly on animal health aspects*

**Key words:** Reading behavior; Regression analysis; Livestock farmers;

Literacy is an indispensable tool for acquiring and sharing of knowledge-cum-information, a pre-condition for an individual's growth and for national development. With the spread of literacy and awareness in rural Haryana, Hindi dailies have become the potent means of communicating animal husbandry information to the masses. Since farmer's reading behaviour is very important to animal husbandry development, it is necessary to enhance the farmers' reading behaviour. In this context, "Reading behaviour defines as an act of reading the printed content with an understanding and a critical appreciation".

Newspaper is an enduring and very popular print media in rural India because it can be read and re-read at convenience, thus allowing for a full and better

understanding of mass contents. In essence, the newspaper is a potent and fundamental tool for technology transfer in animal husbandry and rural development. Despite recent industrial development, Haryana is primarily an agricultural state with 70 per cent of residents being engaged in agriculture along with dairy farming. Haryana has a livestock population of 98.97 lakhs (Anonymous 2007) with 660 grams of per capita availability of milk per day and ranks at second position in the country along with vast network of milk societies that support the dairy industry. This status of dairy farming may be attributed to exposure of farmers towards print media particularly news papers. Hence, reading behaviour of farmers can make the farmers to be more aware about the mass media for increasing

the dairy production. Hence, keeping the importance of reading behaviour of farmers in mind, the present study was undertaken with following objectives:

- i. To study the newspaper reading behaviour of the livestock farmers
- ii. To establish relationship between reading behaviour with their antecedent characteristics..

## METHODOLOGY

An ex-post-facto research design was adopted to study the reading behaviour of livestock farmers in purposively selected Hisar division of Haryana. Two newspapers namely; Dainik Jagran and Dainik Bhashkar were selected on the basis of maximum circulation in Hisar district for this study. Two villages namely Aryanagar and Kemerli were selected randomly. Incidental sampling approach was adopted to selected 70 livestock farmers were selected randomly from each village making a total sample of 140 respondents for the study. The study included aspects like subscription of newspaper, extent of reading newspaper, regularity in reading, time devoted for reading, time of reading, category of A.H. Information, re-exposure of old issue, modes of reading, posture of body while reading and frequency of reading in a week for developing newspaper reading behaviour index. The total score of each individual on this variable was worked out by adding the scores on various aspects of reading behaviour. The total maximum possible reading behaviour score was 45. On the basis of the total score obtained by the respondents, they were categorized into three groups' i.e. low, medium and high level of reading behaviour using the mean and one standard deviation formula ( $\bar{X} \pm SD$ ). The antecedent characteristics of the livestock farmers were taken as independent variables while reading behaviour of respondents was considered as a dependent variable in the study. Twelve variables namely age, education, occupation, land holding, herd size, annual income, place of reading, marital status, family structure, social participation, extension contact, mass media exposure other than newspaper were studied as independent variables followed by reading behaviour of livestock farmers.

The data were collected with the help of interview schedule by personal interview method. The statistical tools viz. frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, correlation coefficient, and multiple regression,

were used in this study, for drawing meaningful interpretation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Socio-economic characteristic of the respondents:*

The data given in Table 1 reveals that, average age of the sample farmers was 39.67 years and ranged from 18 to 70 years. The data pertaining to education of respondents, majority of the respondents were having high school and secondary level of education to the extent of 23.58 and 22.85 per cent, respectively, followed by middle school (19.29%). Only 5.72 per cent of the respondents carried out exclusive agricultural farming, while majority of the farmers (77.86%) had livestock and agricultural both as main occupation and remaining 16.42 per cent respondents had livestock farming as their occupation. Majority (44.29%) of the respondents possessed large size of land while 21.43 per cent were landless. The data presented in table revealed that 50.91 per cent livestock farmers fall in the category of small herd size (up to 2 animals) followed by medium herd size (26.37%) and large herd size (22.72%). The average herd size in the study was found to be small i.e., up to 2 animals. Overall, the average annual income of the respondents was Rs. 1, 58,960.10 with a range of 40, 000 to 20, 00,000. It implies that the farmers had sufficient financial background to carry out their farming. Overall, 52.14 per cent respondents read newspapers at their home followed by neighbours home (25.00%), tea stall and other shop (17.15%) and lastly chopal or panchayat (5.71%). Almost similar finding was also observed by *Suresh (2004)* and *Khin Mar Oo (2005)*.

Data also revealed that among livestock farmers 93.58 and 6.42 per cent respondents were married and unmarried, respectively. A perusal of the data presented in Table 2 indicated that in general 52.15, 27.14 and 20.71 per cent respondents fall in large, medium and small family size, respectively. Majority of the respondents were in the medium level of extension contact category to the tune of 51.43 per cent while 42.86 per cent of them hailed to the low level followed by high extension contact to the extent of 5.71 per cent.

It can be seen from Table 2 that majority of the respondents (67.86%) were in the low level of mass media exposure while 23.57 per cent of them hailed to medium category followed by high level of mass media exposure category to the extent of 8.57 per cent.

**Table 1. Distribution of the respondents according to various Respondents' characteristics (N=140)**

Characteristics	Category (score)	No.	%
Age	Young (<30 years)	32	22.85
	Middle (31-55 years)	96	68.57
	Old (>55 years)	12	08.58
Educational qualification	Primary (1)	24	17.14
	Middle (2)	27	19.29
	High School (3)	33	23.58
	Secondary (4)	32	22.85
Occupation	Graduate and above (5)	24	17.14
	Livestock (1)	109	77.86
	Poultry (1)	08	05.72
Land holding	Livestock +Poultry (2)	23	16.42
	Landless (0)	30	21.43
	Small (Up to 2 ha) (1)	24	17.14
Herd size	Medium (2-4 ha) (2)	24	17.14
	Large (>4 ha) (3)	62	44.29
	Small (Up to 2) (1)	56	50.91
Total income	Medium (3-5) (2)	29	26.37
	Large (>5) (3)	25	22.72
	Low (Up to 80 k) (1)	31	22.14
Place of reading	Medium (81k to 1.6 l) (2)	88	62.86
	High (>1.6 l) (3)	21	15.00
	Home (4)	73	52.14
Social Participation	Chopal, Panchayat (3)	08	05.71
	Neighbors' home (2)	35	25.00
	Tea stall & other (1)	24	17.15
Mass media exposure	Low (0-6)	140	100.0
	Medium (7-12)	-	-
	High (>12)	-	-
Extension contacts	Low (0-3)	95	67.86
	Medium (4-6)	33	23.57
	High (>6)	12	08.57
Marital status	Low (0-2)	60	42.86
	Medium (3-4)	72	51.43
	High (>4)	08	05.71
Family structures	Unmarried (1)	09	06.42
	Married (2)	131	93.58
	Joint (1)	92	65.72
	Nuclear (2)	48	43.28
	Large (1)	73	52.15
	Medium (2)	38	27.14
	Small (3)	29	20.71

**Table 2. Level of newspaper reading behaviour of farmers on the basis of total reading behaviour Score**

Level of reading Behaviour	Score range	Livestock farmers	
		No.	%
Low	0-28	30	21.42
Medium	29-34	77	55.00
Large	35-45	33	23.58
Total		140	100.00

Mean=27.07; SD=02.86

*Level of newspapers reading behaviour of livestock farmers on the basis of total reading behaviour index:* Data presented in the Table 2 show that 55, 23.58 and 21.42 per cent respondents had medium, high and low level of reading behaviour, respectively. The average reading behaviour score was 27.07.

*Relationship between socioeconomic characteristics and reading behaviour of respondents:* Researchers have well established the relationship of antecedent characteristics of the farmers with the reading behaviour although the nature and extent of relationship varies from situation to situation.

**Table 3. Relationship between socio-economic characteristics and reading behavior of farmers (N=140)**

Independent Variables	'r' value
Age ( $X_1$ )	-0.216*
Education ( $X_2$ )	0.638**
Occupation ( $X_3$ )	-0.187*
Land Holding ( $X_4$ )	-0.114
Herd size ( $X_5$ )	0.256**
Income in 1000 ( $X_6$ )	0.240**
Place of reading ( $X_7$ )	0.479**
Marital status ( $X_8$ )	-0.037
Family structures ( $X_9$ )	0.086
Social participation ( $X_{10}$ )	0.171*
Extension contacts ( $X_{11}$ )	0.264**
Mass media exposure ( $X_{12}$ )	0.261**

\*5% level of significance \*\*1% level of significance

In the present study, an attempt was made to determine the relationship between livestock farmer's socio-economic characteristics (independent variables) with their reading behaviour which was considered as dependent variable. The relationship was determined by using Pearson's correlation coefficient (r value) and has been given in Table 3. It is evident from the figures that except three variable namely; land holding, marital status and family structure, all other independent variables namely education ( $r=0.638$ ), herd size ( $r=0.256$ ), total income ( $r=0.240$ ), place of reading ( $r=0.479$ ), extension contact ( $r=0.264$ ), mass media exposure ( $r=0.261$ ) showed positive and significant correlation with reading behaviour of farmers at 1 per cent level of significance. However, occupation ( $r=-0.187$ ) and social participation ( $r=0.171$ ) had positive and significant correlation whereas age of the farmers ( $r=-0.216$ ) exhibited negative and significant relationship at 5 per cent level of significance. Similar findings were

also observed by Bhavya and Nanjappa (2009) who reported that variables like social participation and extension contact were found to be significantly associated with reading habit of the farmers. The positive and significant “r” value implies that education, herd size, income, place of reading, social participation, extension contact and mass media exposure have direct relationship. It is presumed that with the increase in these independent variables, the extent of reading behaviour will be increased.

**Table 4. Regression coefficients between socioeconomic characteristics and reading behaviour of farmers**

Variables	‘b’	‘t’
Age ( $X_1$ )	0.009	0.340
Education ( $X_2$ )	1.608**	6.895
Occupation ( $X_3$ )	-4.211	1.590
Land Holding ( $X_4$ )	-0.302	-1.344
Herd size ( $X_5$ )	0.165	-0.494
Income in 1000 ( $X_6$ )	0.089	0.352
Place of reading ( $X_7$ )	0.786**	4.120
Marital status ( $X_8$ )	-1.673	1.366
Family structures ( $X_9$ )	0.208	1.435
Social participation ( $X_{10}$ )	0.090	-0.237
Extension contacts ( $X_{11}$ )	0.382	1.194
Mass media exposure ( $X_{12}$ )	0.102	0.463

$R^2 = 0.579$

$F = 10.17^{**}$

\*5% level of significance

\*\*1% level of significance

*Contribution of socioeconomic characteristics towards reading behaviour of farmers (Regression analysis):* After establishing the relationship, it was desirable to ascertain the contribution or variation explained by all antecedent characteristics (independent

variables) towards reading behaviour of farmers.

The data given in Table 4 reveals that all the twelve variables entered in the regression analysis accounted for 57.9 per cent of variation towards reading behaviour of newspaper by the livestock farmers. The “F” value (10.17) was found to be significant at 1 per cent level which indicated the significance of the regression equation in predicting the level of reading behaviour of livestock farmers. It is also evident from Table 6 that education ( $b = 1.608$ ) and place of reading ( $b = 0.786$ ) of newspaper were the most important factors / predictor on the part of livestock farmers reading behaviour. The F value (10.17) was also found to be highly significant in this case at 1 per cent level of significance.

## CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that 55.0, 23.58 and 21.42 per cent of respondents had medium, high and low level of reading behavior, respectively. The age of the respondents was negatively and significantly correlated while extension contact had positive and significant level of relationship with the reading behavior of farmers. The regression analysis of 140 respondents regarding reading behavior of farmers depicted that out of the twelve antecedent variables, two variables namely; education and place of reading had emerged as potential contributors towards the overall reading behavior of respondents. All the twelve variables had contributed 54.3 per cent of variation towards the reading behavior of farmers.

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