

UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION ON DAIRYING AMONG TRIBAL AND NON-TRIBAL DAIRY FARMERS IN CACHAR DISTRICT OF ASSAM*

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ABSTRACT

The study was done in the 4 development blocks having relatively higher intensity of mix population of tribal and non-tribal farmers in Cachar district of Assam. Altogether 100 randomly selected dairy farmers were considered as respondents. Majority belonged to medium level of extent of utilization of information related to dairying in both tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers. There existed significant difference in utilizing the information sources between the tribal and non-tribal farmers with non-tribal farmers scoring higher means. Veterinary officials, relatives and friends were mostly the key sources for utilization of dairying information in case of both tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers.

Keywords : Utilization of information, dairying, tribal and non-tribal farmer.

Keeping with the modernity, the introduction of scientific dairy farming has added new dimensions in the Indian farming system. The transfer of innovations and their adoption have acquired an added height in rural areas today. Although North-East India have traditionally lagged behind when compared to major milk producing states of the country due to the region's customary and traditional preference for meat, in recent years, introduction of many programmes and projects, exposure and experiences and major changes in socio political scenario influenced things to look bright for dairying. Community wise differences mostly exist, which prompts

development of strategies to implement programmes well. The success of dairying depends heavily on human resources and innovativeness which inflict constant updating of information relating to dairying. Effective communication, its utilization from different sources and the channels of transmission are the essence of extension. They provide rural people maximum impetus to modify their behaviour for sustainable benefits to them and the society. Therefore, a study was conducted to find out the utilization of information on dairying among tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers in Cachar district of Assam.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was undertaken to know the extent of utilization of information related to dairying among 50 tribal and 50 non-tribal dairy farmers in 4 purposively selected development blocks of Cachar District of Assam, namely Silchar, Salchapra, Borkhola and Sonai. This purposive selection was due to the reason that the

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numbers of tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers were relatively more, there were adoptions of relatively newer dairying practices and the farmers were primarily, secondarily or in a tertiary manner dependent upon from sale of milk and milk products. Three villages each for tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers were randomly selected from each of the 4 blocks. A list of all the tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers having at least one milch cow/buffalo was prepared separately in consultation with the A.H. & Vety. and Dairy Development Officials and the Block officials of the district. Twenty five such dairy farmers (tribal and non-tribal) were selected randomly from each of the blocks. Thus, 50 tribal and 50 non-tribal respondents were selected making the sample size of 100. Data were collected by personally interviewing the selected respondents with the reliable and valid interview schedule. Reliability coefficient of the interview schedule was worked out by conducting a pre-test in two developmental blocks in Brahmaputra Valley namely Sonapur and Dimoria development blocks of Kamrup district of Assam where mixed settlement of tribal and non-tribal farmers have been existing over many dec. des Validity was examined by content validation where (a) sensitive selection of the items was ensured and (b) the selected items after necessary and proper modification were placed in an organized and orderly manner.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Extent of utilization of information referred to the proportion of knowledge brought to application by the respondent after getting exposure to various source of information related to dairying (media/agency/networks) like Television, Radio, Newspaper/ dairy magazine/ extension publication, Relatives, Friends, Veterinary officials, Meetings etc. which were in fact considered for study in this investigation. The figures of the Table 1(a) exhibited that majority i.e., 74 percent and 68 percent of the dairy farmers in both tribal and non-tribal had medium level of extent of utilization of information. It may be due to the fact that dairying was still a

part of their way of life rather than a means of livelihood. Further, dairying, as observed was also a leisurely activity. Therefore respondents spent moderate time in utilizing information. Similar findings were seen where majority of the respondents had medium communication media utilization¹. The data in Table 1(a) revealed that the mean scores of the non-tribal dairy farmers were significantly higher than that of the tribal dairy farmers with regards to their extent of utilization of information ($t=3.47$, $P<0.01$). It indicated that extent of utilization of information related to dairying of non-tribal was more than that of tribal dairy farmer. This might have been a reflection of their slow assimilation process to the non-tribal original society, which still dominated their mindset. This essentially prompted that strategy to be worked out for dairy development in Cachar District needed had to be different for the tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers.

From Table 1(b), it could be inferred that information related to dairying from veterinary officials were mostly preferred by both tribal and non-tribal dairy farmers (55 percent for tribal and 56 percent for non-tribal) and was therefore ranked 1st in extent of utilization of information. Friends and relatives also contributed considerably being ranked at 2nd and 3rd respectively. This might be due to the fact that there was non-availability of ample source of information getting repeated in the area. But they possessed that advantage with the friends and relatives in terms of technical knowledge, face value and trust. Related findings were seen where maximum information was drawn from local leaders, progressive farmers, friends, veterinary officers, ADO/VLWs etc. sources, regarding scientific dairy farming², mean while it was also observed that majority of the respondents in the milk societies mostly used personal localite channels such as dairy extension officers³. Respondents favoured livestock supervisor (formal sources) and friends (informal sources) in this regard⁴; whereas it was observed that majority of the farmers used neighbor, friend & relative as communication source⁵ whilst

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friends/neighbours were ranked 1st in extent of use of communication media⁶. Mass media, both print and electronic not getting the higher order of

preference was not an encouraging scene as the results of the study revealed.

TABLE 1(a) – DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF EXTENT OF UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION-

Variable	Category	Tribal dairy farmer					Non-tribal farmer				
		Frequency	Percentage	Mean	S.D.	Range	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	S.D.	Range
Extent of utilization of information	Low	7	14			17.14	7	14			21-43
	Medium	37	74	26.86	6.99	-	34	68	30.80	5.97	-
	High	6	12			45.72	9	18			44-29

*t value=3.47, P<0.01

Table 1(b)- FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS ON THE BASIS OF PREFERENCE OF SOURCES FOR UTILIZATION OF INFORMATION-

Variables	Category	Tribal dairy farmer		Non-tribal dairy farmer	
		Percentage	Rank	Percentage	Rank
Extent of utilization of information	T.V.	13%	5 th	19%	5 th
	Radio	25.8%	4 th	32.6%	4 th
	Newspaper/ dairy magazine/ extension publication	1.8%	7 th	0.8%	7 th
	Relatives	45%	2 nd	49%	2 nd
	Friends	39%	3 rd	44%	3 rd
	Veterinary officials	55%	1 st	56%	1 st
	Meetings	7.8%	6 th	13.4%	6 th

**Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study revealed that majority of the tribal and non-tribal dairy farmer had medium level of extent of utilization of information related to dairying. However, the non-tribal farmers scored significantly higher in their utilization of information in comparison to the tribal farmers. It was also found that veterinary official, relatives and friends were the main sources of

information for utilization. The study divulged that for enhancement of dairy scenario in the area, separate strategies were to be worked out by the Dairy Development or Veterinary and Animal Husbandry Department for the Tribal and Non-Tribal farmers as Veterinary officials were preferred the most by the farmers. Further, Mass media both electronic and print should come up objectively and with greater intensity to serve the needs of the dairy farmers.

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