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A Study on Mass Media Preferences and Constraints Faces by the Farmers in Imphal East District Manipur

Baldev Singh[1*], Angad Prasad[1], Ngangom Diyarani Chanu[1], R. Amulya[1] and Yuvaraj S.[2]

[1]Dept. of Extension Education, [2]Dept. of Agricultural Economics, College of Agriculture, Central Agricultural University, Imphal, Manipur (765 004), India

Corresponding Author

Baldev Singh
e-mail: singhbaldev0069@gmail.com

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Abstract

A research study was conducted during March–April, 2023 at Imphal East, Manipur, India to gain insights into the preferences and constraints of farmers concerning their utilization of mass media. Two blocks were select randomly and from each block two villages were selected randomly; a total 120 respondents were interviewed through structured scheduled. Mean, frequency, percentage and garret ranking method were used to analysis the data and to find out the appropriate result. The outcomes illuminated that, among the farmers, mobile phones emerged as the most favored mass media, trailed by television, radio, newspapers, and agricultural magazines. The major constraints faced by farmers in the case of television were a lack of market availability of suggested inputs (59.16%), a lack of use of a complex technical word (44.16%) in radio, a lack of use of a complex technical word (46.66%) in newspapers, no one subscribe to any farm magazine (94.16%) in farm magazines, and a lack of awareness of mobile applications related to agriculture (56.66%) on mobile phones. This study underscores the pivotal role of mass media in rural areas and highlights the challenges tied to specific mass media.

Keywords: Television, radio, mobile, newspaper, magazine, mass media, Imphal

1. Introduction

Imphal is the capital of Manipur. It is situated at an altitude 790 meters above the mean sea level. The district lies between latitudes 24°39'49.09''N and 25°4'5.45'' N and longitudes 93°55'30'' E and 94°8'42'' E approximately (Anonymous, 2023). Mass media are the channels which are proved to be effective in disseminating information to a larger group of people in a shorter interval of time (Dash and Kumar, 2017). Extension contacts and the media play a significant role in the provision of helpful information to users through various sources and channels for the adoption of new technology that creates awareness and changes in farmers' attitudes for fostering speedy acceptance of agricultural advances (Singh et al., 2023). The study discovered that women and young individuals engaged in agriculture in Abia State extensively utilized radio, television, and GSM (mobile phones) to acquire agricultural information. (Chioma Jennifer and Innocent Achonam, 2023). As the country's literacy rate rises, new opportunities and possibilities open for using print media as a form of mass communication. Educational level should be increased so as farming community is able to get benefit from the different printed or electronic media and cosmopolite sources of information (Devi and Verma, 2011). The study revealed that a significant majority of respondents, ranging from 64% to 94%, regularly used television and mobile phones, while 46% of respondents utilized the internet (Bansal et al., 2022). The smartphone's portability enables users to access it at anytime, anyplace. Smartphone-based sensors like a camera, microphone, GPS, accelerometer, and many others may greatly simplify farm journaling and other farm management tasks (Pongnumkul et al., 2015). The farmers discovered that television had greater uses, followed by newspapers, magazines, kisan call centres, workshops/ training, radio, and the internet, in that order (Bhatia et al., 2016). Respondents consistently ranked radio, television, and mobile as their top choices for agricultural information, weather forecasts, and updates on government programs. Additionally, radio was the preferred medium for obtaining market information, with television following closely behind (sethy and Mukhopadhyay, 2020). The primary constraints faced by most farmers included the high costs associated with smartphone repair and maintenance, elevated data tariffs, and the limited availability of location-specific information (Sowntharia et al., 2023). The major constraints face by the dairy farmers in using of mobile based ICT tools was unavailability of relevant information in local language followed by lack of reliable, useful and location specific

contents, lack of awareness about different mobile phone-based ICT tools (Jadhav et al., 2021). The main technical constraints include frequent power outages (76.67%) and excessive repetition of the programme (71.67%). The major personal constraints include a lack of knowledge of specialists for additional consultation (75.42%). Major information needs-related constraints include a lack of coverage of government policies and programme (77.92%), a lack of information on input availability (72.08%) (Krishnaji et al., 2020). The major technology constraints was the inconsistent supply of energy, whereas organizational limitations 77.50 percent of the responders who agreed said they frequently missed their show because TVs were placed in an inconvenience (Ansari et al., 2018). Mass media has significantly contributed to raising awareness among the public and effectively communicating government directives and guidelines to essential workers such as health professionals, sanitation workers, and grassroots-level law enforcement. Aim of the study is to know the preferences and constraints of mass media among farmers for receiving the agriculture related information via. different media. Therefore, the study was conducted with the following objectives:

1. Preferences of mass media by the farmers.

2. Constraints faces by the farmers in using mass media.

2. Materials and Methods

The study was conducted during March–April, 2023 at Imphal East, Manipur, India. The district comprises four blocks, out of which Heingang and Keirao were randomly chosen. From each of these selected blocks, two villages were also chosen randomly. The researchers then applied simple random sampling to select 120 farmers from these four villages as responders for the study. To gather data, a questionnaire was developed, and the chosen farmers were requested to fill it out. Additionally, in-person interviews were conducted to collect more detailed information. The researchers also thoroughly examined earlier research reports relevant to the study's subject. Descriptive statistical techniques such as frequency, percentage, mean, and the Garrett ranking method were employed to extract insights from the empirical dataset. The study's findings will contribute valuable insights into the targeted research areas and potentially aid in making informed decisions or recommendations for agricultural practices or policies in the region.

2.1. Garrett's ranking method

It was used to order the respondents' preferences to their mass media. According to this approach, respondents were asked to rate each element, and the results of these rankings were then transformed into score values using the following formula:

Percent position= (100 (Rij-0.5))/Nj

Where,

Rij = Rank given for the ith variable by jth respondents

Nj = Number of variables ranked by jth respondents

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Preferences of mass media by the farmers

Table 1 and 2 revealed that, first preference was given to mobile phone. It became the prime (first) choice for communication, information access, entertainment and productive due to their versatile and convenience. Their compact size, extensive features and connectivity options made them the preferred mass media in today digital age. Mobile phones have emerged as a top choice in agriculture providing farmers with valuable tools for communication, market information, weather updates, crop management apps, and access to agricultural knowledge. Their widespread availability and user-friendly interfaces made them essential in modern agricultural practices. Television was ranked second, possibly as a result of the introduction of multiple independent satellite channels that offer a wider range of alternatives and subject matter. Even a person who is illiterate may concentrate and receive information more easily than with other media since television has an audio-visual effect that appeals to all the senses. In order to spark interest and ensure that more farmers may be benefitted from it, it is crucial that television sets are available in every community. The radio received the third preference. Its accessibility and cost might be the cause. One special quality that may be attributed to radio is its capacity to prevent the listener from being distracted from his household duties while the broadcast is playing. Newspaper was chosen as the fourth preference. This might be because newspapers are less expensive than other forms of media and are available in all public locations,

Table 1: Calculated garret score and ranking

Sl. No.	Mass media	Garret score	Mean value	Rank
1.	Television	7157	59.64	2nd
2.	Radio	6687	55.72	3rd
3.	Newspaper	5327	44.39	4th
4.	Farm magazine	2880	24.00	5th
5.	Mobile phone	7709	64.24	1st

Table 2: Percent position and garret value

Sl. No.	100 (Rij-0.5)/Nj	Calculated value	Garret value
1.	100(1-0.5)/5	10	75
2.	100(2-0.5)/5	30	60
3.	100(3-0.5)/5	50	50
4.	100(4-0.5)/5	70	39
5.	100(5-0.5)/5	90	24

including coffee shops, libraries, and so on. Farmers have easy access to the newspaper, which they can read in their spare time. The fifth preference was for farm magazine, which may be because lack of awareness, low level of education and not easy availability in the area. The Table 2 reveals that majority of the farmers preferred mobile phone followed by television, radio, newspaper, and farm magazine. The findings are partially similar with (sethy and Mukhopadhyay, 2020).

3.2. Constraints faced by the farmers in using mass media

The farmers were asked to express the constraints experienced by them in using mass media. The major constraints experienced by the farmers have been given in Table 3 with rank orders.

Table 3: Constraints faced by the farmers in using different mass media

Sl. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1.	Television			
a.	Farmers are not involved in problem discussions	65	54.16	3rd
b.	The program's content does not reflect the needs of farmers.	39	32.50	5th
c.	Use of a complex technical word	63	52.50	4th
d.	Facing problem in understanding the new method / practices	67	55.83	2nd
e.	Electricity problem	26	21.66	7th
f.	High maintenance and equipment costs	27	22.50	6th
g.	lack of market availability of suggested inputs	71	59.16	1st
2.	Radio			
a.	Problem occurs due to poor signal	40	33.33	4th
b.	Speedy presentation of the programming	47	39.16	2nd
c.	Lack of awareness	27	22.50	5th
d.	Useful information not timely	20	16.66	6th
e.	Use of a complex technical word	53	44.16	1st
f.	Lack of a field-based programme	43	35.83	3rd
3.	Newspaper			
a.	Absence of problem-focused news	47	39.16	3rd
b.	Lack of a field-based programme	51	42.50	2nd
c.	Unnecessary information is given	42	35.00	4th
d.	Use of a complex technical word	56	46.66	1st
e.	The news is brief and not in-depth	25	20.83	6th
f.	Lack of interest	38	31.66	5th
4.	Farm magazine			
a.	Lack of awareness	110	91.66	2nd
b.	No one subscribes any farm magazine	113	94.16	1st
c.	Lack of interest	106	88.33	3rd
d.	Not easily availability of farm magazine	80	66.66	4th
5.	Mobile phone			
a.	Network issue	43	35.83	5th
b.	Lack of knowledge in effective utilization of mobile	48	40.00	3rd
c.	Lack of awareness of mobile applications related to agriculture	68	56.66	1st
d.	Use of a complex technical word	45	37.50	4th
e.	Facing problem in understanding the new method / practices	51	42.50	2nd

In the present study, farmers faced constraints in using different mass media. In case of television, "Lack of market availability of suggested inputs" was ranked first constraint by maximum (59.16%) of the farmers, followed by facing problem in understanding the new method / practices (55.83%), farmers are not involved in problem discussions (54.16%), use of a complex technical word (52.50%), the program's content does not reflect the needs of farmers (32.50%), high maintenance and equipment costs (22.50%) and electricity problem (21.66%) were ranked as 2nd to 7th places, respectively. In case of radio, 44.16 per cent of the farmers opined that "use of a complex technical word" was the major constraints and they ranked it as first constraints, followed by speedy presentation of the programming (39.16%) as 2nd, lack of field-based programme (35.83%) as 3rd, problem occur due to signal (33.33%) as 4th, lack of awareness (22.50%) 5th and useful information not timely (16.66%) sixth. In case of newspaper, 46.66 per cent of the farmers use of complex technical word as first constraints followed by lack of field-based programme (42.50%), absence of problem focused news (39.16%), unnecessary information is given (35.00%) lack of interest (31.66%) and the news is brief and not in depth (20.83%) as second to sixth, respectively. In case of farm magazine, among the four constraints, 94.16 per cent farmers were found not to subscribe any farm magazine and hence the constraint "no one subscribe any farm magazine" was ranked as first followed by, Lack of awareness (91.66%), lack of interest (88.33%) and not easily availability of farm magazine (66.66%) were ranked as 2nd to 4th, respectively. In case of mobile phone constraints "lack of awareness of mobile applications related to agriculture" was ranked first due to maximum opinion (56.66%) followed by, facing problem in understanding the new method / practices (42.50%), lack of knowledge in effective utilization of mobile (40.00%), use of a complex technical word (37.50%) and network issue (35.83%) were ranked 2nd to 5th, respectively. The findings are partial similar with Nargawe (2020).

3. Conclusion

Mobile phones were the favored choice of the farmers, followed by television, radio, newspaper, and farm magazines, reflecting preferences for communication and information access. For television, lack of market availability of suggested inputs ranked first (59.16%). Radio's top constraint was the use of complex technical word (44.16%). Newspapers major constraints was use of complex technical term (46.66%). Farm magazines suffered from low subscriptions (94.16%). Mobile phones major constraints was lack of awareness of mobile applications related to agriculture (56.66%).

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