

RESEARCH ARTICLE :

Gender perspectives in use of extension services in Maharashtra

■ P. N. ANTWAL AND C. M. BELLURKAR

ARTICLE CHRONICLE :

Received :

22.12.2015;

Revised :

15.03.2016;

Accepted :

16.04.2016

SUMMARY : Present investigation was carried out in six agro-climatic zones of Maharashtra viz., South Konkan Coastal, North Konkan Coastal, Western Ghat, Sub montane, Western Maharashtra Plain and Eastern Vidarbha. From each zone one district, from each district two blocks and from each block five villages were randomly selected. From each village 30 households (30 male and 30 female) were selected randomly. Hence, from each zone 150 households (150 male and 150 female = 300) were randomly selected. The total households selected from six zones were 900 and the total respondents selected were 1800. The results indicated that VLEW, NGO personnel and Bank personnel were known to rural men and women. Frequency of contact was meagre. Demonstration was found to be mostly preferred extension method. Shortage of time, personnel involved are men were the reasons given by the rural women and venue of the programme was not convenient and the programmes were organized without prior notice were the reasons given by the rural men for not availing extension services.

KEY WORDS :

Knowledge,
Frequency of contact,
Extension agent,
Preference,
Extension methods

How to cite this article : Antwal, P.N. and Bellurkar, C.M. (2016). Gender perspectives in use of extension services in Maharashtra. *Agric. Update*, 11(2): 148-153 (DOI : 10.15740/HAS/AU/11.2/148-153).

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

For technology to be successful, it is important that it should serve a useful purpose to the end user. The institution that bridges the gap between farmers and agricultural research scientists is the Agricultural Extension Service. The main objective of Agriculture Extension Services (AES) is to transmit latest technical know-how to the farmers. Besides this, the AES also focuses on enhancing farmers' knowledge about crop techniques and helping them to increase productivity.

Dynamics of socio-economic development

and effective transfer of technology requires a wide array of human skills. In the era of globalization, our extension strategies should not depend only on conventional systems like demonstrations, trainings, radio and TV broadcasts. Extension system should be very fast, need based and look for resources, market and cost benefit ratio (Bahal *et al.*, 2004a and b, 2006).

Utilization of improved agricultural technology by the farmers to a large extent depends upon the effective sources of information and channel to which they are generally exposed directly or indirectly. Transfer of agricultural technology to the

Author for correspondence :

P. N. ANTWAL

All India Coordinated
Research Project,
Department of Home
Science Extension and
Communication
Management, College of
Home Science, Vasanttrao
Naik Marathwada Krishi
Vidyapeeth, PARBHANI
(M.S.) INDIA
Email: snehankit23@rediffmail.com

See end of the article for
authors' affiliations

farmers, to increase their production and productivity has been playing a vital role in agricultural development in India. The use of mass-media was found to be more in progressive village (Kalmesgh and Menon, 1977).

Keeping this in view, the investigation was conducted with the following objectives:

- To study the socio personal profile of respondents.
- To study the knowledge and frequency of contact with extension agents.
- To know the degree of preference of different extension methods by the respondents.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

Present investigation was carried out in six agro-climatic zones of Maharashtra *viz.*, South Konkan Coastal, North Konkan Coastal, Western Ghat, Sub Montane, Western Maharashtra Plain and Eastern Vidarbha. From each zone one district, from each district two blocks and from each block five villages were randomly selected. From each village 30 households and from each household one male and one female, thus, 30 male and 30 female were selected randomly as the respondents. Hence, from each zone 150 households (150 male and 150 female = 300) were randomly selected. The total households selected from six zones were 900 and the total respondents selected were 1800. The data on gender perspectives were collected personally by using the structured interview schedule supplied by the Technical Coordinator (AICRP - Extension). The data were collected agro-climatic zone wise regarding role, responsibilities, access and control of the respondents in case of farming and allied activities and also regarding extension services availed by the respondents. The data were analyzed by using percentages.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been presented under following heads.

Socio -personal profile of the respondents :

It was observed from Table 1, that as far as personal and economic profile of respondents was concerned, about forty seven per cent (47.10%) of the rural women were belonging to middle aged category, followed by 29.18 per cent and 23.72 per cent of rural women were belonging to young age and upper age category, respectively.

Table 1: Personal and economic profile of the respondents (n=900)

Profile characteristics\ categories	Women (%)	Men (%)
Age		
Young (18 - 30) years	29.18	12.48
Middle (31 - 45) years	47.10	56.12
Upper (46 years and above)	23.72	31.40
Marital status		
Unmarried	0.00	0.67
Married	97.33	98.67
Widow	2.67	0.67
Divorcee	0.00	0.00
Family education		
Illiterate/ unlettered	33.52	12.03
Can read and write/ lettered	2.90	8.13
Primary School	16.37	14.92
Middle School	14.92	14.03
High School	24.50	29.84
Post matric diploma	4.68	13.36
Graduate and above	3.12	7.68
Occupation of respondent		
Non-wage earner	15.81	0.33
Wage earner		
Farming	58.46	67.15
Service	1.22	10.91
Enterprise	9.02	8.35
Labour	15.48	13.25

In case of rural men, more than half of them (56.12 %) were also belonging to middle age category, followed by 31.40 per cent of them were belonging to upper age category. Only 12.48 per cent of them were from young age category. A great majority of the rural women and men were married (97.33 % and 98.67 %, respectively) whereas only 2.67 per cent of rural women and 0.67 per cent rural men were widow and widower, respectively.

As regards the education, it was noticed that more than one third of rural women (33.52%) were illiterate or un-lettered, whereas near about one fourth of them (24.50 %) were educated up to high school level followed by 16.37 per cent and 14.92 per cent rural women were educated upto primary school and middle school level, respectively. Further it was noticed that 4.68 per cent and 3.12 per cent rural women were having post matric diploma and graduation. Only 2.90 per cent of them were

from lettered category. In case of rural men, it was observed that more than one fourth (29.84%) were educated upto High School level followed by 14.92 per cent, 14.03 per cent of them were educated upto primary school level and middle school level education, respectively while 13.36 per cent and 12.03 per cent of the respondents were educated up to post matric diploma and un lettered category, respectively. Further, it was noticed that 8.13 and 7.68 per cent rural men were lettered and educated upto graduate level, respectively. As regards their occupation, it was seen from the table more than half (58.46%) of the rural women and 67.15 per cent of rural men were engaged in farming while 15.81 per cent and 15.48 per cent rural women were non-wage earners and agriculture labours, respectively. About 9.00 per cent rural women were engaged in different enterprises while only 1.22 per cent of them were having service. About thirteen per cent (13.25%) rural men were found to be agriculture labour, whereas about eleven per cent (10.91%) rural men were having service followed by 8.35 per cent were engaged in enterprises.

Knowledge and contact with extension agent :

As far as knowledge of extension agent is concerned, it is seen from the Table 2, that more than three fourth of the rural women (83.93 % and 75.60 %) were knowing VLEW and NGO personnel, respectively. Bank personnel were known by 26.49 per cent rural women followed by University personnel (17.86%) where as 6.55 per cent rural women were knowing extension officer and only 1.19 per cent of them were knowing Block personnel. Further it was observed that more than three fourth (87.89% and 79.18%) of the rural men were knowing Bank personnel and VLEW, respectively, whereas University personnel were known to 46.49 per cent rural men. Extension officer and Block personnel were known to 28.81 and 16.71 per cent of the rural men, respectively.

As far as the frequency of contacts is concerned, it is observed that percentages of rural women having always (regular) contacts with Extension agents were very meagre *i.e.* 0.16 – 0.80 whereas more than one third (39.72% and 38.35%) rural women were sometimes contacting VLEW and NGO personnel. Further, it was

Table 2 : Distribution of women and men according to knowledge and contact with extension agent (n=900)

Sr.No.	Extension agent	Total per cent of respondents having knowledge		Frequency of contact (%)					
				Always		Sometimes		Never	
		RW	RM	RW	RM	RW	RM	RW	RM
1.	VLEW	83.93	79.18	0.69	6.96	39.72	37.84	59.58	55.19
2.	Extension officer	6.55	28.81	0.80	0.72	5.75	20.81	93.45	78.47
3.	University personnel	17.86	46.49	0.31	1.16	11.51	29.65	88.18	69.19
4.	NGO personnel	75.60	87.89	0.71	5.93	38.35	45.32	60.94	48.75
5.	Bank personnel	26.49	59.32	0.31	1.02	16.51	35.66	83.18	63.32
6.	Block personnel	1.19	16.71	0.16	0.61	2.23	11.80	97.61	87.59

Table 3: Distribution of females and males according to degree of preference of different extension methods (n=900)

Extn method	Female			Male		
	Most preferred (%)	Somewhat preferred (%)	Not at all (%)	Most preferred (%)	Somewhat preferred (%)	Not at all (%)
Awareness programme	2.00	20.22	77.78	10.68	30.80	58.52
Campaigns	1.17	18.93	79.91	7.63	29.63	62.75
Demonstration	37.23	16.83	45.94	52.81	14.03	33.17
Field day	11.65	16.26	72.09	32.13	14.47	53.40
Gosthi/ discussion	16.32	24.79	58.88	32.70	24.14	43.16
Lecture	19.89	21.76	58.35	40.90	25.60	33.49
Multi media	1.55	21.19	77.26	17.59	27.67	54.74
On farm trial	21.41	9.71	68.87	43.10	6.43	50.47
Tour	6.28	16.91	76.81	24.03	14.94	61.04

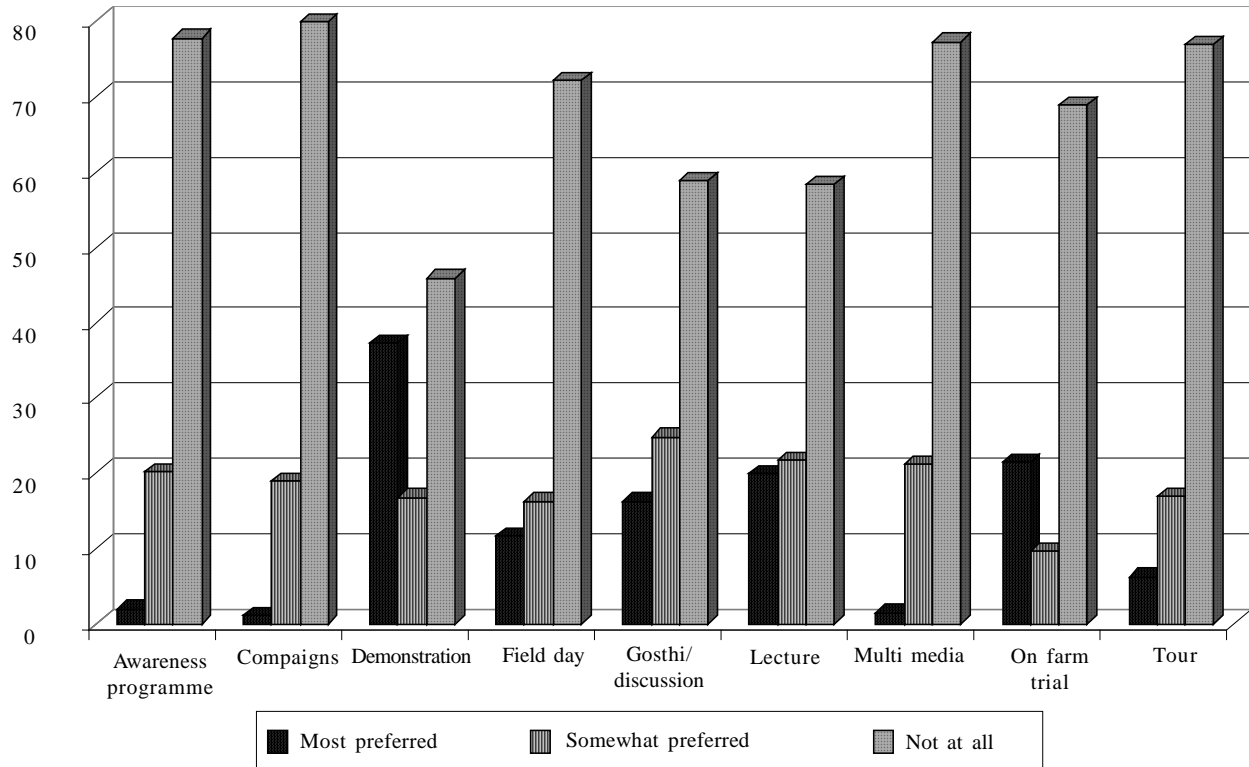


Fig. 1 : Distribution of females according to degree of preference of different extension methods

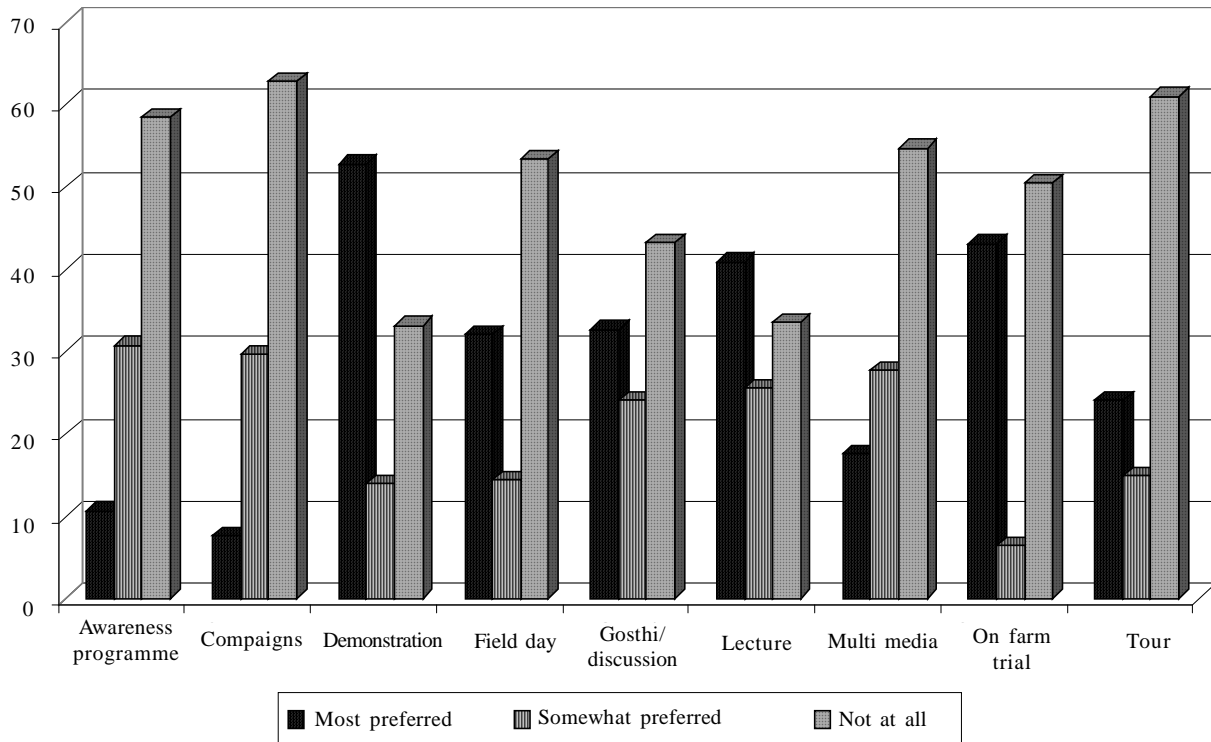


Fig. 2 : Distribution of males according to degree of preference of different extension methods

noticed that Bank personnel and University personnel were sometimes contacted by 16.51 and 11.51 per cent rural women. Only 5.75 per cent and 2.23 per cent rural women were having some times contact with Extension officer and Block personnel, respectively. It was also observed that 6.96 and 5.93 per cent of the rural men were always (regularly) contacting VLEW and NGO personnel, respectively. More than one third (45.32%, 37.84% and 35.66%) of the rural men were some times contacting NGO personnel, VLEW and Bank personnel, respectively. More than one fourth (29.65%) of the rural men were some times contacting University personnel followed by extension officer (20.81%) and Block personnel (11.80%). Majority of rural women and men were never contacting extension officer (93.45% and 78.47%), University personnel (88.18% and 69.19%) and Block personnel (97.61% and 87.59%).

Degree of preference for different extension methods :

As regards the preference for different extension methods, both rural women (37.23%) and rural men (52.81%) were mostly preferring demonstration as it involves more number of senses thereby contributing to effective learning followed by on farm trial (21.41% and 43.10%) and lecture (19.89% and 40.90%). Gosthi / discussion were mostly preferred by 16.32 per cent of the rural women while 32.70 per cent and 32.13 per cent rural men mostly preferred Gosthi / discussion and field day, respectively.

More than one fifth of the rural women somewhat preferred Gosthi/discussion (24.79%), lecture (21.76%), multi media (21.19%) and awareness programme (20.22%) followed by campaign (18.93%). Near about equal percentages of rural women were somewhat preferring tour (16.91%), demonstration (16.83%) and

field day (16.26%). In case of rural men, awareness programme was somewhat preferred by 30.80 per cent of them followed by campaign (29.63%) and multimedia (27.67%). Near about one fourth of the rural men were sometimes preferring lecture (25.60%) and Gosthi / discussion (24.14%) followed by tour (14.94%), field day (14.47%) and demonstration (14.03%) (Table 3 and Fig. 1 and 2).

The finding is coinciding with the findings of Sailaja and Reddy (2002) and Ramurthy (1983).

These findings are contradictory with the findings of Kaur *et al.* (2005) who reported in their study 'Institutional Training Programmes: Perception of Extension Personnel' that lecture-cum- discussion was the most preferred method with highest score followed by practical, field trips and demonstration.

Reasons for not availing extension services :

It was noticed that more than half (60.35%) of the rural women gave the reason that they always have shortage of time followed by the reason, personnel involved were men (36.25%). About one fourth (24.97% and 24.61%) rural women gave the reason that the venue of programme was not convenient for them to attend and the extension services were not needed by them. About twenty two per cent (22.17%) of the rural women always felt that the extension services were not relevant to them whereas 19.71 per cent and 16.69 per cent rural women felt that the programmes were always organized without prior notice and always they experienced biased contact by extension worker, respectively.

The programmes were sometimes organized without prior notice was the reason experienced by more than half of the rural women (52.34%) followed by the venue was sometimes not convenient to attend the programme (48.18%) and sometimes biased contact by extension

Sr. No.	Reasons for not availing extension services	Always (%)		Sometimes (%)		Never (%)	
		RW	RM	RW	RM	RW	RM
1.	Not needed	24.61	19.78	35.95	30.97	39.43	49.25
2.	Not relevant	22.17	17.24	40.00	27.91	37.83	54.86
3.	Organized without prior notice	19.71	15.68	52.34	51.78	27.95	32.54
4.	Shortage of time	60.35	48.12	36.27	47.85	3.38	4.03
5.	Biased contact by extension worker	16.69	11.59	42.88	37.09	40.43	51.31
6.	Personnel involved are men	36.25	6.14	39.08	34.65	24.66	59.21
7.	Not convenient to attend at the venue organized	24.97	18.79	48.18	52.88	26.86	28.33

worker (42.88%). More than one third rural women gave the reason that sometimes extension services were not relevant to them (40.00%), personnel involved were men (39.08%), shortage of time (36.27%) and extension services were not needed (35.95%).

Shortage of time was the reason always given by near about half of the rural men (48.12%) for not availing extension services. Less than one fifth of them always experienced that extension services were not needed (19.78%), the venue of the programme was not convenient (18.79%), extension services were not relevant (17.24%) and the programmes were organized without prior notice (15.68%).

Significant percentages of the rural men (52.88% and 51.78%) experienced that sometimes the venue of the programme was not convenient and the programmes were organized without prior notice, respectively. Shortage of time (47.85%) and biased contact by extension worker (37.09%) were the reasons given some times by the rural men for not availing the extension services (Table 4).

Summary:

More than three fourth of the rural women (83.93% and 75.60%) were knowing VLEW and NGO personnel, respectively. More than three fourth (87.89% and 79.18%) of the rural men were knowing Bank personnel.

Only 6.96 and 5.93 per cent of the rural men were always (regularly) contacting VLEW and NGO personnel, respectively. Rural women having always (regularly) contact with extension agents were very meagre.

Both rural women (37.23%) and rural men (52.81%) mostly preferred demonstration followed by on farm trial (21.41% and 43.10%) and lecture (19.89% and 40.90%).

More than half (60.35%) of the rural women gave the reason that they always have shortage of time followed by the personnel involved were men (36.32%). Near about half (48.12%) of the rural men were always having shortage of time for not availing extension services. Significant percentages of the rural men (52.88% and 51.78%) experienced that sometimes the venue of the programme was not convenient and the

programmes were organized without prior notice, respectively.

Implication :

It is implied from the present investigation that in the light of the findings, extension agencies should be careful about their contacts with rural mass as well as while planning the extension programme the reasons expressed by the respondents for not availing the Extension services needs to be considered.

Authors' affiliations :

C.M. BELLURKAR, All India Coordinated Research Project, Department of Home Science Extension and Communication Management, College of Home Science, Vasantrao Naik Marathwada Krishi Vidyapeeth, PARBHANI (M.S.) INDIA
Email: chitra_kanishka@rediffmail.com

REFERENCES

- Bahal, R.,** Wason, M., Sudeep and Kumar, R. (2004a). Expert system for effective extension. In: *Communication support for sustaining agricultural extension services* (Eds. Dipak De, Basavaprabhu Jirli and Kalian Ghadei) Ganga Kaveri Publishing House, Varanasi, 91-102pp.
- Bahal, R.,** Wason, M., Sudeep and Issar, D. (2004b). Expert system for effective extension. *Indian J. Extn. Edu.*, **40** (1&2): 8-11.
- Bahal, R.,** Wason, M., Sudeep and Issar, D. (2006). Expert system for demand driven extension, *J. US-China Edu. Rev.*, **3** (5) :58-65.
- Kalmesgh, E.N.** and Menon, K.R. (1977). Communication behaviour of small farmers in progressive and non-progressive village. *Indian J. Extn. Edu.*, **13** (1&2): 37-41.
- Kaur, R.,** Temesgen, D. and Kaur, M. (2005). Institutional training programmes: Perception of extension personnel. *Indian J. Extn. Edu.*, **41** (3&4): 24-27.
- Ramurthy, A. K.** (1983). Training needs of small and marginal farmers under lab. to land programme of Chittoor district in Andhra Pradesh. M.Sc. (Ag.) Thesis, Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University, Hyderabad, A.P. (INDIA).
- Sailaja, A.** and Reddy, M.N. (2002). Preferences of farm women towards training methodology. *Mysore J. Agric. Sci.*, **36**: 180-182.

11th
Year
★★★★★ of Excellence ★★★★★