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Communication Patterns in Transfer of Livestock Production Technologies in Kashmir Valley

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Abstract

With a view to explore existing communication patterns of transfer of livestock production technologies in Kashmir Division, the present study was conducted in eight villages of purposively selected Budgam district of the Division. Twenty-five livestock farmers were selected through PPS method from each selected village, comprising 200 farmer respondents. Farmer's contact with selected sources of information and their participation in extension activities were studied on a 4-point continuum viz. regularly, occasionally, rarely, and never. The findings revealed that majority of the respondents were using mostly the informal interpersonal communication sources like neighbors/relatives and progressive farmers.They were lacking contacts with formal interpersonal sources like VAS, VLW and university scientists. Majority of the respondents were lacking their participation in training, demonstration, field day, meeting and visit. However they were found to be fond of visiting kisan melas and cattle shows. The data on the livestock farmers radio listening and TV viewing behavior indicated that these media were popular among them due to a variety of reasons they were not able to use the farm-based programs. Due to predominance of illiteracy the print media was found to be rarely used by them. The findings suggest that there is need for reorienting communication strategy for transfer of livestock production technology by emphasizing and strengthening the interpersonal communication sources and moulding radio and TV programs to suit to the requirements of local farmers. Besides, more training and demonstration programs in participatory mode are required to be conducted based on the convenience of the farmers.

Key words : Communication pattern, Livestock production, Kashmir valley.

For rural upliftment, improvement of cattle and other small animals like sheep, goat and poultry form a crucial component of the development strategy. Improvement in livestock production implies the shift from traditional methods to new scientific methods of production. In spite of several technology transfer efforts scientific farm information are not reaching the potential users as rapidly as it is anticipated. The sources and channels of communication through which new knowledge is flowing to the farmers have always motivated the social scientists to go into details of such situations. A whole range of sources of information and communication channels are sometimes available in the rural areas, but their reach and acceptance as dependable source of information cannot be taken for granted. Thus there is still a need to probe into some of the potent aspects of information sources and communication channels in the diffusion of farm technology. Keeping this in view, the present study was undertaken to identify the existing communication patterns of transfer of livestock production technologies to the livestock farmers.

Methods

The study was conducted in purposively selected Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir. Eight villages were randomly selected from within and beyond 10 km periphery of Budgam town. From each of the selected villages 25 livestock farmers were selected using probability proportionate to size (PPS) method. The sample thus, comprised 200 respondents. Data were collected from the respondents by personal interview method with the help of pre-tested structured schedule. The study included interpersonal communication sources and mass media. A list of six interpersonal communication sources and six types of extension activities/programs were identified and respondents were asked to give their opinion on their extent of their contact with these sources and participation in extension activities/programs on a 4-point continuum i.e. regularly, occasionally, rarely, and

Table 1. Frequency distribution of livestock farmers with respect of their contact with selected interpersonal communication sources. Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

	Interpersonal communication sources	Frequency distribution according to nature of contact (N = 200)			
		Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1	Neighbors relatives	153 (76.50)	47 (23.50)	00 (0.00)	00 (0.00)
2	Progressive farmers	61 (30.50)	77 (38.50)	43 (21.50)	19 (09.50)
3	VAS	31 (15.50)	44 (22.00)	76 (38.00)	49 (24.50)
4	University scientists	26 (13.00)	21 (10.50)	67 (33.50)	86 (43.00)
5	NGO personnel	33 (16.50)	19 (09.50)	45 (22.50)	103 (51.50)
6	Input/credit Personnel	09 (4.50)	13 (06.50)	58 (29.00)	120 (60.00)

never. Similarly radio listening, TV viewing and extension literature reading behaviors were also studied. Simple statistical methods viz. frequency and mean were calculated to interpret the data.

Results and Discussion

Contact of Livestock Farmers with Interpersonal Communication Sources

Frequency distribution of livestock farmers with respect of their contact with selected interpersonal communication sources is presented in Table 1.

Table1 shows that more than 75% of the respondents had regular contacts with their neighbors/relatives with respect to their livestock production problems and solutions, while more than 30% of the respondents indicated that they used to get information from progressive farmers of the area. Only 15.50% of the respondents had regular contact with VAS, 16.50% with NGO personnel, 13% with University scientists and 4.5% with input/credit personnel.

Thus the neighbors, relatives and progressive farmers were the chief source of the messages and new information for livestock farmers. The percentage of regular contact with other sources viz. VAS, university, scientists, NGO's and input personnel appeared to be quite less. Kurukulasuriya et al. (1) reported that friends and neighbors were the most utilized personal localite sources whereas agriculture supervisor and input dealers were the most preferred personal cosmopolite sources for agricultural information in Udaipur district of Rajasthan, But Olaniyi et al. (2) reported that extension agent/veterinary doctor are the prime source of information followed by radio/television, other farmers and neighbors in respect of utilization poultry production technology. But keeping in view the culture, shyness in nature of the livestock farmers their contribution cannot be estimated to be less. Only discouraging feature was seen in case of input/credit personnel for whom about 60% of respondents felt that they never came in contact with these personnel. This was closely followed in NGO personnel and university scientists. Reasons are quite obvious that the livestock farmers normally do not get time to go to the university or bank or other organizations unless there is special training programs, kisan mela, field day, credit camp.

Participation of Livestock Farmers in Extension Activities/Programs

Data on participation of livestock farmers with respect to their participation in extension activities/ programs are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 shows that training being the most important extension activity, it was quite discouraging that 69.50% of the respondents never took part in any training program, 18.50% rarely got opportunity to participate, whereas regular and occasional participation was to the extent of only 2.50 and 9.50% respectively. This shows the failure on the part of government department, university and voluntary agencies for non-organizing enough training programs for the livestock farmers. Since training improves knowledge and skill, it is essential that regular training programs should be organized for livestock farmers so that they are able to adopt improved livestock production technologies. Meetings were however, organized at the village, block or the institu-

Table 2. Frequency distribution of livestock farmers with respect to their participation in extension activities/programs. Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

	Interpersonal communication sources	Frequency distribution according to nature of participation (N = 200)			
		Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1	Training	05 (02.50)	19 (09.50)	37 (18.50)	139 (69.50)
2	Meeting	28 (14.00)	43 (21.50)	44 (22.00)	85 (42.50)
3	Demonstration	00 (0.00)	00 (0.00)	46 (23.00)	154 (77.00)
4	Field day	00 (0.00)	06 (03.00)	23 (11.50)	171 (85.50)
5	Kisan mela	41 (20.50)	38 (19.00)	51 (25.50)	70 (35.00)
6	Visit to university/Research Station/KVK	04 (02.00)	26 (13.00)	34 (17.00)	136 (68.00)

tional level and about 14% of the respondents regularly participated in such meetings whereas, 21.50% occasionally and 22% rarely. Martin and Omer (3) also reported community meeting as first and newspaper article as second most important methods of instruction used by cooperative extension service. The most depressing situation was observed in field day, demonstration and visit to university, research station. About 85.50% respondents never participated in field days, 77% in demonstrations and 68% in visits to the university or research station. Contrast to the present findings Ogunwale (4) reported 87.50 and 57.50% of farmers attended agricultural meeting and demonstration program respectively in his study farmer's participation in agricultural development program.

Kisan mela was found to be quite popular as compared to any other activities. Only 35% of the respondents never participated in any kisan mela, whereas 65% had the participatione ither regular, Occasional or rarely. The regular participation was maximum in kisan melas followed by meetings and trainings in the order. Since rural people are fond of any kind of festival or meal, this might be one reason why kisan mela attracted more participation.

Radio Listening, TV Viewing and Extension Literature Reading Behavior of Livestock Farmers

Data pertaining to radio listening, television viewing and extension literature reading behavior of livestock farmers are presented in Table 3.

Table 3 indicates that majority of the respondents (64.29%) had either radio or transistor sets. It was found that about 77% respondents listened to radio programs and 23% did not listen. Out of the listeners of farm radio programs, only 12.34% were regular listeners, 46.76% occasional and 40.90% rare listeners. About 64.29% livestock farmers listened to the program at their own home along with family members whereas, 35.71% with some friends or neighbor at their place.

Radio being available and popular amongst farmers can be used as good medium for transfer of technology. More topics on livestock production should be included in radio programs. Similar findings have

Table 3. Radio listening, television viewing and extension literature reading behavior of livestock farmers. Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

	Item	Radio			Television			Extension literature		
		Listeners (N = 154)	Non-Listeners (N = 46)		Viewers (N = 167)	Non-viewers (N = 33)		Readers (N = 2)	Non-readers (N = 178)	
		Regular	Occasional	Rate	Regular	Occasional	Rate	Regular	Occasional	Rare
1	Frequency distribution of users	19 (12.34)	72 (46.76)	63 (40.90)	64 (38.32)	40- (23.95)	63 (37.72)	0(0.00)	09 (40.90)	13 (59.09)
		Own	Neighbors	Community center	Own	Neighbors	Community center	Friends neighbors	Extension agent	Research institution
2	Place of use source	99 (64.29)	55 (35.71)	0 (0.00)	129 (77.24)	38 (22.75)	0 (0.00)	09 (40.90)	11 (50.00)	02(9.09)

been reported by Sandhu (5) and Singh (6).

Data indicate that about 58.50% of the respondents were TV viewers and 41.50% were non-viewers. The non-viewers can be attributed to having no TV sets because of its high cost. About 11.97% of the respondents were regular viewers, 8.55% occasional and 79.48% were rare viewers. Majority of the respondents (75.21%) used to watch TV programs at their neighbors place because of non-availability of TV sets, power failure or other personal reasons. However,farm based programs on TV were neither interesting nor well planned to generate interest among farmers. Low quality of programming in local television system to a considerable extent was responsible for such viewership. No body can deny that TV is the most effective tools of mass communication as Al-Shadiadeh (7), ranked TV second and first rank for men and women farmers respectively according to availability for educational media for them.

Print media has not been popular in rural areas due to illiteracy or low level of education. Table 3 indicates that only 11% of respondents read and 89% of the respondents were not interested in farm literature. Non-availability of farm magazines, their cost, inappropriate context and exotic languages may be some of the reasons for the poor response to the print media particularly farm literature. Out of those respondents who were so called readers, none was regular reader and 40.91% were occasional readers that too at friends, neighbors home, literature received from extension agencies, research institutes. Purchase of farm magazine by a farmer in Budgam district of Kashmir is quite rare.

Conclusion

The findings lead to conclude that majority of the respondents were using interpersonal communication media like neighbors/relatives and progressive farmers rather formal interpersonal sources like VAS, university scientists, majority of the respondents were not attending the training, demonstration, field day meeting and visit to university/research stations. However, kisan mela was found to be important and effective communication intervention. Among mass communication sources radio was popular. Therefore it may be suggested that in Budgam district of Kashmir, there is need for strengthening interpersonal communication sources, radio program and traditional communication media. Training and demonstration program should be organized according to the need and convenience of the farmers and efforts should be made to encourage more participation of livestock farmers in such programs.

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