

Influence of Media on Social Change of Farming Community

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Abstract

The farming is principal means of livelihood for 65% of India's population. For sustainability and sustainable development of rural community through agriculture, we require access and dissemination of knowledge by using different media. The report of the "Task Force on India as knowledge super power"-2001 emphasized on the need for the developing the capacity to generate, absorb, disseminate and protect knowledge and to exploit knowledge as a powerful tool to derive societal transformation or social change, the mass media play a crucial role. Keeping this in mind, the present study was undertaken to study the social change occurred as a result of mass media utilization. The present study was undertaken in two districts of South Gujarat. The statistical tools used for the study were percentage, correlation and regression i.e. 'r' value. The results reveal that slightly more than half (51.33 per cent) of the respondents were in middle age group and about 44.00 per cent were having primary level of education. A great majority of respondents (88.00 per cent) utilized news papers for getting information on daily basis, where as more than 60.00 per cent of them utilize magazine on fortnightly and monthly basis. Regarding audio visual aids, a great majority (92.00 per cent) of respondent used radio to get information, particularly after starting FM services on daily bases while television usage was found 65.00 per cent on daily basis to view agricultural related programmes. The social change found was significantly occurred as a result of using mass media in terms of increase in farm production, income, social contact, social status, household amenities and family education.

Keywords : Media Influence, Social Impact of Media, India Farmers and Media.

1. Introduction

The oldest culture of the world is agriculture. In India, the farming is principal means of livelihood for 65% of India's population. The agriculture sector continues to provide employment to about 58% of country's labour force and sustains over two-third of the Indian population. Since independence, India has progressed in many ways and directions. It has developed technologically, economically and individually. Improvement in agricultural education, communication, technology and markets have made the country a global village.

About 103 million Farm families cultivate 165 million holdings, spread over in more than 6,00,000 villages in 589 rural districts of the country. Today farmers need varieties of information other than technology alone from the research, public and private institutions. They need information about a agriculture as a business, about the system and sub-system including administration, initiatives of other farmers, market information and other unlimited partners known and unknown affecting the agricultural production system they practice. Farmers and those who serve them must balance three formidable objectives of productivity, profitability and sustainability. For sustainability and sustainable development, we require access and dissemination of knowledge by using different media.

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It is quite different from regular communication process since it is a lengthy and time consuming process involving many dimensions. Accordingly, three dimensions are generally recognized as the pillars of sustainable development i.e. (1) Economic dimension, (2) Environmental dimension and (3) Social dimension. For effective communication of knowledge regarding social dimension and social change, appropriate approaches and methods to be used to tackle some issues like, equitable access to knowledge and information to all sectors of society-bottom up planning-promote equality issues through networking and social platforms-encourage changes in behavior and life styles-promote use of natural resources-ensure economic and employment opportunities through timely and adequate information-solving multiple conflicts in a society.

Hence, communication is essential to achieve issues indicated above. Though there are many communications methods and tools are in practice for dissemination of knowledge. There have been many successful experiments in our country in this regard. Broadly it is termed as mass media or media. This includes;

1. Print media
 - News papers - Magazines - Popular articles
2. Audio-visual aids
 - Radio - Television - Private cable connection - CD/DVD
3. Electronic connectivity
 - Computers – Internet - e-services
4. Public and Private information shops (kiosks)
 - Satellite

A complete transformation of traditional societies to knowledge societies has been increasingly felt all over the world. The report of the "Task Force on India as knowledge super power"-2001 emphasized on the need for the developing the capacity to generate, absorb, disseminate and protect knowledge and to exploit knowledge as a powerful tool to derive societal transformation or social change, the mass media play a crucial role. Keeping this in mind, the present study was undertaken with following objectives.

1. To study the personal and socio-agro-economical characteristics of the farmers.
2. To study the extent of mass media utilization by the farmers.
3. To study the social change occurred as a result of mass media utilization.
4. To find out relationship between selected independent variables of the farmers and social changes occurred as a result of mass media utilization.

2. Methodology

The present study was undertaken in two districts namely; Tapi and Navsari of South Gujarat. Tapi district is having 84% tribal population while Navsari district represents mix population. One taluka from each district and five villages from each taluka were randomly selected. 15 farmers from each village were selected and thus total 150 farmers were selected as a sample size with the help of simple random sampling technique. The details of selection of respondents are given in Table-1.

Table-1 : Selection of Respondents

S.N.	Name of district	Name of Taluka	Name of villages	No. of farmers
1.	Navsari	Gandevi	Kolva	15
			Khergam	15
			Biggery	15
			Pinjra	15
			Kotha	15
2.	Tapi	Vyara	Kapoorra	15
			Pati	15
			Gadat	15
			Dolvan	15
			Bhat	15
Total				150

Social change measured with the indicators like;

1. Increase in Farm production
2. Increase in Income
3. Increase in social contact
4. Increase in social status
5. Change in food habit
6. Change in clothing pattern
7. Purchasing of household amenities
8. Increase in family education

The farmers were interviewed in presence of family members with the help of structured interview schedule in local language. The collected data were analyzed in the light of objectives and presented with the help of percentage, correlation and regression i.e. 'r' value.

3. Findings

3.1) Personal and socio-agro-economical characteristics of the farmers: A perusal of data presented in table-2 reveals that slightly more than half (51.33 per cent) of the respondents were in middle age group. More than two-fifth (44.00 per cent) of the respondents were found to have primary level of education. Only a meager 22.00 per cent of farmers were found having higher secondary level and college education. Among the respondents, 50.00 per cent have small size of land holding (1.01 to 2.00 ha). A good picture observed in term of income. Nearly half of the respondents (48.00 per cent) were found having annual income of Rs. 1,00,000 to 1,50,000. The probable reason might be that the 56.67 per cent of the farmers had medium size of herd which helped them to add subsidiary income. Majority of them (48.00 per cent) had (51.00 to 75.00 per cent) irrigation potentiality and 66.67 per cent of them had cropping intensity ranging from 150 to 200 per cent.

3.2 Extent of mass-media utilization

It is apparent from the table-3 that a great majority of respondents (88.00 per cent) utilized news papers for getting information on daily basis, where as more than 60.00 per cent of them utilize magazine on fortnightly and monthly basis. While 79.00 per cent utilized research journals rarely because of its English language publication. More than half of the respondents (31.00 to 44.00 per cent) utilize printing material (leaflet, pamphlet, folder) on daily and weekly basis, i.e. as and when they require, they used.

Table-2 : Distribution of respondents according to their personal and socio-agro-economical characteristics

N=150

S.N.	Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
A. Personal characteristics			
1.	Age		
	Young (up to 35 years)	26	17.33
	Middle (36 to 55 years)	77	51.33
	Old (above 55 years)	47	31.44
2.	Education		
	Illiterate	16	11.00
	Primary level	66	44.00
	Secondary level	35	23.00
	Higher Secondary level	21	14.00
	College level	12	8.00
B socio-agro-economical characteristics			
1.	Land holding		
	Marginal (Upto 1.00 ha).	34	22.67
	Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	75	50.00
	Big (Above 2.00 ha)	41	27.33
2.	Annual income		
	Up to Rs. 50,000	3	2.00
	Rs. 50,000 to 1,00,000	45	30.00
	Rs. 1,00,000 to 1,50,000	72	48.00
	Rs. 1,50,000 to 2,00,000	26	17.00
	Rs. 2,00,000 and above	4	3.00
3.	Herd size		
	Small (1 to 3 animals)	47	31.33
	Medium(4 to 6 animals)	85	56.67
	Large (1 to 3 animals)	18	12.00
4.	Irrigation Potentiality		
	Not at all	07	5.00
	Upto 25 per cent	21	14.00
	26 to 50 per cent	32	21.00
	51 to 75 per cent	72	48.00
	Above 75 per cent	18	12.00
5.	Cropping Intensity		
	100 to 150 per cent	21	14.00
	151 to 200 per cent	100	66.67
	201 to 250 per cent	19	12.67
	Above 250 per cent	10	6.66

Table-3 : Extent of Mass-media Utilization

S.N.	Mass media	Pattern of Utilization									
		Daily		Weekly		Fortnightly		Monthly		Rarely	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	News papers	132	89	18	12	-	-	-	-	-	-
2.	Magazines	20	13	28	19	47	31	43	29	12	8
3.	Research journals	-	-	-	-	-	-	32	21	118	79
4.	Printing material	47	31	36	24	28	19	27	18	12	8
5.	Radio	138	92	12	8	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Television	97	65	36	24	17	11	-	-	-	-
7.	C.D. & D.V.D.	-	-	-	-	-	-	31	21	119	79

Table-4 : Aspectwise social change occurred as a result of Mass media Utilization

N=150

S.N.	Particulars	Mean score		Mean difference	't' value
		Before	After		
1.	Increase in farm production	3.4120	5.5320	2.1200	21.4857**
2.	Increase in income	3.5867	27.3467	23.7600	8.8412**
3.	Increase in social contact	2.0923	5.5400	3.4477	8.3609**
4.	Increase in social status	1.2146	2.6068	1.3940	12.2716**
5.	Change in food habit	5.6993	5.7267	0.0274	0.4363
6.	Change in clothing pattern	1.1952	3.5067	2.3115	2.0763*
7.	Purchasing of household amenities	4.3140	5.2467	0.9327	2.1096*
8.	Increase in family education	3.3200	11.4533	8.1333	16.8597**
		3.0384	8.0532	3.0090	10.9247

*= significant at 0.05 level of probability **= significant at 0.01 level of probability

Regarding audio visual aids, a great majority (92.00 per cent) of respondent used radio to get information, particularly after starting FM services on daily bases. Regarding television usage, 65.00 per cent respondents used on daily basis to view agricultural related programme, while only 21.00 per cent farmers utilize CD and DVD to get information on monthly basis, which is available from NGO, line dept. or University.

3.3 Influence of mass media on social change

The data presented in Table-4 reveal that the mean difference found in case of change in clothing pattern and purchasing of household amenities were statistically significant at 0.05 level of probability. It can be inferred that these two aspects were significantly increased after the use of mass media. So for as change found in area increased in farm production, increase in income, increase in social contact, increase in social status and increase in family education was highly significant at 0.01 level of probability. This result gives indication that these five aspects were highly increase after utilization of mass media,

The mean difference found in change in food habit was non significant. The result reveals the fact that after exposure to mass media they do not change their traditional food habit.

4. Conclusion

It is inferred that majority of farmers were middle age group with primary to higher secondary level of education with small land holding and medium herd size. They have annual income from 1,00,000 to 1,50,000 lakh. They regularly utilized newspapers and printed material for information as ready rackener. They also utilized radio and television for getting latest information about their agriculture by utilizing mass media for collection of latest information about their main occupation which increased their annual income, social status and social contacts and indirectly they changed their socio-economical status as whole.

5. References

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