

Utilization of Information Sources By Farmers



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Abstract

The present study was an attempt to investigate the preference of information sources by agriculture farmers. Study was conducted in Jaipur district of Rajasthan. 75 respondents were selected through random sampling method for the study and personal interview technique was used for data collection. Data related to information source used by the farmers revealed that mobile phone was the most preferred source by the farmers (70.66%). Farming helping apps (56%), television (53.33%), internet (52%) and local leader /neighbors (41.33%) always used by the farmers for accessing agriculture information. Study further revealed that poor contact of extension worker (42.66%), poor net signal and lack of knowledge on mass media (33.33%) and agriculture information broadcasting on odd hours (32%) were the major problems faced by the farmers in seeking information. Government should improve access to public extension services, by increasing the number of extension officers, and providing adequate training programmes to update their knowledge in the farming activities.

Keywords: Information Needs, Farmers, Agriculture.

Introduction

Information has become a vital and integral part in agriculture which contributes in enhancing the agriculture production and productivity. Its role is to supports and contributes to the social and economic change by facilitating agricultural and rural development. Information has been considered as an important input and factor for agriculture and rural development (Garforth et al., 2003). Information is the most essential element in the decision making process. The value of information is directly dependent on its content, relevance and timeliness. In this context, to access the right information at the right time, users have to be aware of the various sources of information, the services being offered and existing information systems (Jain, 2007).

Review of Literature

Information sources play key role in communicating innovative technologies to the ultimate users making them not only aware of the useful information but also create interest, promote understanding, assist in mental evaluation and ultimately motivate them for adoption (Gupta and De, 2011). Farmers use many information sources and channels for seeking agricultural information on improved farm practices. They may come across large number of information sources and channels (training, conferences exhibitions campaigns, bulletins, seminar radio, television, newspaper, friends, neighbors, internet, research stations, village extension Workers etc.), but perceive and use only few of them. Kumar and Swain (2017) conducted a study on "Information seeking behaviour and use of information sources by farmers of Haryana" and stated that Agriculture farmers mostly used landline phone (80%), internet (70%), kisan mela (60%), newspaper and magazine (50%) and mobile (40%). To utilize information and knowledge to improve productivity especially in agriculture, advancement in the information and communication technologies provide an opportunity for developing and agrarian countries like India (Lwoga, 2010). Due to differing literacy, technical skill and functional digital content, the farmers who are poor from available resources are mainly affected in their ability to use information and communication technologies unfortunately (Ghatak, 2007).

Methodology

The present study was conducted in one purposively selected gram panchayat "Mundiyagarh" in sambhar panchayat samiti, phulera tehsil, Jaipur district Rajasthan. A total number of 75 farmers were selected

by random sampling method as a sample for the study. Data collection was accomplished through structured interview schedule by personal interview method at their farm and residence. After data

collection, data were tabulated and analyzed by the application of mean, percentage and correlation coefficient as statistical measurement.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Socio- Economic Profile of The Respondents (N=75)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	31-40 year	13	17.33%
	41-50 year	23	30.66%
	51-60 year	28	37.33%
	61-70 year	11	14.66%
Cast	OBC	73	97.33%
	General	0	0
	SC	2	2.66
	ST	0	0
Family type	Joint	56	74.66%
	Nuclear	19	25.33%
Education	Illiterate	14	18.66%
	Primary to 8 th class	18	24%
	Secondary Education	23	30.66%
	High Secondary Education	18	24%
	Graduation	2	2.66%
Annual income	1 lakh to 2 lakh	7	9.33%
	2 lakh to 3 lakh	15	20%
	3 lakh to 4 lakh	20	26.66%
	More than 4 lakh	33	44%
Farming experience	5 to 15 years	15	20%
	15 to 25 years	18	24%
	25 to 35 years	18	24%
	More than 35 years	24	32%
Farm size	0-20 Bigha	12	16%
	20-40 Bigha	16	21.33%
	40-60 Bigha	13	17.33%
	60-80 Bigha	17	22.66%
	80 Bigha above	17	22.66%

Data regarding personal socio economic attributes like age, cast, educational status, family type etc. are presented in table 1. It was clearly evident from the table that the majority (37.33%) of the respondents belonged to 51-60 year age group, followed by 41-50 year age group (30.66%). Further majority (97.33%) of the respondents belonged to other backward caste category. Three fourth (74.66%) of the respondents were from the joint families. Table also depicted that majority (30.66%) were having

secondary level of education and data regarding annual income showed that maximum number of respondents (44%) were in above Rs.4 lakh income category followed by 26.66% having annual income between Rs.3 to 4 lakh. Table 1 also revealed that similar number of respondents (22.66%) was in both 60-80 Bigha and in 80 Bigha above farm size categories. It was observed that majority (32%) of the respondents were having farming experience of more than 35 years.

Table: 2 Information Sources Used By Farmers (N=75)

S. No.	Information Sources	Always		Sometime		Never	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Friend/relative/neighbors	31	41.33%	29	38.66%	15	20%
2.	Extension officer	23	30.66%	31	41.33%	22	29.33%
3.	Local leader	31	41.33%	22	29.33%	24	32%
4.	Newspaper and magazines	22	29.33%	39	52%	14	18.66%
5.	Radio	14	18.66%	30	40%	31	41.33%
6.	Television	40	53.33	22	29.33%	13	17.33%
7.	Mobile	53	70.66%	15	20%	18	24%
8.	Internet	39	52%	26	34.66%	10	13.33%
9.	Message app	22	29.33%	37	47.33%	16	21.33%
10.	Farmers helping app	42	56%	13	17.33%	20	26.66%
11.	Call center	30	40%	28	37.33%	17	22.66%
12.	Training	18	24 %	34	45.33%	23	30.66%
13.	Exhibition	19	25.33%	29	38.66%	27	36%
14.	Youth club	26	34.66%	32	42.66%	17	22.66%
15.	Kisan mela	22	29.33%	32	42.66%	21	28%

Critically examination of the table 2 revealed that majority (70.66%) of the farmers always used mobile phone to get information regarding crop production techniques, water harvesting, weather temperature, Government schemes etc. And farmers helping app like IFFCO Kisan app, kisan kheti, big haat, apni kheti etc. were utilized by 56 percent farmers always because of easy access of information by these apps. Followed by 53.33% respondents were utilized television always because of highly motivational and informative agriculture related programmes telecasted timely on television

like krishi darshan programme, agriculture news etc. And more than half (52%) were also using internets always to get agriculture information. 52 percent famers using newspaper sometimes because of providing of various agriculture information effectively and timely. Followed by message apps used by 47.33 percent respondents and training by 45.33 percent farmers sometime. Table also presented that radio and exhibition were never used by 41.33% and 36 percent respondents respectively. The findings are similar with the findings of Kumar and Swain (2017) and Odini, S. (2014).

Table 3: Problem Faced by Farmers in Seeking Information's (N-75)

S. No.	Problems	Very Serious		Serious		Low serious	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1.	Language related	19	25.33%	34	45.33%	22	29.33%
2.	Poor contact of extension worker	32	42.66%	28	37.33%	15	20%
3.	Illiteracy	22	29.33%	30	40%	23	30.66%
4.	Long distance of information center	24	32%	31	41.33%	20	26.66 %
5.	Agriculture information broadcast on odd hours	22	29.33%	28	37.33%	25	33.33%
6.	Irregular electricity supply	21	28 %	30	40%	23	30.66%
7.	Poor internet signals	29	38.66%	26	34.66%	20	26.66%
8.	Lack of ICT facility	24	32%	23	30.66%	28	37.33%
9.	Poor knowledge of TV and radio operating system	23	30.66 %	29	38.66%	23	32%
10.	Lack of knowledge on mass media	23	30.66 %	32	42.66%	20	28%
11.	Lack of Trust on news	22	29.33%	33	44%	20	28 %
12.	Un availability of Subject specialist	25	33.33 %	28	37.33%	22	29.33%

Problem faced by the farmers in seeking information is presented by table no. 3 revealed that poor contact of extension workers (42.66%), poor internet signals (38.66 %), unavailability of subject specialists (33.33%) in their area were very serious problems of farmers in seeking information's regarding agriculture. In serious problems category language related problem was faced by the majority of the farmers (45.33%) because of they cannot understand Hindi language properly. Followed by lack of trust on news (44%), lack of knowledge on mass media (42.66 %) and long distance of information centre (41.33%) were facing as serious problems by farmers. Study further stated that lack of ICT facility, poor knowledge on TV and radio operating system and agriculture information broadcast on odd hours were facing as low serious problems by 37.33 percent, 33.33 and 32 percent farmers respectively. These findings are supported by the findings of Choudhary (2017).

Conclusion

It can be concluded that mobile phone was the most preferred source by the farmers. And Mobile helping app and television, internet were also major sources of information regarding various aspects of agriculture for them. Study further revealed that poor contact of extension worker, poor net signals and unavailability of subject specialists in their area were very serious problems of farmers in seeking information's regarding agriculture.

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