Pakistan Journal of Law, Analysis and Wisdom
Volume No. 2, Issue No. 2, September 2023
e-ISSN: 2959-0825, p-ISSN: 2959-0817
http://pjlaw.com.pk

Information Revolution & Agriculture Development
A Survey of District Bahawalpur (Punjab)

Rashid Minhas
Assistant Office of Assistant Director Agriculture Director Agriculture EXT Bahawalpur
minhasdr22@gmail.com

Dr. Awais H. Gillani
Assistant Professor, Department of Media Studies, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur

Muhammad Ahmad Hameed
Producer at NEO NEWS, Islamabad

Abstract

The farming community views agricultural periodicals as an efficient instrument for disseminating agricultural knowledge. Various governmental and commercial entities in Pakistan employed this method to speed up the spread of agricultural innovation. The purpose of the current study was to examine the function and contribution of agricultural periodicals in distributing agricultural knowledge among farmers. The district of Bahawalpur served as the study's area. 52 followers of five different agricultural magazines were chosen at random as the sample size for the study. The data were gathered using a pre-tested and verified postal questionnaire. Through the use of the program SPSS, the data that was obtained was examined. The study's findings show that young farmers responded more favourably to agricultural periodicals than did older farmers in terms of their value for crop yield, the veracity of the information, and its applicability. It is recommended that the number of subscribers to agri-publications be expanded for the agricultural community to receive the most coverage possible.

Keywords: *Information Revolution, Agricultural Periodicals, Innovation, Young Farmers, Old Farmers*

1. Introduction:

The media is seen as a vital tool for educating farmers, both literate and illiterate, about current agricultural methods. After an influx of cable channels in the Pakistani media landscape, there has been a notable change in people's access to information with a diversity of viewpoints and feedback. The 'time' between news events and news delivery has reduced with the sophistication of communication technologies (Raza, 2019). Farm and home broadcasts in Pakistan with an agricultural focus were first established in 2001 to inform farmers about the use of various technologies to advance the agricultural sector. There are now roughly 50 of these radio sets spread across the nation. The media might be a useful medium for disseminating agricultural knowledge and the most recent technological advancements because the majority of Pakistani citizens are actively involved in agriculture (Malik, 2000). Farmers can readily comprehend operations, technology, and instruction through the media. Newspapers and agricultural magazines are frequently utilized in the mass media. They are essential

in the dissemination of agricultural knowledge among farmers with literacy. The country's rising literacy rate opens up new opportunities and possibilities for communicating through print media. Print media expanded the reach of communication (Mohsin, 1997). People can afford to buy and read them since they are inexpensive. Because the messages are permanently imprinted and have a high storage value, they are excellent for reference and study.

In Pakistan, agricultural journalism is a relatively new phenomenon (Muhammad, 2005). It only came into being five decades ago. It is currently becoming more significant, especially because Faisalabad now has an agricultural university (Cheema, 2000). Given the rise in literacy, print media, namely agricultural magazines, now play a bigger part in educating the farming community about new agricultural techniques. Every province in Pakistan has a farm magazine, which is mostly published in regional and official languages. The majority of farmers in Punjab live in poverty, which is caused by their inability to obtain up-to-date information. It seems logical that information poverty causes a lack of resources and marginalization (Ashraf, 2008). According to a study, 40% of farmers utilized print media in the form of agricultural periodicals to obtain knowledge about their industry. Print media may therefore be quite useful in educating farmers about illnesses, pest control, and other topics relating to agriculture (Abbas et al., 2003; Muhammad, 2005). By sending their complaints and queries to the editors, farmers may also acquire the right assistance from professionals through these media to deal with the new issues. Print media can deal with upcoming agricultural issues and support farmers in finding solutions. The practice of creating agricultural publications for the farming community in Punjab is growing. In the current study, an effort has been made to look into the function of print media in Bahawalpur district's agricultural information transmission.

2. Materials and Methods

By disseminating agricultural knowledge In District Bahawalpur, the study sought to analyse the impact of agricultural periodicals on farm production. The three tehsils that make up the study district are Bahawalpur, Yazman, Ahmadpur East, and Hasilpur. The study employed a cross-sectional research design. the readers of Zirrat Nama, Kissan Time, Kissan Risala, Nidia-i-Kissan, and Zaria Digest, five agricultural periodicals. DOA. (2009) The study's target population consisted of the five publications mentioned above. Using a straightforward random selection procedure, a sample of 52 respondents was selected from the subscription lists.

Data were gathered using a mail questionnaire that had been pre-validated and tested. At the respondents' homes, mail-in questionnaires were delivered with instructions to complete and return to the researcher. To interpret the findings, simple frequency and percentage calculations were used. Additionally, the cross-tabulation was used to help explain the findings.

3. Selection of study area

Although Bahawalpur is a city in Pakistan that is known as the "city of the nawabs," it has historically been a center for the production of wheat, cotton, and sugarcane. Even though this region has transitioned from an agricultural to an industrial economy, the majority of its residents continue to work in agriculture, doubtless as a result of the industry's rapid mechanization, which has polluted underground water and left the soil unproductive. While choosing this district as the research location, a lot of variables were taken into account. To begin with, this region has a diverse population in terms

of socio-ethnic makeup. Second, the variety of land ownership is a feature of Bahawalpur (formerly known as the city of Nawabs) (Ahmad, 1997).

Thirdly, because of its physical proximity to distant places and medium distance from governing institutions, this district is somewhat vulnerable to modernization (Cheema, 2000). Fourth, Bahawalpur has a variety of crops and cattle (DOA, 2008). Fifth, according to Iqbal (1984), the rural community is moderately educated. Sixthly, according to Majeed (1994), this district is transitioning from a traditional agro-based economy to an agro-urbanized economy. Last but not least, having worked in Bahawalpur's institutions gave you good exposure to the city as well as a supportive environment and resources for gathering data on equality.

4. Research Population

All of the reading literate farmers in the Bahawalpur area were included in this study since it was specifically interested in the relationship between agricultural publications and production. The majority of illiterate farmers in the chosen district were not given access to agricultural publications, despite being deemed a study population. This is one of the drawbacks of agricultural publications, which is demonstratedin this instance by an evaluation of the effects of agricultural publications on farm productivity (Saeed, 1993).

4.1 Data Collection

On the basis of the available sample of fifty-two respondents, fifty-two literate farmers were chosen in order to represent the total population. To guarantee unbiased and uninfluenced replies, the survey method was utilized to gather the data individually. Before the survey, the respondents were given a brief explanation of the study's objectives. It eliminated any hesitation or suspicion the respondent could have had, which made it easier to record honest replies (Wimmer and Dominick, 2003).

4.2 Results and Discussion

The acceptance of innovation by farmers will have a significant impact on the function of agriculture publications. Making it feasible for the farmer to use an agricultural instrument properly comes after it has been created. Diffusion of invention is a very time-consuming method for this aim. The social and economicconditions of the community, as well as its beliefs, play a significant role in this process of innovation adoption. A key factor in the spread of innovation is agricultural publications. These books aid in modifying outdated land-forming agricultural practices. The link and interaction between publications and the dissemination of these publications' goals are established via fairly common phenomena. The primary goal of these magazines focused on agriculture is to inform and inspire farmers. Therefore, in this regard, scientific research is published in these journals to offer a fresh perspective and a new approach to crop and animal husbandry. There are a lot of change agents who want to hasten the adoption of technologies. One way to do this is to disseminate information about new concepts more quickly or effectively, which will hasten the creation of knowledge. Agricultural publications encourage future adopters to use that invention in this way. According to the information in Table 1, 11 out of the 52 respondents who were between the ages of 18 and 25 believed that using agricultural knowledge had boosted their productivity. Similarly, 7 respondents who fall into the 26–35 age range report that using agricultural magazines enhanced their production. It shows that respondents between the ages of 18 and 25 gave a high rating of the usefulness of the agricultural

information in the publications, whereas respondents between the ages of 36 and 45 gave a poorrating. The table shows that children used agricultural publications more frequently. These outcomes are consistent with

Table 1. Cross tabulation of age of respondent with their improved yield by using agri. publications

		Improve yield by using Agri. publications				Total
		Yes	No	Public	To some extent / undecided	
Age of the Respondnt	18-25	10	3	2	1	10
	26-35	5	1	0	1	15
	36-45	5	5	0	3	10
	46 andabove	7	4	3	2	15
Total		27	13	5	7	50

Table 2. Cross tabulation of age of respondent with the practicability of Information got from agriculturalpublications.

		Practicability of information from Agri. publication				Total
		Yes	No	To some extent	Undecided	
Age of the Respondent	11	1	2	2	2	16
	5	2	3	4	2	12
	4	5	1	0	1	7
	10	1	5	2	2	17
Total		9	7	11	8	52

Findings showed young farmers were more educated and inclined to new technologies than senior farmers, according to Muhammad et al. (2008), Iqbal (2010), and Majeed (2005).

Table 2 shows that 10 and 9 respondents in the 18 to 25 and 46 and older age groups, respectively, said that the agricultural knowledge provided by agri. periodicals applied to actual farm situations. However, just 4 and 3 respondents from the age groups 26–35 and 36–45, respectively, agreed that the information was useful. It suggests that the publications were well-received by young farmers. These findings are consistent with those of Saeed (2011) and Wimmer and Dominik (2020), who found that young farmers had a higher favourable opinion of the applicability of agricultural information in agricultural magazines.

Table 2 shows that 11 respondents who fall into the 18–25 age group believed the information supplied to them by an agricultural journal was accurate. However, just 2 respondents in the 36–45 age group thought the material was accurate. It again shows that young farmers were seen in a better light than older ones. These findings concur with those of Ashraf (2008) and Asghar (1990), who found that young farmers had a more favourable opinion of the veracity of the information offered by agricultural

publications than did older ones. Figure 1 displays the frequency-format total data from the three tables. The degree of innovation and uptake among young farmers is high. It is a result of increased knowledge about technological farming.

5. Conclusion

The study's findings may lead one to draw the general conclusion that agricultural publications' standards need to be raised in terms of the applicability of their suggestions. The items should also be in accordance with the needs of the diverse farming community. Additionally, there is a need to improve communication among farmers of all ranks. Conclusion: Younger farmers rated agricultural media information's usefulness, applicability, and validity higher than older farmers did. Young farmers should thus be the primary audience for the organizations that produce knowledge about agricultural innovations.

References:

Abbas, M., A.D. Shiekh, S. Muhammad and M. Shafaq. 2003. Role of print media in the dissemination of recommended sugarcane production technologies among farmers in central Punjab-Pakistan. Int. J. Agri. Biol., 5: 26-29.

Asghar, M. 1990. Evaluation of extension teaching methods used for the adoption of recommended water management practices by the farmers in Niaz Beg sub- project area, Lahore. M.Sc. Thesis, Department of Mass Comunication., Islamia Univrsity. of Bahawalpur.

Ashraf, I. 2008 and Analysis of communication interventions of extension field staff with farmers under centralized extension in the Punjab, Pakistan.

Ahmad, I. 1997. Study of the impact of information sources and socio-economic conditions on the adoption of Modern Agriculture practices in the rural areas of tehsil Bahawalpur. M.Sc. (Hons.) thesis, Dept. of Rural Soc.

Cheema, S. M. 2000. Socio economic issues in the adoption of modern agricultural technologies in Rural Bahawalpur,M.Sc. (Hons.) these Dept. of Rural Soc., Univ. of Agri., Faislanbad.

DOA. 2009. Information Government of Punjab,Lahore DOA. 2008. Schedule of visit of field assistant under Hub Programme at village level in District Bahawalpur (Unpublished) Prepared by District Officer Agriculture (Extension), Bahawalpur.

Iqbal, M. 1984. Impact of radio program”Ravi tey Chenab” broadcast by radio station Bahawalpur on the adoptionof agricultural innovations.

Majeed, A. 1994. A study into factors affecting adoption of recommended weedicides for the wheat crop by the farmers of tehsil Bahawalpur. M. Sc. (Hons.) thesis, Dept. of Mass Communication.

Malik, S. 2000. The role of mass media in diffusing modern agricultural techniques in

Distt. Bahawalpur.

Mohsin, M. 1997. Impact of mass media in diffusing agricultural technologies. M. Sc. Thesis, Dept. of rural Soc., Univ. of Agri., Faisalabad.

Muhammad, S. 2005. Agricultural Extension: Strategies and Skills, Unitech Communications, Faisalabad, Pakistan.

Muhammad, S., T.E. Lodhi and G. A. Khan.2008. An in depth analysis of the electronic media for the development of a strategy to enhance their role in agricultural technology transfer in the Punjab, Pakistan. Final Report of Research Project submitted to Higher Education Commission, Islamabad.

Raza, M. R. (2019). Tracing Media Audience Relationship Through Agenda Setting A Study of Cable News Channels in Pakistan. Journal of Peace Development and Communication, Volume 03-Issue 01 January –June 2019. Doi: https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC.0301.03

Saeed, A.1993. A study into the factors affecting adoption of improved agricultural practices by the farmers of tehsil Faisalabad. M.Sc.Thesis, Dept. of Rural Soc., Univ. of Agri.

Wimmer, R.D and J.R. Dominick. 2003. *Mass media research – An introduction.* Thomason Wadsworth, Mexico. p .427.