

NEWSPAPER READING AND DISSEMINATION BEHAVIOUR OF FARM WOMEN

Sonia Bhandal^{1*}, Sukhdeep Kaur Mann² and Davinder Singh³

1 Ph.D Scholar, 2 Assistant Professor, 3 Extension Scientist
Department of Extension Education & Communication Management and Extension Education,
Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana (Punjab) - 141004
Email : sonia-cecm@pau.edu

ABSTRACT

Print media is a source of information for larger population like other media. It can frequently and conspicuously cover specific topics, and they have a big part in inspiring readers to adopt fresh viewpoints, increase their awareness of various problems, and learn new things. It also serves as learning and entertaining media besides spreading information to the people. It has played an important responsibility in disseminating the information on improved agricultural and household activities to rural women. The present study was conducted to examine the newspaper reading and dissemination behaviour of farm women. Two hundred farm women from Punjab state who were subscribers of selected newspapers were selected as the sample for the study. Data were collected through a well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule. Majority of the respondents subscribed newspaper from more than twenty years and read newspaper on daily basis during anytime of the day for more than one hour. Whereas, the majority of the respondents disseminate information with in family members followed by relatives, neighbours and friends. Others can utilize the information was the main reason of dissemination of the information to others. Age, educational level, size of family were positively correlated and contributing towards increasing the extent of disseminating behaviour.

Keywords: newspaper, reading behaviour, dissemination behaviour, farm women.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important components for rural development is agricultural knowledge. As agriculture is the main stay of India and its economy is agriculture based (Ghanghas et al. 2020). Information and communication are always necessary for agriculture (Mishra et al. 2020). Although, communication involves a deliberate effort to create shared understanding or agreement about ideas, facts, emotions, preferences, and similar matters with others (Patel et al. 2023). The agricultural sector is becoming more and more knowledge-intensive, and academics are constantly developing new sources of knowledge to increase agricultural productivity. At the regional, national, and international levels, there has been a significant accumulation of knowledge and information. Communities only receive external ideas, fresh information, and emerging technologies through the process of communication (Kumar et al. 2023). The timely dissemination of the generated information to the stakeholders is still crucial for its efficient application in real-world situations (Joshi 2022). This necessitates offering timely, simple access to vital information for farmers and farm women through various means owing to the reason that not only women are engaged in household activities but also play a crucial role in farm activities.

Farm women are the foundation of agriculture, just as the farmer is the industry's body. Farm women split their time between the home and the fields. The majority of farm women actively participate in household and agricultural tasks. No matter where they live, women need information on a range of subjects, such as family health, food and nutrition, family planning, child education, credit, and government schemes and services, but the same rural women need information at the expense of government buildings, projects, and programmes for their involvement in agriculture and household activities (Verma et al. 2019). In this sense, the media has a significant impact on how farm women are informed. It has emerged as one of the powerful sources of seeking relevant scientific information by our farm women (Rani and Lal 2019; Chaudhari et al., 2022; Kishor et al., 2022; Krushnpalsinh and Vinaya, 2020).

There is a considerable degree of influence today from the mass media. From literature to the internet, it has a catalytic effect on a large portion of the population. To spread new technologies and promote knowledge and behavioural changes in farmers' and farm women's attitudes, the mass media plays a pivotal role in providing consumers with useful information through a variety of sources and channels. Despite radio and television having the fastest rates of development

in the mass media, newspapers offer additional advantages, including a clear format, a wealth of knowledge, and influence. A large population still depend a lot on print media sources such as, newspapers and magazines. Newspapers are often published magazines that include editorial, critical, and analytical articles as well as advertisements, special reports, pictures, and comics. Newspapers can also frequently and conspicuously cover specific topics, and they have a big part in inspiring readers to adopt fresh viewpoints, increase their awareness of various problems, and learn new things (Khan et al. 2020). Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to evaluate newspaper reading behaviour of farm women and to identify the information dissemination pattern.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To analyse newspaper reading behaviour of farm women
- (2) To identify the information dissemination pattern

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in the five agro-climatic zones of Punjab State: Sub-Mountain Undulating Zone I, Undulating Plain Zone II, Central Plain Zone III, Western Plain Zone IV, and Western Zone V. The study focused on two regional newspapers, “*Ajit*” and “*Jagbani*” which have the highest circulation in rural areas. The district with the highest number of subscribers was picked from each agroclimatic zone. Two blocks were randomly selected from each of the selected districts. The next step was to select twenty farm women from each block. Accordingly, two hundred farm women made up the study’s sample.

Data collection involved using a pre-tested interview

schedule. The data were collected and transferred to excel based spreadsheet in coding form. Statistical tools were performed including frequencies, percentages and weighted arithmetic mean, Karl Pearson Coefficient of correlation (r) and Multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Newspaper readership pattern among farm women

The data in Table 1 depicts the newspaper readership pattern among farm women. It was stated that 33.50 per cent of respondents subscribed the newspaper for more than 20 years followed by respondents who subscribed the newspaper for less than 5 years and 10-15 years with 24.00 per cent and 21.00 per cent, respectively. Only 4.00 per cent of the respondents subscribed the newspaper for 15-20 years. The results further revealed that 37.00 per cent of the respondent’s read newspaper on the daily basis followed by respondents who read the newspaper weekly and fortnightly with 23.00 per cent and 19.00 per cent, respectively. Whereas, very small percentage of respondents i.e., 2 per cent read the newspaper on monthly basis.

In case of preference time of reading, majority of the respondents (80.59%) preferred anytime for reading the newspaper. However, 12.35 per cent of the respondents prefer to read the newspaper only in afternoon. It was also found that same percentage of respondents i.e., 3.53 per cent prefer to read the newspaper during morning and evening time. Additionally, large proportion of the respondents (61.76 %) spent more than 1 hour daily for reading the newspaper, while remaining respondents i.e., 38.24 per cent devoted less than 1 hour for reading the newspaper. The findings were in contrary with the results founded by Singh (2017).

Table 1 : Distribution of respondents according to their newspaper readership pattern

(n=200)

Parameter	Zone I %	Zone II %	Zone III %	Zone IV %	Zone V %	Overall %
Years of subscription						
Less than 5 years	27.50	22.50	22.50	22.50	25.00	24.00
5-10 years	22.50	15.00	15.00	17.50	17.50	17.50
10-15 years	17.50	27.50	17.50	15.00	27.50	21.00
15-20 years	2.50	2.50	7.50	5.00	2.50	4.00
More than 20 years	30.00	32.50	37.50	40.00	27.50	33.50
Frequency of reading						
Daily	42.50	27.50	47.50	37.50	30.00	37.00
Twice a week	2.50	2.50	10.00	2.50	2.50	4.00
Weekly	22.50	27.50	20.00	15.00	30.00	23.00
Fortnightly	17.50	15.00	15.00	22.50	25.00	19.00
Monthly	2.50	-	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.00

Parameter	Zone I %	Zone II %	Zone III %	Zone IV %	Zone V %	Overall %
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.00	15.00
Preferred time of reading						
Morning	2.86	-	7.89	6.25	-	3.53
Afternoon	8.57	13.79	7.89	18.75	13.89	12.35
Evening	2.86	3.45	5.26	6.25	-	3.53
Anytime	85.71	82.76	78.95	68.75	86.11	80.59
Time devoted to reading						
Less than 1 hour	34.29	41.38	36.84	34.38	44.44	38.24
More than 1 hour	65.71	58.62	63.16	65.63	55.56	61.76

Thus, it can be concluded from the data majority of the respondents subscribed newspaper from more than twenty years and read newspaper on daily basis during anytime of the day for more than one hour.

Frequency of perusal of various literature items by the respondents

The data in Table 2 present the frequency of perusal of various literature items by the respondents namely, Editorial column, Lookout of the pictures, Household related articles, Agriculture related articles/news, Headlines/News, Finance, Advertisements, Matrimonial, Sports, Politics, Religious, Entertainment, Stories. Except finance (15.58 %), matrimonial (76.88 %) and religious (15.58 %), a similar percentage of respondents can be seen in each literature item i.e., 15.08 per cent which represents the number of respondents who never read any of the above literature item.

It was found from the data that nearly sixty per cent of the respondents sometimes prefer to read editorial column followed by 25.63 per cent who always read the editorial column. However, a large proportion of the respondents (66.83 %) were found to be interested in only looking out at pictures rather than context. While, 18.09 per cent of respondents sometimes lookout at pictures.

In case of household related articles, large proportion of the respondents (60.80 %) prefer to read the articles always. While, 24.17 per cent of the respondents read articles related to household sometimes while reading other literature items. Same trend was followed in case of agricultural related articles/ news i.e., majority of the respondents (51.76 %) read agricultural regarding articles and 33.17 per cent respondents sometimes read the agricultural articles or news.

Table 2 : Frequency of perusal of various literature items by the respondents (n=200)

Items	Zone I %	Zone II %	Zone III %	Zone IV %	Zone V %	Overall %
Editorial column						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	65.00	47.50	62.50	55.00	66.67	59.30
Always	22.50	25.00	32.50	25.00	23.08	25.63
Lookout of the pictures						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	17.50	17.50	20.00	15.00	20.51	18.09
Always	70.00	55.00	75.00	65.00	69.23	66.83
Household related articles						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	22.50	20.00	25.00	22.50	30.77	24.17
Always	65.00	52.50	70.00	57.50	58.97	60.80
Agriculture related articles/news						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	35.00	25.00	35.00	32.50	38.46	33.17

Items	Zone I %	Zone II %	Zone III %	Zone IV %	Zone V %	Overall %
Always	52.50	47.50	60.00	47.50	51.28	51.76
Headlines/News						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	50.00	45.00	52.50	45.00	61.54	50.75
Always	37.50	27.50	42.50	35.00	28.21	34.17
Finance						
Never	12.50	30.00	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.58
Sometimes	77.50	67.50	77.50	67.50	89.74	75.88
Always	10.00	2.50	17.50	12.50	-	8.54
Advertisements						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	65.00	52.50	67.50	50.00	69.23	60.80
Always	22.50	20.00	27.50	30.00	20.51	24.12
Matrimonial						
Never	80.00	67.50	80.00	67.50	89.74	76.88
Sometimes	12.50	27.50	17.50	20.00	10.26	17.59
Always	7.50	5.00	2.50	12.50	-	5.53
Sports						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	82.50	67.50	84.50	72.50	89.74	78.89
Always	5.00	5.00	12.50	7.50	-	6.03
Politics						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	60.00	50.00	60.00	47.50	71.79	57.79
Always	27.50	22.50	35.00	32.50	17.95	27.14
Religious						
Never	10.00	27.50	5.00	20.00	15.38	15.58
Sometimes	42.50	40.00	45.00	35.00	56.41	43.72
Always	47.50	32.50	50.00	45.00	28.41	40.70
Entertainment						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	72.50	62.50	72.50	60.00	82.05	69.85
Always	15.00	10.00	22.50	20.00	7.69	15.08
Stories						
Never	12.50	27.50	5.00	20.00	10.26	15.08
Sometimes	52.50	45.00	57.50	40.00	64.10	51.76
Always	35.00	27.50	37.50	40.00	25.64	33.17

Further, the table 2 inferred that half of the percentage of the respondents sometimes read headlines/ news and 34.17 per cent of the respondents always show interest in reading headlines / news. On the other hand, majority of the respondents (75.88 %) read finance news sometimes while reading newspaper and only 8.54 per cent of the respondents

read it always while reading.

A large proportion of the respondents (60.80 %) see advertisements sometimes while reading news in newspaper and 24.12 per cent of the respondents always see advertisements. Only minimal percentage of respondents (5.53 %) read matrimonial column. While, 17.59 per cent of

the respondents sometimes read the same.

In the category of sports and politics, the majority of the respondents i.e., 78.89 per cent and 57.79 per cent read sometimes this kind of news. Whereas, 27.14 per cent of respondents always read politics news. Only 6.03 per cent of the respondents prefer to read sports news always. Afterwards, in the category of religious news, a small difference of 3.02 per cent can be seen in the percentage of respondents who read religious news sometimes and on always basis.

Table 2 further depicts that majority of the respondents (69.85 %) sometimes showed interest in reading entertainment news and nearly half of the respondents showed interest in reading stories. While, 33.17 per cent of the respondents always read stories and nearly half of the

percentage of respondents compared story readers prefer to read entertainment news always.

Dissemination behaviour

Dissemination behaviour in the present context refers to sharing of information by the farm women with others. It consists of type of disseminations and purpose of dissemination of respondents.

(a) Information dissemination pattern

Response of the respondents were sought with respect to the nature of the communicatee viz. family, friends, relatives and neighbours, with whom the respondents shared the information.

Table 3 : Information dissemination pattern of selected newspapers

(n=200)

Pattern	Zone I	Zone II	Zone III	Zone IV	Zone V	Overall
With family	2.22	1.97	2.27	2.17	2.30	2.19
With friends	1.27	1.12	1.25	1.10	1.17	1.18
With relatives	1.40	1.20	1.25	1.25	1.30	1.28
With neighbours	1.42	1.17	1.25	1.12	1.25	1.24

Table 3 displays that the majority of the respondents with mean score 2.19 disseminate information with in family members followed by relatives (1.28), neighbours (1.24) and friends (1.18). While, comparing zone-wise data, it was reported that with mean score 2.19, majority of the respondents of agro-climatic zone V disseminated information with their family members followed by agro-climatic zone III (2.27), agro-climatic zone I (2.22), agro-climatic zone IV (2.17) and agro-climatic zone II (1.97), respectively. Additionally, in agro-climatic zone III same number of respondents with mean score 1.25 shared information with family, friends, relatives and neighbours. The result opposes the findings of

Chaitra (2017).

(b) Reasons related to dissemination of information

The reasons for disseminating the information are given in Table 4. The large proportion of readers (68.00 %) disseminated the information for the purpose that others can utilize the information followed by 20.50 per cent and 11.00 per cent of respondents who shared the messages to develop awareness of improved practices among others and for the purpose that others can contribute to the information, respectively.

Table 4 : Reasons related to dissemination of information

(n=200)

Reasons	Zone I %	Zone II %	Zone III %	Zone IV %	Zone V %	Overall %
Others can utilize the information	67.50	60.00	62.50	70.00	80.00	68.00
Others can contribute to the information	10.00	15.00	10.00	7.50	12.50	11.00
To develop awareness of improved practices among others	25.00	12.50	35.00	17.50	12.50	20.50
To create goodwill of oneself	-	-	2.50	-	-	0.50

On agro-climatic zone wise comparison, it was reported that the large proportion of the respondents of agro-climatic zone V (80.00 %), agro-climatic zone IV (70.00 %), agro-climatic zone II (60.00 %), agro-climatic zone I (67.50 %) and agro-climatic zone III (62.50 %) disseminated

information for the reason that others can utilize it. Whereas, among all the agro-climatic zones only one respondent from agro-climatic zone III disseminated the information for the purpose of creating goodwill of herself.

Relationship of socio-personal variables with dissemination behaviour

Table 5 specifies that socio-personal variables such as age, educational level and size of family were positively correlated with dissemination behaviour. These relationships were also resulted as statistically significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance.

Table 5 : Relationship of socio-personal variables with dissemination behaviour (n=200)

Variables	Age	Educational Level	Size of family
Dissemination behaviour	0.280**	0.283**	0.154*
** Significant at the 0.01 level			
* Significant at the 0.05 level			

Table 6. Relative contribution of socio-personal variables to dissemination behaviour

(n=200)

Independent variables	Regression coefficient	Standard error	Standard regression coefficient	't'-value	Significance
Age	0.081	0.025	0.318	3.199**	0.002
Educational Level	0.041	0.020	0.172	2.079**	0.039
Size of family	0.107	0.042	0.212	2.564**	0.011
** Significant at the 0.01 level					

CONCLUSION

It may be concluded from this study that majority of the respondents subscribed newspaper from more than twenty years and read newspaper on daily basis during anytime of the day for more than one hour. However, looking only at the pictures, household and agricultural related articles were read regularly by majority of the respondents. Furthermore, majority of the respondents disseminated the gained information with their family members only. This restricts the interaction outside the family. Therefore, motivation is required to promote dissemination of messages outside the family to farm women.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

REFERENCES

- Chaitra, G. (2017) *Readability and readers analysis of selected agricultural publications in Kannada*. M.Sc. Thesis. University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga, India.
- Chaudhari, H. C., Tunvar, M. A. and Parmar, H. A. (2022) Association between selected characteristics of the farmers and their newspaper reading behaviour. *Guj. J. Ext. Edu.* 34(2):155-158. <https://doi.org/10.56572/gjoee.2022.34.2.0032>.
- Ghanghas, B. S., Chahal, P. K. and Rohilla, A. K. (2020) Communication pattern of prime source of farm information: agro input dealers of Haryana. *J. Community. Mobilization. Sustain. Dev.* 15(1): 135-141.
- Joshi, K. (2022) Need based information media for farmers in hill regions of Uttarakhand: implications for extension. *Indian. J. Ext. Educ.* 58(1): 136-141.
- Khan, N., Siddiqui, B. N., Khan, N., Ahmad, Z., Ismail, S., Javed, H. H., Ali, S., Kazim, R., Azam, T., Abdullah and Kasi, A. K. (2020) Mass Media Role in Agricultural and Rural Development. *Int. J. Adv. Res. Biol. Sci.* 7(4): 199-209.
- Kishor Kumar. N., Savaliya, V. J. and Pranav. R. (2023) Communication behaviour of scientists of krishi vigyan kendras. *Guj. J. Ext. Edu.* 35(1):115-124. <https://doi.org/10.56572/gjoee.2023.35.1.0024>.
- Krushnpalsinh. I. Parmar and Vinaya Kumar H. M. (2020) Farmers' perception and their suggestions for

It can be inferred from the findings that with the growth in socio-personal variables i.e., age, educational level and size of family, the dissemination behaviour of the respondents increases with respect to selected print media.

Relative contribution of socio-personal variables to dissemination behaviour

As per Table 6, age, educational level and family size were the significant variables which were observed to be contributing towards enhancing the dissemination behaviour of respondents. The absolute per unit contribution values of age, educational level and family size were 0.318, 0.172 and 0.212 respectively. As total contribution is around 7 per cent, it could be inferred that there were several other independent variables also which might have affected the variation in the dissemination behaviour of the farm women.

- improving the effectiveness of Krishi Jivan Farm Magazin. *Gujarat Journal Extension Education*, 31(1): 155-159.
- Kumar, K. N., Savaliya, V. J. and Pranav, R. (2023) Communication behaviour of scientists o f Krishi Vigyan Kendras. *Guj. J. Ext. Edu.* 35(1): 116-124.
- Mishra, A., Yadav, O. P., Yadav, V., Mishra, S. and Kumar, N. (2020) Benefits of use of ICT services perceived by farmers for acquiring agricultural information in central U.P. *Indian. J. Ext. Educ.* 56(1): 86-89.
- Patel, P. C., Patel, M. C. and Sipai, S. A. (2023) Scale to measure oral communication skills for agricultural personnel. *Guj. J. Ext. Edu.* 35(2): 1-2.
- Rani, S. and Lal, M. (2019) Media effectiveness on rural women in Haryana for vegetables cultivation. *Indian. J. Ext. Educ.* 55(1): 21-27.
- Singh, H. (2017) *Newspaper reading habits of rural women*. M.Sc. Thesis. Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, India.
- Verma, R. K., Wason, M., Singh, P., Sarkar, S. and Bhowmik, A. (2019) Information need, perceived credibility of information sources among rural women. *Indian. J. Ext. Educ.* 55(2): 42-46.

Received : March 2024 : Accepted : June 2024