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Factors Affecting Sources of Information Utilization

B.K. Mandal[1] and Dipak De[2]

ABSTRACT

An attempt has been made to study the factors affecting information sources utilization by the farmers. The study was conducted with a sample of 300 farmers drawn randomly from Banka and Rajaun blocks of Banka district of Bihar. The study revealed that socio-economic status, interpersonal interaction, and value orientation were the main factors determining the sources of information utilized by farmers. The value of co-rrelation coefficient (r = 0.566) was found to be highest in case of socio-economic status, whereas the regression co-efficient was found to be highest (b=0.328) in case of interpersonal interaction.

Key word: Source, information, utilization, socio-economic status, interaction, value.

INTRODUCTION

The sources of information utilized by farmers with regard to farm practices play an important role in the adoption of farm practices. Diffusion and adoption of farm practices have been recognized as a function of communication of information (Report of the sub-committee on diffusion and adoption of farm practices Rural sociological society, 1952). A variety of means and techniques have been utilized by agricultural agencies to influence farmers to accept worthwhile recommendations. The mass media are gradually gaining importance over the earlier system of personal contacts used for passing information dissemination on a it is however, a fact that various agencies are not similar in their capacity to influence people nor are they equally preferred by various categories of people who seek information about new developments.

Furthermore, a single source of information is not suited to disseminate all types of ideas and practices. The term information sources are used to apply to people and agencies which are sought for farm information namely mass media agricultural extension agencies agricultural departments and commercial dealers.

These sources of information utilized by farmers depend on a number of factors. The present study was conducted with the following objectives to study the level of information sources utilization by the farmers, to study the association of different factors with sources of information utilization by the farmers and to study the contribution of different factors, in predicting the sources of information utilization by the farmers.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in purposively selected Banka district of Bihar. Out of 11C.D. blocks, two blocks namely Banka and Rajaun were selected randomly. Thereafter, 25 per cent gram panchayats from both the C.D. blocks were selected randomly. On this basis, four gram panchayats (Dudhari, Danra, Lakrikola and Telia) from Banka block and five gram panchayats (Bhawanipur Kathaun, Dhauni Bamdev, Khaira, Morama Bangaon and Tilakpur) from Rajaun blocks were selected. A sample of 25 per cent villages were selected randomly from the selected gram panchayats. The samples for the study comprised of 300 farmers (paddy growers) who were selected randomly on the basis of probability proportionate sampling method. Data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule.

Variables and their measurement

Dependent variable, namely sources of information utilization by farmers was measured with the scale developed by Ramachandran (1974). Independent variables namely socio-economic status was measured will socio-economic status scale developed by Trivedi (1963); annual income was quantified; interpersonal interaction was measured with the scale developed by Bhople (1985); innovation proneness was measured with the scale developed by Chaudhary (1973); value orientation was measured with the scale developed by Kittur (1976). The data were collected with the help of structured interview schedule in face to face situation. The data were tabulated, classified and statistically analyzed to draw relevant conclusions.

[1] S.M.S. (Extension Education), K.V.K. Banka, & Research scholar, Institute of Agricultural Sciences BHU. Varanasi-221005 (U.P.)
[2] Professor & Head, Department of Extension Education, Banaras Hindu University Varanasi- 221 005 (U.P.)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to find out the level of soruces of information utilization by farmers, mean and standard deviation were worked out and it was categorised as low, medium and high.

Table 1: Distribution of farmers on the basis of level of sources of information utilization.

n=300

Particular	Frequency	Percentage
Low, < (mean-S.D)	7.00	2.33
Medium, In between (mean ± S.D.)	258.00	86.00
High, > (mean + S.D)	35.00	11.67

Mean = 30.16, Highest score = 86Range = 77
S.D. = 17.16 Lowest score = 9

The Table 1 showed that majority of the respondents *i.e.* (86.00 %) had medium level of information sources utilization, followed by high level of information sources utilized by 11.67 per cent of respondents. Only 2.33 per cent of the respondents utilized low level of sources of information.

In order to examine the association between selected independent variables and sources of information utilization, correlation coefficients (r) were worked out between dependent and independent variables and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation between sources of information utilization and selected independent variables.

n=300

Selected independent variables	Value of Correlation Coefficient (r)
Socio – economic status (X_1)	0.566**
Education (X_2)	0.311**
Annual income (X_3)	0.425**
Interpersonal interaction (X_4)	0.536**
Innovation proneness (X_5)	0.314**
Value orientation (X_6)	0.283**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

A close view of the data presented in Table 2 revealed that all the independent variables were positively and significantly correlated with sources of information utilization. The co-rrelation co-efficient between socio-economic status and sources of information utilization (r = 0.566) was found to be highest followed interpersonal interaction (r = 0.536). The variables like annual income, innovation proneness and education were also correlated with sources of information utilization and the r values for these variables were 0.425, 0.314 and 0.311 respectively. The variable value orientation was least correlated (r = 0.283) as compared to other variables taken for the study.

The positive and significant relationship between socio-economic status and sources of information utilization means that the socio-economic status of a farmer exerted highly significant influence on the sources of information utilization. This is quite natural because high socio-economic status easily signifies bigger farm size, better education, higher income, and higher social participation. A farmer having high socio-economic status may need more information as compared to farmers having low socio-economic status.

The other important variables which were found to be highly correlated were interpersonal interaction and annual income. It means that these two factors exert significant influence on sources of information utilized by farmers. It is commonly observable fact that as interaction increases the need for information increases for further interaction and consequently source of information increases.

According to Guilford (1954), the actual relationship between measured variables in social science are by no means as simple as above. One variable might be associated with or dependent upon several other variables at the same time and hence the multiple regression analysis was carried out, the results of which are furnished in Table 3 given below.

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis of the independent variables with the sources of information utilization (dependent variables) of the farmers.

n=300

Selected independent variables	Regression Coefficient	Std. Error of (b)	"b'
Socio – economic status (X_1)	0.425	0.074	5.779**
Education (X_2)	0.455	0.472	0.963
Annual income (X_3)	-0.0000442	0.0000	-1.266
Interpersonal interaction (X_4)	10.328	0.975	10.591**
Innovation proneness (X_5)	-0.185	0.631	-0.293
Value orientation (X_6)	1.643	0.468	0.001**

R^2= 0.550, intercept constant (a) = -41.448 F = 59.758** d.f. = 6, 293
** Significant at the 0.01 level of probability.

A close view of the Table 3 indicates that all the six variables taken together explained to the extent of 55.00 per cent variation (h^2=0.550) in the sources of information utilized by farmers at 6, 293 degrees of freedom which was significant at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, the result implied that all the six variables taken together would account for a significant amount of variation in the sources of information utilized by farmers.

The co-efficient of regression (b value) was non-significant for education, annual income and innovation proneness, which means that these variables were not contributing significantly in predicting the sources of information utilized by farmers. On the other hand, co-efficient of regression was found positively significant for socio-economic status, interpersonal interaction and value orientation at 0.01 level of significance. It means that these variable were contributing significantly in predicting the sources of information utilized by farmers. Among these variables the 'b' co-efficient of interpersonal interaction was found to be highest meaning thereby that the contribution of this factor was highest in predicting the source of information utilization.The next most important variable that affects sources of information utilization was found to be value orientation.

Another factor/variable that affects sources of information utilization was found to be socio-economic status of a farmer. This is quite natural because higher socio-economic status of a farmer is characterized by higher education, larger farm size and higher income etc., which determines the source of information utilized by farmers.

CONCLUSION

The study showed that among the six variables, three variables namely socio-economic status, interpersonal interaction and value orientation emerged as the most potent variables that affect the sources of information utilized by the farmers. The value of co-efficient of co-rrelation was found to be highest (r=0.566) in case of socio-economic status. The value of regression co-efficient was found to be highest (b = 10.328) in case of interpersonal interaction.

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