



# Farmers Perception about Print Media in Agricultural Information Dissemination: A Review

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to evaluate the role and importance of print media in agricultural information dissemination among the farmers community. The mass media can be a powerful tool for the dissemination of information in rural areas. Print media can be used well if they are relevant to the targeted audience and provide the information they seek. For this study, data were collected using structured questionnaire, distributed randomly among the farmers in three selected villages of Gandhinagar district in Gujarat. The data was analyzed using the Microsoft Excel and bar charts were prepared for better understanding and interpretation. The finding shows that fellow farmers and print media are the important sources of agricultural information among the farmers community. However, based on the rating of various sources of information by respondents, the print media got first, fellow farmers got second and internet got third position. Among the different form of print media, the most used form of print media for dissemination of agricultural information was pamphlets followed by magazines, newspapers, posters, books/booklets, leaflets and journals.

**Key words:** Agriculture, Dissemination, Farmers, Information, Print Media, Sources.

India is the second most populous country in the world, with a population of 1.27 billion. India is leading producer of milk, pulses and jute and also ranks as the second largest producer of rice, wheat, sugarcane, groundnut, vegetables, fruits and cotton in the world. India is also one of the top producer of spices, fish, poultry and livestock. Agriculture contributes to 23 per cent of total gross domestic product and employed 59 per cent of the country's total work force in 2016. In India, 70 per cent of its rural households still depend primarily on agriculture for their livelihood. Agriculture, with its allied sectors, is the largest source of livelihoods in India (<http://www.fao.org>). Contribution of agriculture in GDP has gradually declined from 1951 to 2011. This is due to non-adoption or less awareness of the latest agricultural technologies, information and poor farm management by the farmers. As far as farmers' education is concerned, it aims to provide them with the latest agricultural knowledge, information, research, technologies and equipment with the necessary skills and develops their attitude towards adoption of the same for modern farming.

The mass media can be a powerful tool for dissemination of information in the rural areas. Mass media includes both print and electronic media. Print media includes words, pictures and diagrams to convey accurate and clear mass scale information. Farmers' community can use printed material as a permanent reminder for long period of time and can use many times. Print media can be used effectively if their shape and content are tailored to the need base and as per interests of the target audience, offer options and facilitate decision making, encourage technology adaptation to the local situation. They provide more explicit treatment of sustainability with regard to technical and practical content and provide information on the economic and financial implications of any recommended technologies, including

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the uncertainties and risks involved. The present paper is based on a study conducted on farmers' perception about print media in agricultural information dissemination.

## Literature review

Lot of research has been taken up about the contributions of print materials in agricultural development across the world. Atoma (2008) conducted a study about the agricultural news coverage in the print media. The three types of newspapers including Vanguard, Pointer and New Nigerian were covered under study. Among these three newspapers ordinary low level agricultural news coverage were found. The pointer newspaper recorded only 6.70 per cent of the total news items followed by the Vanguard and the New Nigerian registered only 2.20 and 1.10 per cent of the total news items, respectively.

Patrika (2007) found that print media had been created new opportunities for the effective dissemination of agricultural information in India (print media including farm magazines, books, newspapers, bulletins, pamphlets, leaflets, folders and wall papers). Among these various forms

of print media bulletins and farm magazines were the effective and important sources of agricultural information among the farmers community, as they provided a diversity of information related to crop production technology, subsidiary occupation such as fishing, sheep, cattle, goat, food processing and sericulture and agro-based industries. He further stated that print medias were effective means of communication as they provided more time to think, refresh the memory, durable for keeping record. Irfan *et al.* (2006) found that newspaper was most effective source of information among the printed material followed by posters, charts, books/booklets, magazines and bulletins.

Mooventhan (2016) conducted the experimental study in the Tamil Nadu districts of Coimbatore and Trichy. The survey found that the majority of agricultural web education learners were in the 24- to 53-year-old age range and that they were unable to view online websites because they were not aware of web education. This may be the cause of the rural agricultural communities' incapacity to access and make use of contemporary technology, including newspapers, periodicals and gadgets. Few farmers were discovered who were familiar with more than five agricultural websites. According to this report, farmers are keen to receive instruction online. It was discovered that factors including educational level, media exposure, inventiveness, farm status and agricultural experience operate as crucial factors.

As highlighted by Sharma (2019), because of their lack of knowledge, information and education in numerous areas, hill women of Uttarakhand state were experiencing a variety of issues. Therefore, it's essential to spread knowledge and educate people about numerous new topics in order to empower the hill women. The majority of respondents get their knowledge on farming from their neighbors, followed by input dealers and some time from Mobiles and televisions.

Chaudhary (2021) completed the study on usage of organic manures and found that it was declining year over year, possibly as a result of its decreasing availability and lack of understanding about its long-term advantages. The perceptions of organic farmers were high in terms of profitability and input accessibility and medium in terms of ease of use, efficacy, adaptability and cost-benefit. The organic farmers had to deal with issues including the unclear definition of organic farming, the tendency of organic sources to release plant nutrients slowly and the lack of bio fertilizers and bio pesticides. As per the above literature study the result revealed, due to its less availability and no knowledge about new technology, new theory in farming the farmers cannot get benefited for long term.

### Objectives of the study

1. To find the preferred sources for agriculture information among the farmers community.
2. To identify the maximum usefulness of different forms of print media.
3. To find the different factors that determines the effectiveness of print media.

### Methodology

There are number of progressive districts and villages in agriculture production and adoption of new technologies in Gujarat. Out of which, this research covers Gandhinagar district. The study study carried out in the period of January to August 2021 which covered three villages viz., Kanipur, Karoli and Lavad, having more than 3000 population and comparatively good farming practices. Primary data were collected using structured questionnaire in Gujarati language. A list of progressive farmers was first prepared with the help of local village level worker and from other sources from all the selected villages. Total 90 questionnaires were distributed randomly to the listed farmers in three selected villages. 30 questionnaires were distributed to the listed farmers in each village. Out of 90 questionnaires, 72 filled questionnaires were returned by the respondents. Out of 72 filled questionnaires, finally 60 complete filled questionnaires were used for data analysis and discussion of results. Researchers used the Microsoft Excel tool for data analysis and prepared bar chart for interpretation and for better understanding of results. Villagewise sample and percentage of respondents from each village covered in this study is as given below:

#### Selection of sample

Villages	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Kanipur	22	36.67
Karoli	18	30.00
Lavad	20	33.33
Total	60	100

Farmers always need information for doing scientific farming. For this purpose they use various information sources like radio, television, print media and extension field staffs, private sectors, NGOs and fellow farmers. Farmers may get information from various sources. Their responses about use of these sources are given in Table 1.

The data presented in Table 1 shows that 100 per cent farmers use fellow farmers and 93.33 per cent farmers use print media for getting information on farming activities. The study also indicates that 71.67 per cent respondents use radio, 81.67 per cent respondents use television, 73.33 per cent follow private sector sources, while 68.33 per cent use internet as information their sources. It is proved that the farmers used more than one sources to satisfy their agricultural information needs.

Table 2 indicates ranking of information sources based on their contribution in the dissemination of agricultural information. The most contributing sources for agricultural information was print media, which ranked the first rank (93.33%), fellow farmers were ranked the second rank (88.33%) and internet were ranked the third rank (86.67%), while extension field staffs (48.33%) were ranked the eighth among all major sources of agriculture information. It means majority of farmers are depend on traditional sources like print media, others fellow farmers and also latest sources like internet, television *etc.*

**Table 1:** Respondents' distribution based on agricultural information sources.

Agricultural information	No. of respondents	Percentage
Radio	43	71.67
Television	49	81.67
Print media	56	93.33
Extension field staffs	39	65.00
Private sectors	44	73.33
NGOs	26	43.33
Fellow farmers	60	100.00
Internet	41	68.33

(Multiple choice question).

**Table 2:** Ranking of information sources based on their contribution in the dissemination of agricultural information.

Information sources	Rank order	No.	%
Print media	1	56	93.33
Fellow farmers	2	53	88.33
Internet	3	52	86.67
Television	4	41	68.33
Private sectors	5	38	63.33
Radio	6	33	55.00
NGOs	7	31	51.67
Extension field staffs	8	29	48.33

**Table 3:** Ranking of different forms of print media based on their extent of use by the farmers for agricultural information.

Forms of print media	Rank order	No.	%
Pamphlets	1	54	90.00
Magazines	2	51	85.00
Newspapers	3	46	76.67
Posters	4	44	73.33
Books/booklets	5	36	60.00
Leaflets	6	35	58.33
Journals	7	12	20.00
Others	8	10	16.67

**Table 4:** Ranking of different factors that determine the effectiveness of print media.

Factors	Rank order	No.	%
Information quality	1	56	93.33
Newness of information	2	54	90.00
Easy access to print media	3	50	83.33
Relevance of information	4	46	76.67
Interest of farmers	5	43	71.67
Regular publication	6	43	71.67
Cost of print media	7	40	66.67
Farmers literacy level	8	40	66.67
Comprehensiveness	9	36	60.00

It can be noted from Table 3 that the most used form of print media for agricultural information was pamphlets with 90.00 per cent followed by magazines, newspapers, posters, books/booklets, leaflets and journals with 85.00%, 76.67%, 73.33%, 60.00%, 58.33% and 20.00% respectively. Thus pamphlets were reported for highest use while journals being the lowest use among the respondents. It proves that maximum use of print media like pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, posters for dissemination of latest agricultural information.

Table 4 indicate that the important factors that determine the effectiveness of print media in the dissemination of agricultural information were quality of information ranked first rank (93.33%) followed by newness of information ranked second rank (90.00%), easy access to print media ranked third rank (83.33%), while relevance of information ranked fourth rank (76.67%). Comprehensiveness of information ranked last rank that is ninth rank (60.00%) among the respondents.

## Findings

1. The leading agricultural information sources among the farmers are fellow farmers (100%) and print media (93.33%), followed by television (81.67%) for the agricultural information.
2. Majority of the respondents used more than one source to meet their agricultural information needs. The print media (93.33%) got first, fellow farmers (88.33%) got second and internet (86.67%) got third position based on the rating of various information sources by respondents with respect to their contribution in the dissemination of agricultural information.
3. Among the print media, the most used form for agricultural information, the pamphlets (90.00%), magazines (85.00%), newspapers (76.67%) and posters (73.33%) first, second, third and fourth rank, respectively, with regard to their use.
4. Pamphlets (90.00%) were reported for highest use while journals (20.00%) being the lowest use.
5. The quality of information, newness of information, easy access to print media and relevance of information were perceived to be the major factors of effectiveness of print media in the dissemination of agricultural information among farmers.

## Suggestions

The quality and newness of information, easy access to print media and relevance of information were perceived to be the major factors for effectiveness of print media in the dissemination of agricultural information among farmers. Therefore, all these factors must be given important consideration to make the print media as effective information sources. This will require print media, making extension agencies for agricultural purposes to meet the obstructive factors, which affects the effectiveness of print media. The quality of information should be focused in terms

of farmers' need/interest, innovation and relevance of delivering to farmers on time. The government needs to encourage institutional reforms to deliver an effective expansion message through print media.

## CONCLUSION

The study has implications how to improve print media as per farmers demand for more and easy use of this media among the farmers. This study is important because various factors affected in agricultural information dissemination. Conclusively, this study shows that the leading agricultural information sources among the farmers are fellow farmers and print media. Majority of the respondents used more than one sources to meet their agricultural information needs. The most used forms of print media for agricultural information are the pamphlets, magazines, newspapers and posters. The quality and newness of information, easy access to print media and relevance of information were perceived to be the major factors for effectiveness of print media in the dissemination of agricultural information among farmers.

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