

## Communication Behaviour of Forage Growing Farmers in Kandi Belt of Jammu Division

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### ABSTRACT

Awareness and knowledge about improved technologies in Agriculture and allied can be upgraded through many information sources. Different strata of farmers use different types of information sources as per their socioeconomic status. Some farmers perceive fellow farmers, radio, television and newspapers as the main source of agricultural information while some perceive mass media useful to great extent in increasing agricultural production. In order to know the facts, a study was conducted in Samba and Kathua districts of Jammu division. From each district, three blocks were selected purposively and the final sample size consisted of 144 forage growing farmers. The study revealed that 68.05 per cent of the farmers had medium level (score 6-9) of information seeking behaviour. Only 9.70 per cent fall in high (score above 9) level of information seeking behaviour. Majorities (83.33%) of the respondents were in contact with neighbors and input agencies 'sometimes'. There was no significant difference in the use of personal localite channels of the farmers in the two districts (Kathua and Samba). Junior Agriculture Extension officers were major source of information for about 70.83 per cent of the farmers. Overall 91.66 per cent of the farmers had never participated in any demonstration conducted by the development agencies. There was no significant difference in the use of personal cosmopolite channels of the farmers in the two districts (Kathua and Samba) as far as information seeking is concerned. Overall 72.91 per cent of the farmers in the two districts of Kathua and Samba watch T.V. always. However out of 105 respondents' only five farmers watch agricultural programmes on T.V. always. Neighbours and Input agencies contributed equally (83.33%) each to the knowledge of forage grower in personal localite channels.

**Keywords:** Communication channels, sources of information and utilization of different channel

### INTRODUCTION

Communication is a process in which one or more than one person interact with each other to arrive at a common understanding. In the present era, it is not the technology which is in dearth but the biggest challenge is ways and methods to transfer the available technology to the stakeholders. Communication occurs in many forms. Farmers use localite as well as cosmopolite channels to receive or disseminate the agricultural technology. They believe more in localite channels but feel more reliable the agriculture

messages they receive from cosmopolite channels like government agencies and progressive farmers. The study done by Yadav *et al.* (2011) and Tiwari *et al.* (2011) on Utilization Pattern of Different Sources and Channels of Agriculture Information used by the farmers revealed that among different personal Cosmopolite sources and channels of agriculture information the agriculture supervisor was most utilized by all the categories of growers. This might be due to the fact that the 'agriculture supervisor' is a technical person appointed by government to assist

farmers and he also supplies agricultural inputs to the farmers so the growers are attracted towards him and they utilize him mostly as a preferred source of agriculture information. The findings further revealed that among different impersonal cosmopolite sources and channels of agriculture information the television/film shows was most utilized source for getting information about improved cultivation. The study regarding the pattern of utilization of traditional communication media by different organizations for the purpose of training programme revealed that leaflets/pamphlets, charts/posters were regularly utilized by 90.20 and 81.10 percent of the respondents respectively while films/ 3D films (75.80%), television (72%), bulletin boards (66.70%) and exhibits (65.20%) were used occasionally for the purpose of training programme. However, the utilization of information sources in an agro-climatic system depends upon the various socio-economic and situational factors. The frequency and intensity of information sources used by the farmers living in irrigated areas varies with those of farmers from un-irrigated areas. Keeping in view the above findings and concepts it was planned to study the communication behaviour of forage growing farmers in un-irrigated areas of two districts of Jammu division with following specific objectives

- To study personal localite channels used by farmers in seeking information
- To study personal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information
- To study impersonal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information

### METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in the subtropical Kandi belt of Jammu region covering two districts *viz.* Samba and Kathua. Keeping in view the objective of the study, from each district three blocks were selected purposively. From each block, three villages were selected totaling 18 villages. Eight farmers who were practicing forage cultivation from each village were

selected randomly through Random number generator. The final sample size consisted of 144 respondents. The data were collected from the respondents using an interview schedule from December 2016 to March 2017. The data were analyzed using appropriate statistical methods. Z proportion was used to compare the data of two districts. The research instrument was pretested for workability of the instrument. The modifications suggested by the respondents were incorporated in the final questionnaire. The Pre-tested respondents were not considered into the final study.

### RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Communication is an integral part of development. Knowledge is generated faster than its transfer. The communication gap is an alarming challenge for the extension functionaries. Farmers also use certain type of channels for obtaining and disseminating agricultural knowledge. In the present study sources of communication has been analyzed in three aspects.

Personal localite channels used by farmers in seeking information,

Personal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information

Impersonal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information

Personal localite channels used by farmers in seeking information

As is evident from Table 1, overall 13.19 per cent of the respondents were contacting friends 'always' followed by Neighbour (2.08%). None of the farmers would contact input agent at regular intervals. Majority (83.33%) of the respondents was in contact with each neighbor and input agencies 'sometimes' respectively.

#### Multiple responses

There was no significant difference in the use of personal localite channels of the farmers in the two districts (Kathua and Samba) as far as information seeking behaviour is concerned. The NSSO (2003)

**Table 1: Personal localite channels used by farmers in seeking information**

Channels	Samba n=72			Kathua n=72			Overall n=144			Diff	Statistic (p-value)
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never		
Neighbour	02 (2.77)	53 (73.61)	17 (23.61)	01 (1.38)	67 (93.05)	4 (5.55)	03 (2.08)	120 (83.33)	21 (14.58)	1	z=0.58 (0.56)
Input Agency	00 (00.00)	48 (66.66)	24 (33.33)	00 (00.00)	58 (80.55)	14 (19.44)	00 (00.00)	120 (83.33)	24 (16.66)	0	-
Friends	12 (16.66)	31 (43.05)	29 (40.27)	07 (9.72)	13 (18.05)	52 (72.22)	19 (13.19)	44 (30.55)	81 (56.25)	5	z=1.23 (0.21)

Figures in parenthesis show percentage

also reported that input dealers play a large role in providing information to farmers. Even the National Commission for farmers acknowledged that the farmer depends on input dealers who sell seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and technical advice

### Personal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information

Table 2 depicts that overall 91.66 per cent of the farmers had never participated in any demonstration conducted by the development agencies. Only 8.33 percent of the farmers had attended the demonstration. About one fourth (22.91%) of the respondents had conducted farmers tour/visit to different university and agricultural farms. Junior Agriculture Extension officer was major source of information for about 70.83 per cent of the farmers 'sometimes'. There was no significant difference in the use of personal cosmopolite channels of the farmers in the two districts (Kathua and Samba) as far as information seeking is concerned. The probable reason for large contact of farmers with JAAs may be due to the fact that JAAs

are public extension functionaries and their mandate is education of farmers which they succeeded as is evident from the data. Regarding farmers not attending the demonstrations was that growers were of the view that though demonstrations are laid in their areas but these are generally on cereals and not on forages.

### Impersonal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information

Overall 72.91 per cent of the farmers in the two districts of Kathua and Samba watch T.V. always. However out of 105 respondent's only five farmers watch agricultural programmes on T.V. always. Only 9.72 per cent listen to radio, 1.38 per cent used printed material always. Only 13.88 per cent of the farmers had attended *Kissan Mela* 'sometimes'

### Figures in parenthesis show percentage

There was significant difference in the watching of 'TV' in the two districts (Kathua and Samba). However there was no significant difference between use of printed material and listening to radio in the

**Table 2: Personal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information**

Channels	Samba n=72			Kathua n=72			Overall n=144			Diff	Statistic (p-value)
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never		
Demonstration	00 (00.00)	05 (06.94)	67 (93.05)	00 (00.00)	7 (4.86)	65 (90.27)	00 (00.00)	12 (8.33)	132 (91.66)	0	-
Farmers tour/visit	00 (00.00)	22 (30.55)	50 (69.44)	00 (00.00)	11 (15.27)	61 (84.72)	00 (00.00)	33 (22.91)	111 (77.08)	0	-
Progressive farmers	00 (00.00)	2 (2.77)	70 (97.22)	00 (00.00)	04 (5.55)	68 (94.44)	00 (00.00)	06 (4.16)	138 (95.83)	0	-
JAEO	00 (00.00)	42 (58.33)	30 (41.66)	00 (00.00)	60 (83.33)	12 (16.66)	00 (00.00)	102 (70.83)	42 (29.16)	0	-

Figures in parenthesis show percentage

**Table 3: Impersonal cosmopolite channels used by farmers in seeking information**

Mass Media	Samba n=72			Kathua n=72			Overall n=144			Diff	Statistic (p-value)
	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never	Always	Sometimes	Never		
<b>Radio</b>	05 (06.94)	00 (00.00)	67 (93.05)	09 (12.5)	00 (00.00)	63 (87.5)	14 (9.72)	00 (00.00)	130 (90.27)	4	z=1.12 (0.25)
<b>TV</b>	59 (81.94)	10 (13.88)	3 (4.16)	46 (63.88)	24 (33.33)	02 (2.77)	105 (72.91)	34 (23.61)	05 (3.47)	13	z=2.43 (0.01)*
<b>Internet</b>	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	00 (00.00)	0	0
<b>Printed Material</b>	2 (2.77)	38 (52.77)	32 (44.44)	00 (00.00)	12 (16.66)	60 (83.33)	02 (1.38)	50 (34.72)	92 (63.88)	2	z=1.47 (0.15)
<b>Kissan Mela</b>	00 (00.00)	08 (11.11)	64 (88.88)	00 (00.00)	12 (16.66)	60 (83.33)	00 (00.00)	20 (13.88)	124 (86.11)	0	0

\*Out of 105 only 5 farmers watch agriculture programme always

two districts (Table 3). As is evident from table majority of the farmers watch TV. But watch only news or entertainment programmes probably due to the fact that there were not much TV programmes which improve their knowledge regarding forage cultivation. Radio being a cheap source of dissemination of technology was not properly used by the farmers. The area of study being rainfed and undulating has also problem of radio signals. The biggest fact which came to fore in the study is in the era of information and technology farmers were unaware of the benefits of use of this technology.

#### Levels of sources of information utilized by the farmers in seeking agricultural information

Table 4 shows 68.05 per cent of the farmers had medium level (score 6-9) of information seeking behaviour. Only 9.70 per cent fall in high (score above 9) level of information seeking behaviour. About one fourth (22.22 %) of respondents had low level of information seeking behaviour average score was  $7.56 \pm (2.25)$

**Table 4: Levels of sources of Information utilized by the farmers in seeking agricultural information**

Levels	Frequency (%)
i. Low (score upto 5)	32 (22.22)
ii. Medium (score 6-9)	98 (68.05)
iii. High (above 9)	14 (9.7)

Communication is a two way process. Farmers obtain knowledge from different information sources. The probable reason for medium level of sources of information of forage growers may be that input agencies and neighbours were the main source of information other localite sources were negligible. The farmers' knowledge and information was strengthening by the visits of government extension services as junior agriculture extension officers would visit to the villages. However, no farmer has attended demonstration, farmers tour/visit. Although in the present extension strategy role of local progressive/change agents have been stressed upon but this was not seen in the data as 95.83 per cent of the farmers had no contact with progressive farmers. Similarly, *Kissan Mela* which are considered as an important source in creating awareness and dissemination of technology had no impact on farmers' communication behaviour. Television being a fastest mode of communication was watched by the farmers but majority of them would watch it for the purpose of entertainment and news. Only 5 farmers watched TV for gaining knowledge in agriculture. ICT has brought boom in developed countries. In India also ICT has established its role in disseminating agricultural information. Despite various government efforts to promote IT, it has failed in the study area as no farmer from a sample of 144 was using internet.

## CONCLUSION

Despite revolution in information technology, it is unfortunate to note that forage growing farmers of the study areas have not utilized its benefits. Radio is a cheap and popular tool for communication among rural people. Establishment of community radio for the group of people who grow forages and live in a geographical area can be an asset. Television being a mass tool and having an immediate effect on the senses of the farmers was watched for the purpose of entertainment only. Need and time based programmes should be developed so that farmers can utilise the benefits of TV efficiently. Individual contact by government agencies like Junior Agricultural Assistant can help forage growing farmers to adopt latest technology to harvest better production which can in turn increase milk yield. Input agents have shown their influence in the farmers' knowledge seeking, therefore, they need to be trained for up gradation of their knowledge.

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