

ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FARMERS AND THEIR NEWSPAPER READING BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

A newspaper is a periodical publication containing written information about current events and is often typed in black ink with a white or gray background. Newspapers as a mass media influence public by disseminating news on local, national and international events. Further, they play an important role in the fields of agricultural development by providing knowledge to the farmers about new techniques. In Gujarat, Sandesh is leading daily newspaper and it was found in 1923. It could also be effective media in changing perception, attitude and actions of people when they are literates. So, a study was conducted to know the reading behaviour of agro sandesh in daily newspaper by farmers. The study would also help to know whether the agriculture information is really reaching to its actual beneficiaries and up to what extent. Ex- post facto research design was used for this study. The study was conducted in three talukas of Banaskantha district and reveal that independent variables studied viz. occupation, annual income, extension participation, source of information and extension contact had positive and significant correlation, while education and social participation had positive and highly significant correlation with overall reading behaviour.

Keywords: agro sandesh, newspaper, farmer, relationship, reading behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

Mass media is most important communication media, which easily reach in interior areas and diffuse the message to larger section within the short span of time. It helps to narrow the gap between research results and their application by farmers. In mass media, Print media are cheaper in cost and cover large number of people. It is one of most credible sources of information and increased literacy level. It could also be effective media in changing perception, attitude and actions of people when they are literates. A newspaper is a periodical publication containing written information about current events and is often typed in black ink with a white or gray background. Sandesh is leading daily newspaper and found in 1923. The Agro Sandesh was launched at 3rd July 2011 and it is published on every Monday.

The present investigation throws light on to analyze the contents of newspapers with respect to agriculture information and helps to know inadequately covered agriculture areas which need more coverage. The study would also help to know whether the agriculture information is really reaching to its actual beneficiaries and up to what extent. The information published in newspapers should be easily understandable by even common farmers. It should be useful for all categories of farmers. At the same time, it

should neither be read just for entertainment nor should it be utilized just for satisfying aesthetic needs. It also aimed at creative, useful and applicable innovations and social welfare by knowing reading habit, preferences and suggestions from farmers through the readership survey. Many studies have been conducted for coverage of agricultural information in the farm magazines. However, few have touched upon the coverage of agriculture related aspects in Agro Sandesh. Hence, with the intention to know the reading habit and content of agriculture related information published in Agro Sandesh.

The present study was carried out to find out the relationship between profile of respondents and their Reading behaviour about Agro Sandesh newspaper with following objectives:

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To know the selected characteristics of Agro Sandesh readers
- (2) To assess the association between the newspaper reading behaviour of the readers and their selected characteristics

METHODOLOGY

Present study was conducted in Banaskantha district of North Gujarat. Among fourteen talukas of Banaskantha, three talukas viz.; Palanpur, Deesa, Deodar were purposively selected because under these three talukas maximum number of Sandesh newspaper distribute as compared to other talukas. The farmers of Agro Sandesh readers were the respondents for the study. Five villages from each taluka were selected randomly. From each selected villages ten farmers were selected randomly; thus total 150 farmers sample size was selected for study. An ex-post-facto research design was applied. Objective wise structural schedule was prepared and for data collection a personal contact method was

followed. Data was analyzed with suitable statistics and relationship was obtained by the used of correlation of coefficient for inference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Selected characteristics of Agro Sandesh readers

On the basis of extensive review of literature and discussions with the experts, some important personal, socio – economic characteristics and communicational characteristics have been selected in the present study. The data of these characteristics were analyzed and presented in the table 1 with an object to draw a general picture of the respondents having reading behaviour.

Table 1: Distribution of Agro Sandesh readers according to their selected characteristics (n = 150)

Sr. No.	Personal profile of respondents	Category	Frequency	Per cent
1	Age	Young age (18 to 35 years)	37	24.67
		Middle age (36 to 50 years)	93	62.00
		Old age (above 50 years)	20	13.33
2	Education	Illiterate	08	5.33
		Functionally literate	22	14.67
		Primary school (1 st to 8 th standard)	56	37.33
		Middle school(9 th to 10 th standard)	40	26.67
		High school(11 th to 12 th standard)	19	12.67
		Under-Graduation/Post-Graduation (UG/PG)	05	3.33
3	Occupation	Labour	4	2.67
		Caste occupation	18	12.00
		Business	33	22.00
		Independent profession	11	7.33
		Cultivation	77	51.33
		Service	07	4.67
4	Land holding	Marginal (upto 1.00 ha)	22	14.67
		Small (1.01 to 2.00 ha)	72	48.00
		Medium (2.01 to 4.00 ha)	45	30.00
		Large (above 4.00 ha)	11	7.33
5	Annual income	Low (upto ₹1,00,000/-)	15	10.00
		Medium (₹1,00,001/- to ₹2,00,000/-)	90	60.00
		High (above ₹2,00,000/-)	45	30.00
6	Social participation	Low (< 7.73 score)	31	20.67
		Medium (≥ 7.73 to < 11.81 score)	93	62.00
		High (≥ 11.81 score)	26	17.33

Sr. No.	Personal profile of respondents	Category	Frequency	Per cent
7	Extension participation	Low (< 16.22 score)	43	28.67
		Medium (\geq 16.22 to < 44.93 score)	73	48.66
		High (\geq 44.93 score)	34	22.67
8	Sources of information	Low (< 27.63 score)	15	10.00
		Medium (\geq 27.63 to < 45.84 score)	105	70.00
		High (\geq 45.84 score)	30	20.00
9	Extension contact	Low (< 11.16 score)	32	21.33
		Medium (\geq 11.16 to < 30.36 score)	93	62.00
		High (\geq 30.36 score)	25	16.67

Table 1 indicates that, Majority of the respondents belonged to middle age group. The probable reason might be that middle age group reader are more interested in seeking information for improvement and up to date with current situation. Most of the respondents were had primary school level of education. This might be due to their fair awareness about the significance of education in overall development. Majority of respondent were engaged in cultivation and nearly one half (48.00 per cent) of respondents were having small size of land holding. It might be due to partition of the family; the land was being fragmented. It thus proved that partition might be the reason for the small land holding. 60.00 per cent of respondents had medium annual income ranging from rupees 1,00,001 to 2,00,000. More than three fifth (62.00 per cent) of respondents had medium social participation. The reason might be the most of Agro Sandesh readers were belongs to middle age and young age group. So that middle age Agro Sandesh readers engaged in their business and farming operation so they get little time to participate in different social organizations. 48.66 per cent of respondents had medium level of extension participation.

The data presented in Table 1 revealed that more than two third (70.00 per cent) of the respondents had utilized medium level sources of information. The probable reason for this might be the limited approach to the information sources, which would have put limitation to them to use information source to a greater extent. Majority respondents had medium level extension contact.

Results align with Manjunath, L., *et al.* (2002), Hanumanaikar, R. H. (2009), Akiwate, M. B. (2014), Manjunath, *et al.* (2017) and Parmar and Vinaya (2020a).

Association between the newspaper reading behaviour of the readers and their selected characteristics

To ascertain the association between Agro Sandesh

readers selected characteristics viz.; age, gender, education, occupation, size of land holding, annual income, social participation, extension participation, source of information and extension contact and their reading behaviour were worked out with the help of correlation coefficient (r). The data are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Relationship between profile of Agro Sandesh readers and their reading behaviour

(n = 150)

Sr. No.	Independent variable	Correlation of coefficient 'r'
X ₁	Age	0.083NS
X ₂	Education	0.235**
X ₃	Occupation	0.203*
X ₄	Size of land holding	0.016NS
X ₅	Annual income	0.183*
X ₆	Social participation	0.225**
X ₇	Extension participation	0.167*
X ₈	Source of information	0.188*
X ₉	Extension contact	0.189*

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability

* Significant at 0.05 level of probability

The results of correlation analysis indicated that out of the nine independent variables, five variables viz., occupation (0.203*), annual income (0.183*), source of information (0.188*), extension participation (0.167*) and extension contact (0.189*) had positive and significant

correlation with over all reading behaviour of Agro Sandesh readers. Education (0.235**) and social participation (0.225**) had positive and highly significant relationship with over all reading behaviour of Agro Sandesh readers. age (0.083NS) and size of land holding (0.016NS) had positive and non-significant relationship with the overall reading behaviour of Agro Sandesh readers.

Results align with Ahire, M. C., *et al.* (2010), Surduse, A. V., *et al.* (2016), Akiwate, M. B. (2014) and Parmar and Vinaya (2020b).

CONCLUSION

From the above results it can be conclude that, occupation, annual income, source of information, extension participation and extension contact were positively and significantly related. This infers that the middle age Agro Sandesh readers were more prone towards reading Agro Sandesh newspaper than older.

IMPLICATIONS

It was observed that majority of the Agro Sandesh readers had good education, medium income, medium social participation, medium extension participation, medium sources of information and extension contact. These characteristics obviously proven for higher knowledge collection. Hence, there is need to supply recent, advance, and high-tech information through print media regularly, which helps to improve the economic status of farmer, general awareness and better citizen of the nation.

The profile characteristic like occupation, annual income, extension participation, source of information and extension contact had positive and significant correlation, while education and social participation had positive and highly significant correlation with overall reading behaviour. It gives clue that they are very receptive to new ideas, inventions in the field of agriculture, business and small enterprises and other opportunities to earn more income and improve their standard of living.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict between the authors.

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