

Communication Pattern in Drylands of Uttar Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted with specific objective to understand the process of agricultural information access at farm household level in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. Jalaun from Jhansi division and Hamirpur district from Chitrakoot Dham division were purposively selected for the study. Block Jalaun from district Jalaun and Kurara from district Hamirpur were randomly selected for drawing the sample. A set of four villages from each block were randomly selected. Thus, 50 respondents from each village were identified, which constitute a total sample of 400 respondents. Different communication sources followed by farm households in Bundelkhand region were included under investigation. Exploratory research design was used for the study. The study revealed that the access of different cosmopolite sources was low as compared to interpersonal localite sources. The farmers relied more on neighbours and private companies' dealers for information access. There was no organized way of interaction among farmers at farm household level. There is a need to introduce periodicals on cheaper rates for the farmers. Input dealers need to be trained and made skillful, so that right information can be transmitted to the farmers. Possession of land holdings and use of information sources are positively and significantly correlated, except in case of radio. It was found that educational level increases, the use of information sources. There is a need to utilize diverse information sources for obtaining more farm related information by the farmers.

Key words : *Agricultural information; Interaction ; Information sources; Diverse information sources;*

Communication is a basic need of all human beings and it is a continuing process throughout one's life. It is a natural demand of individual and a requirement for social existence. Communication is the web that holds a society together, and it is a collection of small and relatively isolated agricultural communities. Culture and cultivation over the ages have rested on communication. Present extension system is already under pressure due to wide ratio between the extension worker and farmers. Considerable time of extension worker is spent for administrative work and travel. In this situation, it is very difficult to provide latest information and farm technologies to the farmers in shortest time. To solve such a problem, cost effective and efficient support systems like mass media is required. Newspapers, magazines, traditional media, radio, television, etc. are proved to be most powerful opinion makers in this information age. Participatory video using a methodology called rural audio-visual pedagogy, which uses participatory video as a communication tool for mediating between rural people's and information sources, is very important to respond to these needs. It may cover more people in less time and less cost. The strength of mass

media is of great help to extension workers for providing cost effective and efficient service to the farmers. Cyber extension is the new approach using the power of online networks, computer, communication and digital interactive multimedia to facilitate dissemination of agricultural technology (Balak, Shive, (1999), Singh, Narval and Malik (2003) and Singh & Prasad (1990) .

Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh suffers from low rainfall and low soil fertility. Irrigation facilities are generally inadequate. Topography is undulated and soils are quite varying. Crop failures or animal illness can be catastrophic for the farmers and help is not always readily available. Keeping these facts in view in relation to information and mass media communication for rural and agricultural development, the present study was conducted with specific objective to understand the process of agricultural information access at farm household level.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh. There are two administrative divisions viz Jhansi and Chitrakoot Dham. Jalaun from Jhansi division and Hamirpur district from Chitrakoot Dham

division were purposively selected for the study. Block Jalaun from district Jalaun and Kurara from district Hamirpur were randomly selected for drawing the sample. A set of four villages from each block were randomly selected. Thus, 50 respondents from each village were identified, which constitute a total sample of 400 respondents. The criteria for selecting the farmers as respondent was their economic resource situation i.e. lands less, poor and rich. Different communication sources followed by farm households in Bundelkhand region were included under study. Exploratory research design was used for the investigation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major findings of the study are given in different sub-heads :

Use of mass media sources: The possession of mass media sources by farm households was analyzed over time so as to know the expansion of different channels over the years. The findings are depicted in Table-1.

Table 1. Respondents possessing mass media sources

Year	Percentage of respondents possessing mass media sources.		
	Radio	Television	Newspaper
1960	1.00	–	–
1970	5.00	–	–
1980	13.50	–	–
1990	24.00	7.50	2.00
2000	33.50	12.50	8.50

The findings indicate that the initially growth of radio was quite high during 1980 to 1990 in the study area which later on slowed down due to introduction of television and news papers in the villages. However, the number of mass media sources has increased over time.

Use of information sources: The data (Table 2) revealed that the highest percentage (33.50%) of the farmers used radio on daily basis and about 50% farmers used radio sometimes. Television was used sometimes by 54.75% farmers as a source whereas 12.50% farmers used it on daily basis. A majority (48%) of farmers never used newspaper as information source. The use of television is being done more as compared to other sources. However, the use of television depends upon availability of electricity.

Table 2. Frequency of use of different information sources

Sources	Daily	Often	Sometimes	Never
Newspaper	8.50	19.25	24.25	48.00
Radio	33.50	17.25	49.25	44.00
Television	12.50	19.50	54.75	13.25

Use of print media : The data in Table 3 shows that only 22% of the farmers used agricultural magazines, 18% used personal letters, 16.50% used circular letters and 5.50% used wall printings as source of information. Therefore, the study indicated that use of different print media sources by the farmers is still very low which needs to be improved by introducing use of periodicals by different organizations/KVKs for the farmers.

Table 3. Status of use of print media

Sources	Daily	Often	Sometimes	Never
Magazines	4.50	5.25	12.25	78.00
Personal letters	–	5.50	12.50	82.00
Circular letters	–	3.25	13.25	83.50
Wall printings	–	–	5.50	94.50

Use of other information sources: Majority of farmers never used demonstration (69.25%), kisan mela (52.25%) and kisan gosthi (48.50%) as source of information (Table 4). Once in a year, these sources were used by farmers ranging from 15%-32%. Use of popular and effective sources of information such as demonstration, kisan mela and krishak gosthi was very low due to different reasons, which need to be coloured by programmes in different pockets involving the farmers.

Table 4. Use of sources of information

S. No.	Frequency of participation	Other sources of information		
		Demonstration	Kisan mela	Krishak gosthies
1.	Thrice in a year	5.25	2.00	2.00
2.	Twice in a year	10.25	16.50	17.25
3.	Once in a year	15.25	29.25	32.25
4.	Never	69.25	52.25	48.50

Use of interpersonal localite sources: The data (Table 5) revealed that, friends & relatives (41%) and neighbours (49%) were used as sources of information on monthly, fortnightly or weekly basis. Cooperative, panchayat, progressive farmers and farmers’ organizations were never used as a source of information by the respondents. Weekly and fortnightly use of these interpersonal localite sources was quite low. There was no organized system of interaction among farmers and farmers with other local agencies. This may be because of ineffectiveness of concerned organizations in bringing out useful programmes to attract farmers.

Table 5. Status of use of interpersonal localite sources

Sources	Daily	Often	Sometimes	Never
Panchayat	4.50	7.50	12.25	75.75
Cooperative	2.50	5.50	10.25	81.75
Farmers organizations	8.50	10.50	12.50	68.50
Progressive farmers	4.50	8.50	11.50	75.50
Neighbourers	12.50	18.50	18.00	51.00
Friends & relatives	–	2.50	38.50	59.00

Use of personal cosmopolite sources: Majority of respondents (>50%) never used different inter personal cosmopolite sources (Table 6). The highest non users were found in case of meeting (92.2%), field visits (84.00%) farm & home visits (81.00%), demonstration (77.00%), trainings (74.50%), contact with ADO/BDO (65.00%), etc. Nobody was found using these sources

weekly or fortnightly. Inter personal cosmopolite sources were being used quarterly, half yearly and yearly by the respondents in Bundelkhand region. The findings are in conformity with the findings of Chandra and Babel (1997). There is a need to enhance the use of these sources for better application of improved farm technologies by the farm households.

Table 6. Use of inter personal cosmopolite sources

Sources	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Quarterly	Six monthly	Yearly	Never
Office calls	–	–	4.50	8.50	8.25	8.25	70.50
Farm & home visit	–	–	3.50	5.50	4.50	5.50	81.00
Result Demonstration	–	–	–	–	7.50	15.50	77.00
Method demonstration	–	–	–	15.75	22.75	17.50	44.00
Tour/field visit	–	–	–	–	3.50	12.50	84.00
Meetings/Discussion	–	–	–	1.50	2.50	3.50	92.50
Training	–	–	–	5.50	7.50	12.50	74.50
Exhibition	–	–	–	2.00	16.50	29.25	55.25
Field days	–	–	–	–	13.25	32.25	54.50
Professional leaders	–	–	3.50	7.50	12.25	24.50	52.50
Extension Worker	2.25	5.25	8.50	10.50	16.25	22.25	35.00
Panchayat secretary	1.50	2.50	4.50	12.50	15.50	17.50	46.50
ADO/BDO	1.50	2.50	4.50	5.50	8.00	13.00	65.00
Scientists	3.50	4.50	10.50	11.50	12.50	15.00	42.50

Information access from private companies/NGOs: The findings indicate that dealers of different products were one of the major sources of information because of their availability at the local level. Fertilizer and seed dealers were used most of the time by >50% of respondents for obtaining information related to seed, fertilizer and package of practices for different crops. More use of private companies and input dealers as a source of information regarding seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and cattle feeds was found. Thus, a strategy should be made by the training agencies like KVKs to train dealers on agricultural, horticultural, animal husbandry aspects, etc.

land holdings and use of information sources are positively and significantly correlated, except in case of radio. The significant level was higher in case of newspapers.

Relationship between different information sources and education level : The relationship between use of different sources and education level of farmers is given in Table 9. The data showed that use of information sources like news papers, television, magazine, personal letters, circular letters and wall paintings were significantly correlated with the educational status of the farmers. It shows that as the educational level increases, the use of such information sources also increased. However, use of radio did not show any significant relationship with the educational status.

Table 7. Status of information access from private companies/NGOs

Private Companies	Fortnightly	Often	Some times	Never
Seed dealers	12.25	25.25	12.25	50.25
Fertilizer dealers	13.50	29.50	21.50	35.50
Pesticides dealers	4.50	12.50	22.75	60.25
Cattle feed dealers	4.25	9.25	19.25	65.25

Table 8. Correlation between different information sources and land holdings

Sources	Marginal	Small	Big	Total	Correlation test
News paper	17.60	59.44	83.15	52.00	0.9874**
Radio	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-
Television	68.00	92.78	100.00	86.75	0.9533*
Magazine	-	12.22	69.47	22.00	0.9366*
Personal letters	-	10.00	56.84	18.00	0.9366
Circular letters	-	7.78	54.74	16.50	0.9242

Relationship between different information sources and land holdings : The relationship between use of different sources and land holding of farmers is given in Table 8. It is clear from data that possession of

Table 9. Correlation between different information sources and education level

Sources	Illiterate	Up to middle	High School	Above Intermediate & Intermediate	Total	Correlation test
News paper	-	78.18	89.16	100.00	52.00	0.9747**
Radio	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	-
Television	68.55	97.27	100.00	100.00	86.75	0.9182**
Magazine	-	27.27	43.37	57.89	22.00	0.9963**
Personal letters	-	25.45	28.92	52.63	18.00	0.9420**
Circular letters	-	16.36	26.51	68.42	16.50	0.8747**
Wall paintings	-	-	14.46	26.32	5.50	0.8659**

CONCLUSION

The study has clearly brought out that the access of different cosmopolite sources was low as compared to interpersonal localite sources. The farmers relied more on neighbourers and private companies' dealers for information access. There was no organized way of interaction among farmers at farm household level. There is a need to introduce periodicals on cheaper rates for the farmers. Frequent use of demonstration, kisan

mela and kisan gosthi may be promoted for creating awareness about farm technologies among farmers. Input dealers need to be trained and made skillful, so that right information can be transmitted to the farmers. Possession of land holdings and use of information sources are positively and significantly correlated, except in case of radio. It was found that educational level increases, the use of information sources. There is a need to utilize diverse information sources for obtaining more farm related information by the farmers.

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