

Evaluating media reach and its effectiveness to disseminate agro-technologies among rural community

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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to evaluate the media reach and its effectiveness to disseminate agro-technologies among rural people. One hundred respondents were interviewed randomly with a pre-tested questionnaire. The data were analyzed by one way ANOVA and differences in mean were assessed by using Turkey-b. The study showed that respondents have different degree of accessibility to radio (73%), television (99%, $P < 0.05$) and newspaper (66%). The use of television (17%) was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher as compared to radio (10%) and newspaper (8%) to listen/read about agriculture. Only 4%, 2% and 2% respondents were used television, radio and newspaper, respectively to learn new agro-technologies where as 10% respondents used interpersonal sources. Therefore, from the present study it may be concluded that in order to enhance the effectiveness of mass media in dissemination of agro-technologies, there is dire need to motivate rural community to use mass media to gain agricultural information.

Keywords: randomly, interviewed, media.

In developing countries like India, success of agricultural development programmes largely depends on the nature and extent of use of mass media in mobilization of people for development. Mass media are important in providing information for enabling the rural community to make informed decision regarding their farming activities (Lwoga, 2010). Radio, Television and Newspaper have been acclaimed to be the most effective media for diffusing the scientific knowledge to the masses. The present study was conducted with a major objective of assessing the reach of mass media in rural areas and its role in the dissemination of agro-technologies among farmers so that the outcome of the study will help the extension agents and various stakeholders to strengthen and having better use of mass media for agricultural information dissemination and for the development of farmers.

Materials and Methods

This study was conducted to evaluate the media reach and its effectiveness to disseminate agro-technologies among rural people. A random sampling technique was used for selecting samples. One hundred farmers were selected from rural area of Jalandhar district of Punjab and interviewed with a pre-tested questionnaire. The data were analyzed by one way ANOVA (Snedecor and Cochran, 1994) using the software package SPSS version 16 (SPSS, 2007) and differences in mean were assessed by using Turkey-b.

Results and Discussion

The study showed that majority of the respondents (59%) were under graduates where as 20% graduates, 15% post graduate and only 6% were illiterate respondents. The availability of mass media and

Table 1. Media reach in rural area

S No	Mass media type	Frequency	Percentile	SE
1	Availability of TV	99 ^c	99	0.25
2	Radio Listening	73 ^b	73	0.33
3	Reading of Newspaper	66 ^a	66	0.39

Figures with different superscript in a column differ significantly, $P < 0.05$

Table 2. Purpose of using mass media (%)

Mass media	News	Music	Serials	Agri
Television programmes	36 ^b	25 ^a	22 ^b	17 ^b
Radio programmes	25 ^a	46 ^b	0 ^a	10 ^a
S.E.	0.25	0.32	0.39	0.26

Figures with different superscript in a column differ significantly, $P < 0.05$

Table 3. Use of mass media (%) to learn agro-technologies

Parameter	Television	Radio	Newspaper	Any other, %
Agro-technologies	4 ^b	2 ^a	2 ^a	10 ^c
S.E.	0.26	0.25	0.25	0.27

Figures with different superscript in a row differ significantly, $P < 0.05$

their accessibility to the respondents determine the extent to which the farmers obtained agro-technologies through the mass media. The study revealed that all the three mass media television, radio and newspaper were available in rural area and found accessible to 99%, 73% and 66%, respectively of the respondents (Table 1). The availability of television was significantly ($p < 0.05$) higher as compared to others. 84% of total respondents have cable/satellite television facility. Irfan *et al.* (2006) stressed that television is used to reach large number of people quickly and serves an important and valuable function in stimulating farmers' interest in new

ideas. The study reveals that impact of TV viewing in affirmation is 74% where as 26% of rural audience did not feel any impact. About 93% of respondents thought that television is a medium of education while 7% did not think so. Out of total respondents, 25% people said that programmes should be educative, 24% think it should be entertaining while 51% supports both functions together.

About 36% rural audience liked news/news related programmes, 22% liked serials and 25% liked musical programmes while only 17% of people liked programmes related to agriculture. The facts agree with Kari (2007) who said that major use of television is not as a source for obtaining information, but rather as entertainment media. Among respondents 46% listen radio for musical programmes, while 25% for news based and only 10% listen radio for agriculture related programmes. No doubt radio is one broadcast medium which almost all experts have found to be the most appropriate medium of mass communication in the rural population (Okwu *et al.*, 2007) but use of television was significantly ($P < 0.05$) higher as compared to use of radio to gain information about agriculture.

Print has qualities that make it a suitable medium for information diffusion in rural areas because print messages need relatively simple and cheap technology to produce. Among print media, sports news attracted 23%, politics news 23% and crime news attracted 18% of rural respondents whereas only 8% was attracted by agriculture news/information. About 28% of respondents opted for no response.

Effectiveness is the extent to which the respondents have used mass media to learn agro-technologies given in table 3. The results revealed that only 4% respondents used television, 2% used radio, 2% used newspaper to learn new agro-technologies whereas 10% used interpersonal communication to know about technology and 82.5% did no efforts to respond the statement. The results were agreed with Hassan *et al.* (2011). Based on the results it can concluded that rural community were receiving more agriculture information from the interpersonal sources compared to the mass media sources which may be due to the frequency and the quality of interpersonal communication that occur between rural community and interpersonal sources such as friends, family members and village leaders (Okwu

and Daudu, 2011; Lwoga *et al.*, 2011). The close relationship that exists between these groups enables the agriculture information sharing. Lwoga *et al.* (2011) for example have stressed that interpersonal sources such as friends, family members and neighbours are always become the main providers of the agriculture information due to their credibility, reliability and most of all, they are trusted by the rural community.

Conclusion

No doubt mass media is an important tool to provide information to rural community regarding farming activities but in order to enhance its effectiveness in dissemination of agro-technologies, there is dire need to motivate rural community to use mass media to gain agricultural information.

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