

Problems Associated with the Use of Selected Communication Media in Hilly Areas

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Abstract

A variety of problems hinders the effectiveness of communication. This is even more in traditional societies like indigenous and people living in hilly areas. Transfer of improved livestock production technologies is an urgent need for such societies. Keeping this in consideration the present paper discusses the problems associated with the use of selected communication media as perceived by the field functionaries working in the hilly areas of Kashmir province. Sixty extension workers, 30 each from department of Animal Husbandry Kashmir and Department of Sheep Husbandry Kashmir working in the hilly areas were selected randomly for eliciting their views on problems associated with the use of selected communication media in transfer of livestock production technologies. The findings indicated that the respondents felt difficulties in transferring the message through radio and TV due to poor possession of receiving sets with farmers. They were of the opinion that highly technical talks, inadequacy of farm programs, language problem and farmers inability to attend these programs were the most important reasons for low effectiveness of these media. The findings revealed that use of visual aids was minimal due to a number of factors like lack of artist in the extension organization, improper display, their layout and color combination. They opined that training program were beyond the reach of livestock farmers due to inconvenient time schedule and distance of training venue. Regarding demonstration and farm visit they felt that improper selected of demonstrating farmers and lack of meaningful and effective demonstrations were the main problems associated with these media. The findings suggest that the radio and TV programs should be designed in farmer's perspectives. Demonstrations and training programs should be interactive and laid out in a participatory mode. Farm visits should be arranged during farmer's lean periods and maximum use of visual aids like posters, charts should be made the component of a redesigned communication strategy for livestock farmers of hilly areas.

Key words : Problems, Communication media, Hilly areas.

In the process of innovation-decision relevant information is required at all the stages. Communication devices play an important role in providing such information, which are used by the change agents. The extension workers working in hilly areas especially require such types of communication devices, which can overcome the barriers of literacy and tradition for driving home the messages effectively. The multi-media approach, viz. training programs for livestock farmers and field functionaries, livestock demonstrations, conducted tours of farmers and field functionaries to research institution, organization of field days and mass media support in terms of radio broadcasts, telecast, distribution of leaflets and folders have been advocated for transfer of livestock production technologies to the farmers and field functionaries. The livestock farmers and grass-root level

field functionaries have inadequate technical know-how and skill associated with the improved livestock production technologies. There are many common problems of communication. They may be technical, semantic and influential problems (1—3). Keeping this in view, the present study was undertaken to bring forth the problems associated with the use of some selected communication media like radio, TV, poster, extension literature, training, demonstration and farm visit as perceived by the field functionaries, who are engaged in operating these media for bringing about desirable changes in livestock production.

Methods

The study was conducted in hilly areas of Kashmir province in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Sixty

Table 1. Problems associated with the use of selected communication media as perceived by extension workers. Figures in parentheses indicate percentage.

Problems	Frequency distribution (N = 60)	Rank
Radio		
Lack of radio sets available with the farmers	16 (26.67)	I
Lack of radio listeners organization	10 (16.67)	II
Highly technical talks	8 (13.33)	III
Inadequate farm broadcast	8 (13.33)	-do-
Untimely farm broadcast	6 (10.00)	IV
Language problem	6 (10.00)	-do-
Lack of time with farmers	6 (10.00)	-do-
TV		
Lack of TV sets available with the farmers	30 (50.00)	I
Untimely telecast	8 (13.34)	II
Highly technical talks	8 (13.34)	-do-
Inadequate farm telecast	6 (10.00)	III
Language problem	6 (10.00)	-do-
Lack of time with farmers	2 (03.33)	IV
Poster		
Lack of artist in extension organization	40 (66.66)	I
Improper place of display of posters	14 (23.34)	II
Improper lay-out, color combination	6 (10.00)	III
Extension Literature		
High cost in printing	36 (60.00)	I
Not easily available	16 (26.67)	II
Not in easy and understandable language	8 (13.33)	III
Training		
Inconvenient for farmers to attend institutional training program	26 (43.34)	I
Lack of funds	12 (20.00)	II
Lack of practical orientation	8 (13.33)	III
Inadequate duration of training program	6 (10.00)	IV
Lack of capable resource person	6 (10.00)	-do-
Untimely organization of training program	2 (03.33)	V
Demonstration		
Lack of funds	32 (53.33)	I
Improper selection of farmers	14 (23.34)	II

Table 1. Continued.

Problems	Frequency distribution (N= 60)	Rank
Lack of organizing skills	10 (16.67)	II
Farmers do not have time or interest	4 (06.66)	IV
Farm Visit		
Lack of transport facilities	32 (53.33)	I
Lack of appropriate farms	14 (23.34)	II
Improper selection of time for the visit	8 (13.33)	III
Lack of time available with the farmers	6 (10.00)	IV

extension workers were selected and their views regarding problems associated with the use of selected communication media were ascertained with the help of a pre-tested structured schedule through personal interview. Out of the sixty extension workers 30 each from Department of Animal Husbandry, Kashmir and Department of Sheep Husbandry, Kashmir were selected. Simple statistical analysis viz. frequency and mean were calculated to draw the inferences.

Results and Discussion

Data pertaining to perceptions of extension personnel on problems associated with the use of selected communication media are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that in radio 26.67% of the respondents felt that lack of radio sets was the foremost problem associated with this media. Other problems in order of rank given by the respondents were lack of radio listener's organization, highly technical talks, inadequate and untimely farm broadcast, language problem and lack of time available with the farmers to listen to farm broadcast.

In TV the main problem was lack of sets available with the livestock farmers (as expressed by 50% of the respondents). This may be due to the high cost of TV sets. In spite of relatively high cost of receiving sets, television occupies an important position for entertainment and educational programmes. A causal discussion with the respondents revealed that TV programs must commensurate with needs of the farm-

ers, language should be simple for easy understanding and telecast time should be such when farmers are free from work.

Regarding problems associated with the use of posters, majority of the respondents (66.66%) felt that lack of poster preparation mechanism, mainly the artists in extension organization was the foremost problem associated with this medium. This was followed by improper display places of posters and improper lay out and color combination. The commercial poster designers may not be familiar with the needs of the target group, their socio-cultural background, language, visual literacy. With respect to use of posters the respondents informally suggested that the artists should be specifically trained in designing posters for providing farm messages. Table 1 further shows that about 60% of the respondents were of the opinion that high cost in printing was the main hurdle in use of this media. Other problems in order of rank were unavailability of the extension literature and complexity of the language used.

Problems associated with training programs as reported by the respondents indicated that time schedule and distance were the factors to make it inconvenient for livestock farmers to attend the institutional training programs. This was felt by 43.34% of the respondents as the foremost problem associated with training. Other problems in order of ranks were lack of funds for organizing training program, lack of practical orientation, inadequate duration of training program, and lack of capable resource person and untimely organization of training programs.

In demonstrations, 53.33% of the respondents graded lack of funds as the main problem associated with the use of demonstration. This was followed by improper selection of livestock farmers for demonstration, lack of organizing skills on the part of organizers and lack of time available with the farmers and their interest to attend the demonstrations.

Regarding farm visit the main problem sorted out by 53.33% of the respondents was lack of transport facilities. Other problems in order of their magnitude

were lack of standard demonstration farms, improper selection of time for visit and lack of time available with the farmers.

Conclusion

It may be concluded that lack of radio and TV sets were the foremost problems associated with these media in transfer of livestock production technology in hilly areas as perceived by the extension workers. Display of posters and charts was inadequate due to a variety of reasons. Extension literature either were not read or not appropriate to the level of their education, needs and interest of the local livestock farmers. In training programs, the respondent's opinion indicated that time schedule and distance were the main factors which made this facility inconvenient for the livestock farmers and majority of the respondents felt that lack of funds and transport facilities were the main constraint in conduct of livestock demonstrations. This implies that appropriate improvements in designing radio and television programs, production of posters and extension literature be made. The demonstration and training programs need to be re-oriented in light of farmers' needs, time and education. The government should provide subsidy on purchase of radio and TV sets to the farmers. In order to reorient the communication strategy above mentioned problems require to be overcome for effective transfer of technology to the livestock farmers.

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