

Communication Behaviour of Dairy Farmers in Hilly Areas

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted during 2013 in the Bageshwar district of Uttarakhand. Six villages namely Karala, Pasdev, Tana, Bhatkhola, Matela and Kholseer were selected randomly. From each village 20 farmers were selected. The study revealed that most potential information sources were personal localite channels as the extent use of these channels was 59.60 per cent. Whereas, farmers used mass media and personal cosmopolite channels up to 47.55 and 44.33 per cent, respectively for obtaining the information on recommended dairy technology. Over all data shows that among the various sources of information, neighbours (75.00%), progressive farmers (73.33%), television (71.66%), local leader (60.00%), SMS/Scientist (58.33%) and radio (56.66%) were mostly used by the farmers to obtain information for betterment of dairy farming.

Key words: Communication behaviour, dairy farmers, hilly areas

INTRODUCTION

Dairy development plays a prominent role in the rural economy in supplementing the income of rural households, particularly the landless, marginal and small farmers. It also provides subsidiary occupation in semi urban areas and for the people leaving in hilly, tribal and drought prone area where crop output may not sustain the family. According to the estimates of Central Statistical Organization (CSO), the value of output from livestock was about ₹ 3, 88,370 corers at current prices in 2010-2011. Milk accounted for 68 percent of this output. It was higher than paddy or wheat in term of values of output, milk is now the single largest commodity in India (Bhasin, 2008).

Socio-economic status of farming community could be raised through transfer of agriculture or dairy information to the farmers. But in India, to convey the information to the farming population is a gigantic task. Mass media including both the electronic and print media if effectively utilized could be a very potent instrument in provision of agricultural information (Sharma, 2001). The number of farmers is so large that extension agencies face acute problems of transferring the technical know-how to them without much loss of time. This has to be achieved by proper planning of communication strategy so as to help farmers to make use of communication sources effectively to get information about modern agricultural technology. In general, the multiple sources of information for dairy farmers are TV, Radio, Scientists, Newspaper, Village Level Workers (VLWs), progressive

farmers, neighbour, *etc.*

Keeping this in view the present study was undertaken with an objective to ascertain the communication behaviour of dairy farming in hilly areas of Bageshwar district of Uttarakhand.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Bageshwar block of the Bageshwar district of Uttarakhand. Out of three blocks (Bageshwar, Kapkot and Garur) only Bageshwar was purposively selected. Six village namely Karala, Pasdev, Tana, Bhatkhola, Naghar and Bholna were purposively selected. Twenty farmers were selected randomly from each village hence. The data were collected through a well structured interview schedule. The collected data were analysed with statistical tools like rank and percentage.

The sources of information were classified into three categories, *viz.*, personal localite, personal cosmopolite and mass media channels. Each farmer was asked to give responses according to his frequency of use of these communications channels on a 3- point continuum, *viz.*, often, some times and never score of 3, 2 and 1, were assigned, respectively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Sources of information

Personal cosmopolite: These are the channels of

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communication from outside the social system of the receiver.

They are the extension agents of various organizations and are important in changing the farmers from traditional farming to modern scientific farming. The data regarding contact of farmers with personal cosmopolite channel for obtaining the latest know-how in the dairy technology was analysed. Table 1 reveals that Subject Matter Specialist (SMS)/Scientist were the most prominent source of information for the farmers.

The SMS/Scientist were contacted by 58.33 per cent, of respondents and hence first followed by veterinary officer (55.00%) and VLWs (43.33%) ranked second and third source for obtaining information regarding dairy farming, respectively.

These findings were almost in line with the findings of Jha (1994) and Meena *et al.* (2005).

Table 1: Personal cosmopolite source of information of the dairy farmers

n=120			
Personal cosmopolite sources	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
VLWs	52	43.33	III
BDO/ AEO	38	31.66	V
SMSs/ Scientists	70	58.33	I
Veterinary Officer	66	55.00	II
NGOs	40	33.33	IV
	Mean	44.33	

Personal localite: They are the local leaders and local people who belong to the receivers' own social system. Personal localite channels are important in traditional social system. The use of personal localite source of information, which the farmers used, presented in the Table-2 showed that the neighbours (75.00%) and progressive farmers (73.33%) were mostly contacted followed by local leader (60.00%), friends (53.33%) and relatives (36.66%), individually. Similar findings were also reported by Jha (1994) and Meena *et al.* (2005).

Table 2: Use of personal localite sources of information by the dairy farmers

n= 120			
Personal localite sources	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Progressive farmers	88	73.33	II
Neighbours	90	75.00	I
Local leader	72	60.00	III
Friends	64	53.33	IV
Relatives	44	36.66	V
	Mean	59.60	

Impersonal cosmopolite: Here the channels of communication are from outside the social system of the receiver and at the same time no personal face to face contact is involved. These are mass media, which are important in areas of high urban influence, and farmers who are modern or are changing from traditional to modern.

The use of impersonal cosmopolite sources by the farmers were presented in Table 3, which reveals that television was the most prominent source of information for the farmers. The extent of use of television utilization score was 71.66 per cent, which was ranked first followed by radio (56.66%) and news paper (55.00%) for the obtaining information on recommended location specific dairy farming, respectively. This is in conformity with the finding of Shrivastava *et al.* (2000), Meena and Chauhan (2005), Pal *et al.* (2009) and Lal *et al.* (2012) in which they revealed that the television radio were most important sources of information of dairy farmers.

Table 3: Preferences of mass or impersonal cosmopolite sources by dairy farmers

n=120			
Impersonal cosmopolite sources	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Television	86	71.66	I
Radio	68	56.66	II
Farmers fair	34	28.33	V
Krishi Mahotasava/Exhibition	58	48.33	IV
Agril. literature	30	25.00	VI
News paper	66	55.00	III
	Mean	47.55	

Frequency of access of information sources by dairy farmers

Personal cosmopolite: The data in Table 4 revealed that among the personal cosmopolite source utilized, SMS/Scientist attended by dairy farmers and their percentage was maximum *i.e.*, 60.00 in the category "often" followed by Veterinary officer (47.50%), VLWs (34.16%), NGO (20.83%) and BDO/AEO (12.50%). In case of 'sometimes' out of different source of information attended BDO/AEO (56.66%), NGOs (55.00%), VLW (49.16%), Veterinary officer (30.83%) and SMS/Scientists (29.16%).

The different source of information BDO/AEO, NGOs, Veterinary officer, VLWs and SMS/Scientists were 'never' by 30.83 per cent, 24.16 per cent, 21.66 per cent, 16.66 per cent and 10.83 per cent of dairy farmers, respectively. The finding is supported by Meena and Chauhan (2005) and Pal *et al.* (2009).

Table 4: Extent use of personal cosmopolite source of information of the dairy farmers

Personal cosmopolite sources	n=120		
	Often	Sometimes	Never
VLWs	41 (34.16)	59 (49.16)	20 (16.66)
BDO/ AEO	15 (12.50)	68 (56.66)	37 (30.83)
SMS/ Scientists	72 (60.00)	35 (29.16)	13 (10.83)
Veterinary Officer	57 (47.50)	37 (30.83)	26 (21.66)
NGOs	25 (20.83)	66 (55.00)	29 (24.16)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Personal localite: The data in Table 5 revealed that among the personal localite source utilized Neighbours attended by dairy farmers and their percentage was maximum *i.e.*, 70.83 in "often" category followed by progressive farmers (67.50%), local leader (29.16%), friends (26.66%) and relatives (19.16%). In case of 'sometimes' out of different source of information attended the order was local leader (54.16%), friends (45.83%), relatives (35.83%), progressive farmers (24.16%) and neighbours (22.50%). The response as use of relatives, friends, local leader progressive farmers and neighbours were 'never' by 45.00 per cent, 27.50 per cent, 16.66 per cent, 8.33 per cent and 6.66 per cent of dairy farmers respectively. The finding is partially supported by Meena and Chauhan (2005) and Pal *et al.* (2009).

Table 5: Extent use of personal localite sources of information by the dairy farmers

Personal localite sources	n=120		
	Often	Sometimes	Never
Progressive farmers	81 (67.50)	29 (24.16)	10 (8.33)
Neighbours	85 (70.83)	27 (22.50)	8 (6.66)
Local leader	35 (29.16)	65 (54.16)	20 (16.66)
Friends	32 (26.66)	55 (45.83)	33 (27.50)
Relatives	23 (19.16)	43 (35.83)	54 (45.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

Impersonal cosmopolite: The data in Table 6 revealed that among the personal cosmopolite source utilized 'often' Television was attended by dairy farmers and their percentage was maximum *i.e.*, 66.66 followed by Radio (54.16%), News paper (46.66%), *Krishi Mahotasava/ Exhibition* (16.66%), farmers fair (9.16%) and agricultural literature (4.11%). In case of 'sometimes' out of different source of information attended *Krishi mahotasava/ exhibition* (40.00%), radio (37.50%), television (30.83%), agricultural literature (30.00%), farmers fair (26.66%) and news paper (22.50%) was the order. Use of agricultural literature, farmers fair, *Krishi mahotasava/exhibition*, news paper, radio and television was 'never' by 65.83 per cent, 64.33 per cent, 33.33 per cent, 30.83 per cent and 2.50 per cent of dairy farmers respectively. The results are in confirmation with the findings of Kumar (2003), Meena and Chauhan (2005), Pal *et al.* (2009) and Rajmane (2009).

Table 6: Preferences of extent of mass/ impersonal cosmopolite sources by dairy farmers

Impersonal cosmopolite sources	n=120		
	Often	Sometimes	Never
Television	80 (66.66)	37 (30.83)	03 (2.50)
Radio	65 (54.16)	45 (37.50)	10 (8.33)
Farmers fair	11 (9.16)	32 (26.66)	77 (64.16)
Krishi Mahotasava/Exhibition	20 (16.66)	48 (40.00)	52 (43.33)
Agril. literature	5 (4.11)	36 (30.00)	79 (65.83)
News paper	56 (46.66)	27 (22.5)	37 (30.83)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

CONCLUSION

The present study concluded that a majority of dairy farmers obtained information from personal localite channels (59.60 %). Whereas, farmers used mass media and personal cosmopolite channels up to 47.55 and 44.33 per cent, respectively for obtaining the information on recommended dairy farming practices in the study area. Over all the study shows that among the various source of information neighbours, progressive farmers, television, local leader, SMS/Scientist and radio were the mostly used by the dairy farmers to obtain information for the betterment of dairy farming. There is need to utilize diverse information sources for obtaining more dairy farming related information by the farmers.

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