



Reading habits of the farmers

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken in 10 villages of Akola Panchyat Samiti of Akola district of Maharashtra State. The main object was to study the reading habits of farmers. From this study, it was found that the majority of the respondents were at medium level of reading habit about news paper, magazines and overall literature. Majority of them liked to read agricultural information from magazine. They read news paper as whole publication. They liked to read them in their home. They used to spend only thirty minutes per day for reading. They used the information in their field what ever they read form literature.

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INTRODUCTION

In mass media, the use of literature is increasing regularly due to the increase in literacy. In India the literacy rate in 1980 was only 36 per cent but in 2002-03 it has increased up to 64.8 per cent, among male it is 70.2 per cent and female 48.3 per cent (Anonymous 2002). In Maharashtra literacy rate 76.8 per cent, it directly indicates the educational level, and increase in education level in farming community has increased the use of printed media like farm magazines, newspapers, etc. Print media should be inline with the reading habits of the farmers. These are important means to make available the research finding in the field of agriculture to the cultivators regularly.

It is necessary to know the reading habits of rural readers so as to provide them proper guidance on selection and use of information. Ineffective and time wasting reading habits can be purposefully changed to selective reading for agricultural purpose. These necessitate the reading habit study of rural people.

It is necessary to improve the reading habits so as to make use of available literature to fullest extent. The literature sources also need feedback about the information to be published hence this study will be helpful in

providing required feedback. Hence, the present study was planned with the specific objective to study the reading habits of the farmers.

METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken in 10 villages of Akola Panchyat Samiti of Akola district of Maharashtra State with the help of exploratory design of social research. Vilages were Nimbi, Kapshi, Chikhalgaon, Ugwa, Aagar, Palodi, Kanheri, Shivapur, Babulgaon and Wanirambhapur. These villages were randomly selected by using simple random sampling method. From each village, a list of literate farmers who could read printed matter was obtained and 15 farmers were selected by equal interval random sampling technique like wise total respondents were 150.

Reading habit was decided on the basis of the subject matter read, place of reading, quality of reading and time spent on reading. Distribution of reading habit was done in three level viz., overall reading habit, reading habit about newspaper and reading habit about magazine.

OBSERVATION AND ANALYSIS

From Table 1 it is evident that majority of the respondents were in medium level of reading

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habit (67.34 per cent) and there was nearly equal distribution of respondents in high and low level of reading habit was at par (17.33 per cent and 15.33 per cent, respectively).

Category	No. of farmers (150)	Percentage
Low	23	15.33
Medium	101	67.34
High	26	17.33
Total	150	100.00

Mean = 17.11, S.D. = 08.66

From Table 2 it is observed that majority of the respondents had medium level of reading habit about newspaper (*i.e.* 72.67 per cent) followed by 20.67 per cent respondents had low level of reading habit.

Category	No. of farmers (150)	Percentage
Low	31	20.67
Medium	109	72.67
High	10	06.66
Total	150	100.00

Mean = 49.96, S.D. = 13.52

From Table 3 it was recorded that nearly equal proportion of respondents were found in both low and medium level of reading habit about magazine (21.33 per cent and 23.33 per cent, respectively) and majority of the respondents (40.67 per cent) never read magazines. This indicates that 59.33 per cent respondents read magazine

Table 3 : Distribution of respondents according to reading habit about magazine

Category	No. of farmers (150)	Percentage
Low	32	21.33
Medium	35	23.33
High	22	14.66
Never read	61	40.67
Total	150	100.00

Mean=20.27, S.D.= 182

Table 4 represents that in case of newspaper one third of the respondents (67.33 per cent) read whole newspaper and only 6.67 per cent and 5.33 per cent respondents read agricultural information and market information, respectively. In case of magazines, it was observed that, 52.00 per cent farmers read agricultural information and only 1.3 per cent farmers read whole magazine. In case of leaflets, only 16.00 per cent respondents read agricultural information, nearly similar findings were found in case of pamphlets (14.67 per cent), only 6 per cent and 2.00 per cent respondents read agricultural information from bulletin and other publication, respectively. Books and other reading material were used for gaining agricultural information by a very small proportion of farmers (2.00 per cent).

Thus, it is concluded that, magazine was the most popular among the farmers to gain agricultural information than any other publication (52.00 per cent) followed by leaflets and pamphlets (16.00 per cent and 14.67 per cent, respectively).

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents read newspapers at their home (58.00 per cent) followed by equal distribution of respondents who read newspapers

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to subject matter read

Subject matter read	Respondents (n = 150)											
	Newspaper		Magazine		Leaflets		Pamphlets		Bulletin		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Agricultural information	10	6.67	78	52.00	24	16.00	22	14.67	9	6.00	3	2.00
Market information	8	5.33	22	14.67	2	1.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
News	18	12.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Advertisement	18	12.00	18	12.00	2	1.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Other	29	19.33	31	40.67	5	3.33	7	4.67	2	1.33	18	12.00
Whole publication	101	67.33	2	1.33	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents according to place of reading

Subject matter read	Respondents											
	n = 150		n = 89		n = 33		n = 29		n = 11		n = 21	
	Newspaper		Magazine		Leaflets		Pamphlets		Bulletin		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
At home	87	58.00	39	43.82	0	0.00	0	0.00	2	18.18	9	42.85
Neighbours home	31	20.67	8	8.98	0	0.00	0	0.0	0	0.00	0	0.00
Rural library	4	2.67	25	28.08	33	100.0	29	100.00	9	81.81	12	57.14
Gram Panchayat	11	7.33	17	19.10	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Village canteens	31	20.67	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00

at neighbours home and village canteens (20.67 per cent). In case of magazine, among 89 respondents who read magazines relatively high proportion of the respondents read magazine at their home (43.82 per cent) followed by 28.08 per cent at rural library and Gram Panchayat (19.10 per cent). In case of leaflets and pamphlets out of 33 and 29 respondents, respectively, all (100 per cent) read these publication at rural library. Out of 11 respondents of bulletin, 81.81 per cent read at rural library, followed by 18.19 respondents read at their home. In case of books and other material, among 21 respondents, 57.14 per cent respondents preferred rural library, followed by 42.85 per cent respondents who read books and other publication at their home. From Table 6 it is observed that practically none *i.e.* only 0.67 per cent of respondents took notes from news paper and 12.00 per cent respondents preserved articles and 26.00 per cent respondents used information given in newspapers. Out of 89 respondents who read magazines, only 2.24 per cent respondents took notes, 17.97 per cent respondents preserved articles and nearly half of the respondents (41.57 per cent) used agricultural information. In case of leaflets, out of 33 respondents, nearly half of the respondents (48.48 per cent) used information given in leaflets followed by 30.33 per cent respondents preserved articles. In case of pamphlets, out of 29 respondents more than half of the respondents 51.72 per cent preserved article followed by 48.27 per cent who used information for practical purpose.

Table 6: Distribution of the respondents according to the quality of reading

Publication read	Taking notes		Preserve articles		Use of information	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Newspaper (n=150)	1	0.67	18	12.00	39	26.00
Magazine (n = 89)	2	2.24	16	17.97	37	41.57
Leaflets (n=33)	0	0.00	10	30.33	16	48.48
Pamphlets (n=29)	0	0.00	15	51.72	14	48.27
Bulletins (n=11)	0	0.00	10	90.90	10	90.90
Other (n=21)	0	0.00	0	0.00	5	23.80

Table 7 represents that nearly half of the respondents (49.33 per cent) read newspaper for half hours followed by 35.33 per cent respondents read newspaper for 1 hr and very small proportion of respondents (15.33 per cent) read for 15 minutes. In case of magazine readers out of 89 respondents, 84.26 per cent read it daily half an hour, followed by 12.35 per cent for 1 hr and 3.37 per cent for 15 min. In case of leaflets and pamphlets out of 33 and 29 respondents *i.e.* cent per cent respondents devoted 15 minutes for reading. Ahire *et al.* (2002) and Dharurkar (2006) have also supplicated some information on reading habits of the farmers.

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents according to time spent on reading

Material read	1 hrs		30 min		15 min	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Newspaper (n=150)	53	35.33	74	49.33	23	15.33
Magazine (n= 89)	11	12.35	75	84.26	3	3.37
Leaflets (n=33)	0	0.00	0	0.00	33	100.00
Pamphlets (n=29)	0	0.00	0	0.00	29	100.00
Bulletins (n=11)	2	18.18	6	54.54	3	27.27
Other (n=21)	14	66.66	7	33.33	0	0.00

Conclusion:

From above study it can be concluded that majority of the respondents were at medium level of reading habit about news paper, magazine and overall literature. Majority of them liked to read agricultural information from magazine but the percentage of respondent who read the magazine was only 60.00. So, magazines published by Government and state agricultural universities needs to be made available at less price and in plenty for rural community. Also rural libraries should be strengthening by providing adequate literature containing farm information.

Most of the respondents were spending only thirty minutes per day on reading which is practically inadequate to acquire and understand information. Main reason was that quantum of information published was very inadequate and mostly not based on need and situation specific. Hence, writer and publisher should be persuaded to rich such information.

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