

Farm Women Preferences of Communication Sources for Farm Information

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ABSTRACT

Utilization of improved agricultural technology by the women farmers, to a large extent, depends upon the effective sources of information and channels to which they are generally exposed directly or indirectly. The problems in agricultural development in India, is not the availability of improved agricultural technologies, but converting them into production accomplishments. Among the various communication sources that play an important role in providing information support to the women farmers, interpersonal sources and channels are more important for every cultivation operations. Keeping this in view, the present investigation was carried out with following objectives viz. to study the sources of information used by the farm women about recommended package of practices (by Agricultural Scientists of Haryana state during Agricultural Officers workshop for every season) of wheat crop and to study usefulness of the information sources by the farm women about recommended package of practices. The present study was conducted in Haryana State. The study was undertaken in Kaithal and Jind districts of Haryana State. The pre tested structured interview schedule was used to collect data personally by the investigator. The study revealed that the respondents more frequently used neighbours, family members and friends as localite source of information for wheat cultivation. Most of the respondents used cosmopolite and mass media sources of information least frequently and only radio, television and cassette recorder were frequently used by the farm women for wheat cultivation. Whereas Neighbours, family members and friends were found very useful localite source. None of the cosmopolite sources were perceived as very useful and useful whereas radio, television and cassette recorder were found useful mass media sources of information for wheat cultivation.

Key Words : *Communication sources; Farm women; Utilization, Usefulness;*

Utilization of improved agricultural technology by the women farmers, to a large extent, depends upon the effective sources of information and channels to which they are generally exposed directly or indirectly. The problems in agricultural development in India, is not the availability of improved agricultural technologies, but converting them into production accomplishments. Therefore, transfer of agricultural technology to the women farmers is important as women have been playing vital role in agricultural development in India. Among the various communication sources that play an important role in providing information support to the women farmers, interpersonal sources and channels are more important for every cultivation operations.

The mass media are quick economical but lack crucial elements of empathy and feedback which are

apparent in face to face situation. Adoption of improved package of practices by the farmers varies from farmer to farmer depending upon their situation and availability of information sources to them. Individuals tend to use different communication and media for obtaining the technology. Keeping this in view, the present investigation was carried out to study the sources of information used by the farm women about recommended package of practices of wheat crop and to evaluate usefulness of the information sources by the farm women about recommended package of practices of wheat crop.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Kaithal and Jind districts of Haryana State where wheat crop is

grown in large scale. Kharak pandoo and pinjupura villages of Kaithal block in Kaithal district and Makhand & Uchana Khurd from Uchana block of Jind district were selected. From four selected villages a proportionate random sample of 165 farm women who were actively involved in farming were selected.

The extent of utilization and usefulness of communication sources by the farm women were studied for wheat crop. The frequency of using information source by the respondents had been analyzed to see how frequently they used the information sources. The frequency of contact with various sources/channels by the farming women was measured with the help of three-point interval scale. The three points were regularly, oftenly and Least frequently and assigned scores of 3, 2, 1 respectively.

Usefulness refers to the benefits derived from technological information source usage. The usefulness of using information sources by the respondents had been analysed. The responses were obtained from the respondents in 4 categories as very useful, useful, somewhat useful and not useful, for which they were assigned scores 4, 3, 2, 1, respectively. The structured interview schedule was developed and was pre-tested on non sampled respondents. The interview was conducted personally by the investigator with the women farmers individually. The data thus collected were processed, tabulated and analyzed by using frequency, percentage, mean weight score, rank, etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequency of information source utilization for wheat cultivation : The frequency of information source utilization for wheat crop is presented in Table 1. Data reported in Table 1 point out the fact that neighbour got 1st rank with mean score 2.89, family members II rank with mean score 2.87 and friends III rank with mean score 2.55 as those were perceived as more frequently used localite source of information. Frequently used information source were as progressive farm women (IV, MS 2.12) and relative (V, MS 2.07). Traditional folk media (VI, MS 1.55), Village leaders (VII, MS 1.24) and Panchayat members (VIII, MS 1.13) were least frequently used source by the respondents.

All the respondents were least frequently/not used

cosmopolite source of information as contact farmers (I, MS 1.14), social workers (II, MS 1.13), banks (III, MS 1.12), Kisan Mela (IV, MS 1.08), cooperative societies personnel, farmer's training centers, input agencies (V, MS 1.07 each), university scientist, ADO's, SMS (VI, MS 1.04 each), government agency personnel, exhibitions (VII, MS 1.02 each), District Extension Specialist (VIII, MS 1.01), NDRI scientist, krishi upaj mandi, pesticides/seed/fertilizers depot holders (IX, MS 1.00 each), respectively in order of preference by the respondents. Whereas mass media sources which were frequently utilized sources were radio (I, MS 2.02), television (II, MS 1.90) and cassette recorder (III, MS 1.78). Least frequently information sources such as newspapers and audio visual aids (IV, MS 1.53 each) farm magazines/journals (V, MS 1.50), telephone calls (VI, MS 1.02), internet (VII, MS 1.01) used by the farm women of selected areas of Haryana state i.e. Kaithal and Jind districts.

The above findings revealed that the respondents more frequently used neighbours, family members and friends as localite source of information. Most of the respondents used cosmopolite and mass media sources of information least frequently and only radio, television and cassette recorder were frequently used by the farm women. This may be due to non availability of cosmopolite source of information to farm women at their door step. Same findings were reported by *Vijayraghvan et al. (1997)*, *Jha and Singh (1997)* and *Jha and Chauhan (1998)*.

Usefulness of information sources utilized by the respondents for wheat cultivation: The data about the usefulness of technological information sources as perceived by the respondents are reported in Table 2. It is observed from the Table 2 that very useful localite information source perceived by the respondents were neighbours (I, MS 3.79), family members (II, MS 3.39), friends (III, MS 3.04) and useful sources progressive farm men/women (IV, 2.59) and relative (V, MS 2.55), whereas traditional folk media, village leaders (VII, MS 1.34) and Panchayat members (VIII, MS 1.17) were found somewhat/not useful localite sources as perceived by the farm women.

The data concerning the usefulness of cosmopolite source as perceived by farm women reported that all

Table 1. Frequency of information source utilization for wheat cultivation (N=165)

S. No.	Communication source/ Information source	Frequency of use						Weighed mean score	Rank
		Regularly		Oftenly		Never			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
<i>A) Localite</i>									
1.	Family members	146	88.48	16	9.70	3	1.82	2.87	II
2.	Neighbour	150	90.91	13	7.88	2	1.21	2.89	I
3.	Progressive farm men/women	59	35.76	68	41.21	38	23.03	2.12	IV
4.	Relatives	61	36.97	54	32.73	50	30.30	2.07	V
5.	Friends	114	69.09	28	16.97	23	13.94	2.55	III
6.	Village leaders	-	-	40	24.24	125	75.76	1.24	VII
7.	Panchayat members	5	3.03	12	7.27	148	89.70	1.13	VIII
8.	Traditional folk media	25	15.15	40	24.24	100	60.61	1.55	VI
<i>B) Cosmopolite</i>									
1.	University scientist	-	-	7	4.24	158	95.76	1.04	VI
2.	NDRI scientist	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	IX
3.	District Extension Specialist	-	-	2	1.21	163	98.79	1.01	VIII
4.	Co-operative societies personnel	-	-	12	7.27	153	92.73	1.07	V
5.	Government agency personnel	-	-	4	2.42	161	97.58	1.02	VII
6.	Panchayat officers	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	IX
7.	ADO	-	-	6	3.64	159	96.36	1.04	VI
8.	Social workers	-	-	21	12.73	144	87.27	1.13	II
9.	Farmers' Training Centres	-	-	11	6.66	154	93.34	1.07	V
10.	Subject matter specialists	-	-	7	4.24	158	95.76	1.04	VI
11.	Kisan Mela	-	-	13	7.88	152	92.12	1.08	IV
12.	Exhibition	-	-	3	1.82	162	98.18	1.02	VII
13.	Banks	-	-	20	12.12	145	87.88	1.12	III
14.	Contact farmers	3	1.82	17	10.30	145	87.88	1.14	I
15.	Krishi Upaj Mandi	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	IX
16.	Pesticides/Seed/Fertilizers depot holders	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	IX
17.	Input agencies	-	-	11	6.67	154	93.33	1.07	V
<i>C) Mass Media</i>									
1.	Radio	57	34.54	54	32.73	54	32.73	2.02	I
2.	Television	33	20.00	82	49.69	50	30.31	1.90	II
3.	Newspapers	29	17.57	30	18.19	106	64.24	1.53	IV
4.	Farm magazines/journals	21	12.73	42	25.45	102	61.82	1.50	V
5.	Telephone calls	—	—	3	1.81	162	98.18	1.02	VI
6.	Internet	—	—	2	1.21	163	98.79	1.01	VII
7.	Audio visual aid	11	6.68	65	39.39	89	53.93	1.53	IV
8.	Cassette recorder	29	17.58	70	42.42	66	40.00	1.78	III

*Maximum mean score is 3 i.e. Low (1-1.66), Medium (1.67-2.32) and High (2.33-3.00)

the cosmopolite source were perceived as somewhat/not useful to the respondents. This is due to the fact the cosmopolite sources are not utilized by farm women, because these sources are not available to them regularly/frequently. All cosmopolite sources viz., social

workers (I, MS 1.17), subject matter specialist, banks (II, MS 1.13 each), cooperative societies personnel (III, MS 1.09), university scientist (IV, MS 1.08), farmer's training centers, kisan mela, input agencies (V, MS 1.06 each), ADO (VI, MS 1.05), District Extension Specialist

Table 2: Usefulness of information source utilized by respondents for wheat cultivation (N=165)

S. No.	Communication source/ Information source	Usefulness								Weighed mean score	Rank
		Very useful		Useful		Somewhat useful		Not useful			
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
A)	<i>Localite</i>										
1.	Family members	100	60.60	35	21.21	25	15.16	5	3.03	3.39	II
2.	Neighbour	147	89.09	6	3.64	8	4.85	4	2.42	3.79	I
3.	Progressive farm men /women	41	24.85	55	33.33	30	18.18	39	23.64	2.59	IV
4.	Relatives	53	32.12	37	22.42	23	13.94	52	31.52	2.55	V
5.	Friends	76	46.06	44	26.67	20	12.12	25	15.15	3.04	III
6.	Village leaders	-	-	18	10.91	20	12.12	127	76.97	1.34	VII
7.	Panchayat members	2	1.20	8	4.86	6	3.64	149	90.30	1.17	VIII
8.	Traditional folk media	20	12.12	18	10.91	22	13.33	105	63.64	1.72	VI
B)	<i>Cosmopolite</i>										
1.	University scientist	-	-	5	3.03	3	1.82	157	95.15	1.08	IV
2.	NDRI scientist	-	-	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	VIII
3.	District Extension Specialist	2	1.21	-	-	-	-	163	98.79	1.04	VII
4.	Co-operative societies personnel	-	-	4	2.42	7	4.25	154	93.33	1.09	III
5.	Government agency personnel	-	-	2	1.21	1	0.61	162	98.18	1.03	VIII
6.	Panchayat officers	-	-	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	X
7.	ADO	-	-	3	1.82	3	1.82	159	96.36	1.05	VI
8.	Social workers	3	1.82	5	3.03	10	6.06	147	89.09	1.17	I
9.	FTC	-	-	3	1.82	4	2.42	158	95.76	1.06	V
10.	SMS	-	-	8	4.84	5	3.03	152	92.13	1.13	II
11.	Kisan Mela	-	-	5	3.04	-	-	160	96.96	1.06	V
12.	Exhibition	-	-	-	-	2	1.22	163	98.78	1.01	IX
13.	Banks	-	-	7	4.24	8	4.86	150	90.90	1.13	II
14.	Contact farmers	-	-	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	X
15.	Krishi Upaj Mandi	-	-	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	X
16.	Pesticides/Seed/ Fertilizers depot holders	-	-	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	X
17.	Input agencies	-	-	3	1.82	5	3.03	157	95.15	1.06	V
C)	<i>Mass Media</i>										
1.	Radio	51	30.91	30	18.18	33	20.00	51	30.91	2.50	I
2.	Television	30	18.18	25	15.15	35	21.21	75	45.46	2.06	II
3.	Newspapers	32	19.39	20	12.12	8	4.85	105	63.64	1.87	IV
4.	Farm magazines/journals	-	-	2	1.21	-	-	163	98.79	1.02	V
5.	Telephone calls	-	-	-	-	3	1.82	162	98.18	1.02	V
6.	Internet	-	-	-	-	-	-	165	100.00	1.00	VI
7.	Audio visual aid	5	3.03	37	22.42	54	32.72	69	41.83	1.87	IV
8.	Cassette recorder	27	16.36	23	13.94	45	27.27	70	42.43	2.04	III

*Maximum mean score is 4 i.e. Low (1.00-2.00), Medium (2.10-3.00) and High (3.10-4.00)

(VII, MS 1.04), govt. agency personnel (VIII, 1.03), exhibition (IX, MS 1.01), Panchayat officers, contact farmers, krishi upaj mandi, pesticides/seed/ fertilizers depot holders (X, MS 1.00 each) were somewhat/not useful cosmopolite sources of information to the farm women. Further it is clear from the Table that radio (I, MS 2.50), television (II, 2.06) and cassette recorder (III, MS 2.04) were found useful and newspapers, audio visual aid (IV, MS 1.87), farm magazines/journals, telephone calls (V, MS 1.02) and internet (VI, MS 1.00) as somewhat/not useful mass media source of information as perceived by farm women in order of preference. It can be concluded that neighbours, family members and friends were found very useful localite source and none of the cosmopolite sources were perceived as very useful/useful; whereas radio, television and cassette recorder were found useful mass media sources of information by the farm women. Same findings were reported by *Ladebo et al. (1993)*.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the respondents more frequently used neighbours, family members and friends as localite source of information. Most of the

respondents used cosmopolite and mass media sources of information least frequently and only radio, television and cassette recorder were frequently used by the farm women. On the other hand neighbours, family members and friends were found very useful localite source. None of the cosmopolite sources were perceived as very useful/useful whereas radio, television and cassette recorder were found useful mass media sources of information. Different mass media and cosmopolite source of information were not more frequently utilized and usefulness in area which hindered not only awareness level of farm women, but also adversely affect the adoption level regarding the latest production technology related to wheat. Educational level of the study area should be increased so as farming community is able to get benefit from the different printed or electronic media and cosmopolite sources of information. To increase the use of electronic media such as internet both public and private sector should create awareness and establish centres for the dissemination of modern wheat technology that ultimately results increasing the production of wheat.

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