

A STUDY ON COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOUR OF WHEAT GROWERS IN REASI DISTT. OF JAMMU & KASHMIR, INDIA

Abstract

Introduction of latest interactive communication technology among the rural population has opened a new vista of researchers to find out viability, acquaintance, accessibility, satisfaction, constraints and many more issues of the launched electronic communication technology and systems. There exists a gap between the information available and its dissemination. There is a need to find out better and faster means of communication which will bridge the gap between the researches and their applicability. The information technology revolution has provided huge opportunities to make easy access to information with interactive distance learning. The mechanism of internet and T.V. aided information technology help to reach the unreachable.

Wheat is an important crop grown in hilly distt. Reasi of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir where different varieties of wheat are grown. Keeping in mind the importance of communication behaviour in the transfer of wheat production technology, a study on "Communication Behaviour of Wheat Growers in Reasi distt. Reasi of Jammu & Kashmir, India" was conducted in hilly District Reasi of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir which was selected purposively. Out of 12 C.D. Blocks 4 C.D. Blocks namely Reasi, Pouni, Katra and Thuroo were selected randomly. A sample of 20 per cent villages was selected randomly from selected Gram Panchayats. A sample of 20 per cent Gram Panchayats from each selected block was selected randomly. A sample of 20 per cent villages from the selected Gram Panchayats was selected randomly. A sample of 20 per cent (150) wheat growers was selected randomly from selected villages. Hence, a total of 150 respondents were finally selected for recording their responses for study purpose. Communication behaviour of wheat growers has been operationalised as information input, information processing and information output behaviour of the respondents. An index was prepared for studying the communication behaviour of wheat growers, wherein information input was studied in terms of sources of information, processing of information was studied in terms of evaluation, storage and transfer of information and information output was studied in terms of dissemination of information.

It was found that the majority of respondents were using Extension Personnel of KVK, Extension Personnel of Departments of Agriculture, progressive farmers, television, relatives and friends and radio as arranged rank wise 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 respectively as the main sources of information on wheat production technologies referred as the information input behaviour of the vegetables growers.

A large number of farmers used to evaluate (processing) the information by discussing with the elder family members, progressive farmers, neighbourers and local leaders/key communicators as arranged rankwise 1, 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Majority of wheat growers stored the information by memorization and writing in general notebooks as arranged rankwise 1 and 2 respectively. A large number of wheat growers transformed the information by rearranging the important information as per their needs and rearranging the information in local dialect. Majority of wheat growers disseminated the information (information output) to their family members, neighbourers and those who cultivate in their lands as arranged rank wise 1, 2 and 3 respectively. It was found that majority of wheat growers had medium communication behaviour towards different wheat production information sources.

Keywords: Communication Behaviour, growers, information, production

INTRODUCTION

Communication behaviour is the basic activity of an individual through which the information is converted into its action for the desired results. **Presently the Indian extension system is under numerous pressures. The extension personnel have to cater not only vast population but also to perform election, administrative, election, input supply and other assigned works. Under such circumstances, it is not practically possible to serve all the farmers, all the time for all the problems when ratio of extension worker and farmer is more than 1:1000. The potential of mass media can be exploited to serve the rural population in this direction. Wheat growers have different sources of information and they have different communication behaviour towards different sources of information. Thus, there is dire need to study the communication behaviour of wheat growers.**

Recent developments on the field of agriculture have brought numerous technologies/knowledge. The modern agricultural technologies yet to effectively serve at least a billion farmers throughout the world. With the advancement in agriculture, the communication technology is also fast

changing. The electronisation and mechanization in communication systems have brought significant changes in the pattern and style of communication to the Indian farmers like cyber extension system, computer networking to make available agricultural technologies through ATICs, call centres etc. The communication being a social activity, communication behaviour is affected by number of social personal, economic, administrative and other variables. Therefore, the communication behaviour differs from individual to individual. Different groups of wheat growers from different villages are likely to respond to the same programme in different ways what is more, even a programme geared to the requirements of a specific group of people may fail to get them involved because of rural realities. The communication behaviour of one group of farmers may be different towards a particular information source than the other group because of the utility of the source. It was therefore, felt necessary to study the communication behaviour of wheat growers in Reasi district of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Wheat is an important crop in hilly and sub-mountainous regions of Reasi distt. of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Wheat crop is the main source of income for the majority of the farmers of the distt. It is widely grown crop in Reasi distt. of J&K as the distt. has conducive climate and soil conditions for its cultivation. Wheat crop requires adequate nutrients for its proper production. It is a Rabi season crop and the distt. is having congenial atmosphere for its cultivation. This crop occupies the major area among the different crops in Reasi distt. of Union Territory of J&K. It is the potential source of income for the rural people of hilly distt. Reasi of J&K. The farmers of the distt. are adopting the new methods in wheat production such as Integrated Nutrient Management (INM), Integrated Weed Management and Integrated Disease Management in order to increase its production and productivity. Still the wheat production and productivity is low in Reasi distt. of J&K as compared to national level. The low wheat production in the distt. is mainly due to low level of wheat production information sources for the wheat growers. The low information sources in hilly areas of Reasi distt. could be due to difficult terrains, scattered population, lack of internet connectivity etc.

Keeping in mind the importance of communication behaviour of wheat growers in Reasi distt. a study on “**Communication Behaviour of Wheat Growers in Reasi distt. of Jammu & Kashmir, India**” was undertaken with the specific objectives:

- (i) To study the communication behaviour of the wheat growers in Reasi distt. of Jammu & Kashmir, India.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in hilly district Reasi of Jammu and Kashmir which was selected purposively. Out of 12 C.D Blocks only 4 C.D. Blocks namely Reasi, Pouni, Katra and Thuroo were selected randomly. **Wheat is the major crop of these blocks.** A sample of 20 per cent Gram Panchayats from each selected block was selected randomly. A sample of 20 per cent villages was selected randomly from selected Gram Panchayats. A sample of 20 per cent wheat growers (150) was selected randomly from the selected villages. **The selected wheat growers were from different villages with wheat as their major crop.** Communication behaviour has been operationalised as wheat production information input, wheat production information processing and wheat production information output behaviour of the respondents in the study. An index was developed to study the communication behaviour of respondents.

Wheat production information input was studied in terms of sources of wheat production information, wheat production information processing was studied in terms of evaluation, storage and transformation of wheat production information and wheat production information output was studied in terms of dissemination of wheat production information.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Communication behaviour of wheat growers

(A) Wheat Production Information Input Behaviour

The respondents were asked to indicate the sources by which they did update themselves with the scientific wheat production information.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on their frequency of using different sources of wheat production information

(N=150)

S.No.	Sources of wheat production information	Frequency of use of different sources of wheat production information			Rank
		Often	Occasionally	Never	
					Often

1	Extension personnel of KVK	93 (62.00)	41 (29.33)	16 (10.66)	I
2	Extension personnel of Deptt. of Agri.	90 (60.00)	52 (36.66)	8 (5.33)	II
3	Salesmen of Agril. inputs	49 (32.66)	52 (34.66)	49 (32.66)	IX
4	Local leaders	40 (26.66)	47 (31.33)	63 (42.00)	X
5	Progressive farmers	81 (54.00)	57 (38.00)	12(8.00)	III
6	T.V.	79 (52.66)	46 (30.66)	25 (16.66)	IV
7	Radio	52 (34.66)	26 (17.33)	72 (48.00)	VI
8	Extension Publications	28 (18.66)	47 (31.33)	75 (50.00)	XI
9	Neighbourers	53 (35.33)	65 (43.33)	32 (21.33)	VII
10	Relatives and friends	63 (42.00)	40 (26.66)	47 (31.33)	V
11	Internet	55(36.66)	46(30.66)	49(32.66)	VIII

* Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

The above table shows that the farmers oftenly get the information from Extension personnel of KVK (62.00), Extension Personnel from Department of Agriculture (60.00), progressive farmers (54.00), T.V. (52.66), relatives and friends (42.00), Internet (36.66), neighbourers (35.33), Radio (34.66), salesmen of agril. inputs (32.66), local leaders (26.66) and extension publications (18.66) respectively.

The farmers also got the information occasionally from neighbourers (43.33), local leaders (42.00), progressive farmers (38.00), extension personnel of deptt. of agriculture (36.66), salesmen of argil. inputs (34.66), extension publications (31.33), T.V. (30.66), Internet (30.66), relatives and friends (26.66), extension personnel of KVK (29.33) and radio (17.33) respectively.

The farmers who never got the information from extension publications (50.00), radio (48.00), local leaders (42.00), Internet (32.66), salesmen of agril. inputs (32.66), relatives and friends (31.33), neighbourers (21.33), T.V. (16.66), extension personnel of KVK (10.66), progressive farmers (8.00), Extension Personnel of department of agriculture (5.33) respectively.

The results are in accordance with the results of Sinha and Prasad (1966), Williams (1969), Ambastha (1974), Bhangoo and Kawer (1994), Singh and Singh (1997), Arneja, C.S. and Singh, D.P. (1998), Gour, M. And Bishnoi, I. (2010), Lal, Tandon and Sahu (2013), Hakeem, De and Lal (2014) and Lal and Tandon (2020).

(B) Information Processing Behaviour of Respondents

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the basis of wheat production information evaluation, wheat production information storage and wheat production information transformation

(N=150)

S.No.	Statements	Frequency			Rank
		Often	Occasionally	Never	Often
	(a) Wheat production Information Evaluation				
1	Discuss with elder family members	104 (69.33)	32 (21.33)	14 (9.33)	I

2	Discuss with neighbourers	69 (46.00)	36 (24.00)	45 (30.00)	III
3	Discuss with progressive farmers	90 (60.00)	25 (16.66)	35 (23.33)	II
4	Discuss with local leaders / key communicators	59 (39.33)	42 (28.00)	49 (32.66)	IV
5	Discuss in light of past experiences	61 (40.66)	25 (16.66)	64 (42.66)	VI
6	Thinking about technical feasibility	49 (32.66)	38 (25.33)	63 (42.00)	VII
7	Discuss with SHGs/farm association/farmers clubs	65 (43.33)	41 (27.33)	44 (29.33)	V
(b)Wheat production Information storage					
1	By memorization	62 (41.33)	52 (34.66)	36 (24.00)	I
2	Writing in general notebook	38 (25.33)	47 (31.33)	65 (43.33)	II
3	Preparing subjectwise files	15 (10.00)	13 (8.66)	122 (81.33)	IV
4	By preserving the printed matter	17 (11.33)	10 (6.66)	123 (82.00)	III
(c)Wheat production Information transformation					
1	Rearrange the important information as per farmers needs	82 (54.66)	35 (23.33)	33 (22.00)	I
2	Rearrange the information in local dialect	15(10.00)	17 (11.33)	118 (78.66)	II

*Figure in parentheses indicate percentages \

(a) Wheat Production Information Evaluation

It is clear from the table 2 that respondents had evaluated the wheat production information oftenly by discussing with elder family members (69.33), progressive farmers (60.00), neighbourers(46.00), by discussing with SHGs / farm association/farmers clubs(43.33), on the basis of their past experiences (40.66), local leaders/key communicators (39.33) and thinking about technical feasibility (32.66).

The respondents had evaluated the wheat production information occasionally by local leaders(28.00), by discussing with SHGs / farm association (27.33), thinking about technical feasibility (25.33), neighbourers(24.00), discussing with elder family members (21.33), on the basis of their past experiences (16.66) and progressive farmers (16.66). The percentages of respondents who never evaluated the wheat production information by these methods were(82.00) ,(81.33),34.00),(32.66),(30.00),(29.33),(23.33) and (9.33) respectively.

(b)Wheat production Information Storage

The table 2 further shows that the respondent's oftenly stored the wheat production information by memorization (41.33), writing in general notebooks (25.33), by preserving the printed matter (11.33) and preparing subject wise files (10.00) respectively. The percentages of respondents who use the information storage occasionally by these methods were (34.66), (31.33), (8.66) and (6.66) respectively. The percentage of respondents who never used the wheat production information storage by these methods were (80.66), (79.33), (43.33) and (24.00) respectively.

(c) Wheat production Information transformation

It is clear from the table that the respondents' oftenly transformed the information by rearranging the important information as per their needs (54.66) and rearranging the information in local dialect (10.00). The percentages of respondents who occasionally transformed the information were (23.33) and (11.33) respectively. The percentages of respondents who never transformed information by these methods were (78.66) and (22.00) respectively.

The findings are in accordance with the findings of Akhoury (1973), Ambastha (1974) and Pandey (1979), Gour, M. And Bishnoi, I. (2010), Lal, Tandon and Sahu (2013), Hakeem, De and Lal (2014), Raman (2014), and Lal and Tandon (2020).

Wheat Production Information Output Behaviour:

(N=150)

(a) Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the basis of wheat production information

S. No.	Statements	Often	Occasionally	Never	Rank (Often)
1	To my family members	122 (81.33)	24 (16.00)	4(2.66)	I
2	To my relatives	99 (66.00)	47 (31.33)	4(2.66)	V
3	To my neighbourers	112(74.66)	19 (12.66)	19 (12.66)	II
4	To my friends	101 (67.33)	33 (22.00)	16 (10.66)	IV
5	To the person who contacted me	91 (60.66)	55 (36.66)	4 (2.66)	VII
6	To all the persons known to me	95(63.33)	46 (30.66)	9 (6.00)	VI
7	To the farmers of neighbouring villages	77 (51.33)	20 (13.33)	53(35.33)	VIII
8	To those who are cultivating in my land	101 (67.33)	21 (14.00)	28 (18.66)	III

output behavior

*Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

The wheat growers after getting the information and processing it disseminate to other farmers. It is clear from the table 3 that the farmers disseminated the wheat production information oftenly to their family members (81.33), neighbourers(74.66), those who cultivate in their land (67.33), friends (67.33), relatives(66.00), the persons who were known to him (63.33) and other

persons who contacted him (60.66) and to the farmers of neighbouring villages (51.33) respectively.

The percentages of farmers who disseminated the wheat production information occasionally to others were (36.66), (31.33), (30.66), (22.00), (16.00), (14.00), (13.33) and (12.66) respectively. The percentage of farmers who never disseminated the wheat production information to others were (35.33), (18.66), (12.66), (10.66), (6.00), (2.66), (2.66) and (2.66) respectively.

The findings are in line with Sunderswamy (1971), Singh and Singh (1977) and Pandey (1979), Gour, M. And Bishnoi, I. (2010), Lal, Tandon and Sahu (2013), Hakeem, De and Lal (2014), Raman (2014), and Lal and Tandon (2020).

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to their communication behaviour towards wheat production farm information

(N=150)

S.No.	Level of communication behaviour	Frequency of respondents
1	Low (Below $\bar{X} -SD$)	15 (10.00)
2	Medium (in between $\bar{X} \pm SD$)	79 (52.66)
3	High (more than $\bar{X} +SD$)	56 (37.33)

*Figures in parentheses indicate the percentages

It is clear from the above table that 10.00 per cent respondents had low communication behaviour towards wheat production information. 52.66 per cent respondents had medium communication behaviour towards wheat production information and 37.33 per cent respondents had high communication behaviour towards wheat production information.

The finding is in line with Babu and Sinha (1985), Rajput (1993), Singh and Lal (1997), Singh and Singh (1997), Lal, Tandon and Sahu (2013), Hakeem, De and Lal (2014), Raman (2014), and Lal and Tandon (2020).

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that communication behaviour of the wheat growers was greatly influenced by the Extension Personnel of KVK, Extension Personnel of Deptt. of Agriculture, Progressive Farmers and T.V. and they were considered as the effective communication media for dissemination of wheat production information. After receiving the wheat production information, the farmers mainly disseminated the wheat production information to the family members, neighbours, those who used to cultivate his land and friends and relatives. Majority of the respondents were having medium communication behaviour towards the wheat production information sources.

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