
Information Needs and Gathering Habits among Farmers in Rural areas of Mahoba District, Uttar Pradesh: A Study

Hariom

Ph.D. Research Scholar
Dept. of Library and Information science,
BBAU Lucknow, U.P. (India)
Email: hariomshrivastava87@gmail.com

Dr M.P. Singh

Associate Professor
Dept. of Library and Information science,
BBAU Lucknow, U.P. (India)

ABSTRACT

The study examined the Information Needs and Gathering Habits among Farmers in Rural areas. Primary data collected through field survey with the help of Schedule, Interview, dairy and personal observation method, villages were selected by lottery method and 10 farmers were randomly selected from each village for data collection. From a total of 521 farmers a 411 (79.3%) farmers were interviewed. The result of data analysis, explored 31.38% farmers were illiterates and a small numbers of farmers 7.54% qualified on higher education level. 62.53 % generally required information about health, highest majority of respondents (86.37%) required information on Seeds and planting, majority of respondents 70.55% preferred Kishan Seva Kendra to access information. 72.74% respondents were facing, inability to access formal channels problem and 74.93% were also affected to Lack of awareness of New communication technology. study further exposed that majority of respondents 33.81% didn't satisfy to the getting information.

Keyword: Information needs, Mahoba, Rural Farmers, User studies, Kishan Seva Kendra

Introduction

In 21st century, information plays an increasingly important role in every sphere of the development process. Without information human being can't be survived, they need information to every stage of life, rising countries transforming the society from an industrial age to an information age. As an outcome now we are surrounded by vast amount tools, sources that can provide instance access to information. We can say information is the power of sources any kind of developments to industrial, agricultural and knowledge society.

Thus Indian economy is prominently based on agriculture sector which plays a pivotal role in development. Almost seventy per cent of Indian population, one or another way, depends on agriculture as source of their livelihood that is why India emerged as a leading country in the field of agriculture. With increased complexity of agriculture systems, gaining access to relevant information in present competitive environment has become very important as it facilitates the adoption of technology and improves farm productivity especially in case of

marginal and small agricultural land holders. Prevailing market price, latest agriculture technologies and techniques of farming etc. influence the farmers and their capability to access relevant information related to it empowers them to take correct decision.

Although the mainstream economy of India is based on agriculture, most of the farmers working in this sector are not well educated, even they are not aware of the tools and techniques of modern agricultural system.

Information is now available in numerous sources and formats, such as printed text, television, videos, library databases, web sites, etc. Information literate person is one who can locate, select, analyse, evaluate, and use information for problem solving

This study aims at exploring the extent of the agricultural information literacy of farmers in Bangladesh with particular emphasis on the northern region of the country.

Objectives:

- To identify the information needs of the farmers belonging to rural areas
- To examine the various sources information used by the farmers.
- To explore the purpose of gathering information
- To examine type of difficulty faced by the farmers in accessing the information.

Review of Literature

An inadequate amount of works has been published on this topics “information needs and gathering habits among farmers during the last one decade in the India.

The significance of research and extension is further reiterated by Dulle (2000:121), who states that: “Information is one of the most important inputs for agricultural development ... because of this; agricultural research results constitute an important knowledge base that should be made available to farmers for increased food production. Elly, Tumsifu & Silayo, Ephraem Epafr , (2013) Has determine information needs and sources of the rural farmers in Tanzania specifically from Iringa rural district. Survey method and interview techniques’ used for primary data collection to various farmers. It has identified farmers’ information needs as the need for information about crops and livestock husbandry, marketing information, funding options and value addition. Mwalukasa, 2013: examined assess sources of agricultural information used by farmers for climate change adaptation in the semi-arid areas, Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative and quantitative data from varous farmers, and found major sources of information for farmers were predominantly local (neighbours and friends), followed by public extension services. Apart from radio and cell phones, advanced technologies (i.e. internet and e-mail) and printed materials were not used in the study area, despite their existence in the communities. Jimma, 2014, Studied entitled “The Role of Library and Information Services for Rural, Development: The Case of Ethiopia” rural area, such as school libraries and research libraries are lacking professional librarians. However, the current trend is showing that it is at a stage of compensatory growth or at exponential phase, because the past few years have seen good progress and still gaining momentum. The wise use of the services of the library and information science education in rural areas will provide the farming community with scientific knowhow and herald the formation of knowledge societies in Ethiopia. However, this can only be realized when information and knowledge are effectively shared for overall agricultural and rural

development. Hasan, 2012 conducted a study, the projects and web-based agricultural information systems and services for the NARS users, overview of these projects including objectives and deliverables has been highlighted especially keeping in view of the current scenario of the NARS institutions. It further elaborates the rationale, mission and objectives of the projects, the methodologies, and work programs. It also shows the directions and outcomes of the projects. The long term positive deliverables of the projects have also been projected.

All these studies are far from indicating to the very nature of agricultural information needs mostly from a specific farming context. Thus, this study is set to uncover issues specific to the users' information need, sources retrieval, problems, factor affecting and opinion about centres of a rural location where the majority of the farmers exist in.

Needs and significance of the study

In this study researcher try to know types of information required by farmers, what's the main source they preferred to gather information? The major problems are factor effecting to farmers during information access, the degree of positive or negative feeling (opinion) of farmers towards the Information need of the farmers has attempted to know. The study suggests different ways to improve of agricultural information to development for the farmers in the rural areas under study.

Scope/Limitation of the Study

The study covered only Mahoba District Uttar Pradesh of India. The study distinguishes on the basis of the education of the farmers.

Methodology

In this study the Survey methods, interview, schedule, personal observation and dairy as tools used for data collection. 521 villages found at mahoba district Uttar Pradesh, out of above villages, only 52 villages were selected for data collection , with the helped of lottery method and 10 farmers were randomly selected from each village for sample. Open ended questions were used in interview schedule, educated persons and family members of farmers, personal interpretation and interview were used for filling schedules. Suggestion and others opinion related to study also have flexibility in schedule for farmers. 520 schedules distributed to the farmers, 411 farmers were responded. The responses of respondent are tabulated and descriptive analysis (percentage, charts) is done to present details about the farmer's

Data analysis & Interpretation

Schedule Distributed

Table 1

SL. No.	Sample Size520	No.	%
1	Responded	411	79.3
2	Not Responded	109	20.7

The table 1 exhibit that farmer's response of different districts or his sub- division of Bundelkhand region. Due to large of the different districts, that's by districts divided in to sub- Division and 10 % villages selected from each Division through Random sampling under which two methods i.e. stratified sampling and lottery methods used for collecting the data from the outstanding population of farmers at each village that's why is not possible to cover to whole population, only 10 farmers randomly selected to the each selected villages.

Table – 2 Gender Wise Responses of Farmers

SL. No	Gender	No	%
1	Male	398	96.83
2	Female	13	3.16

Table 2 shows the respondents were required to indicate their gender. The study established that 398(96.83%) male at mahoba Districts and only 11 (1.82%) of respondents were female.

Table-3 Educational status of the farmers.

SL. No	Educational Status	No.	%
1.	Primary to middle (8 th) schools levels	70	17.03
2	Matric	72	17.51
3	Intermediate	110	26.76
4	Higher education (UG, PG)	31	7.54
5	Illiterate	129	31.38

The table 3 distinguish about education status of different Districts. *Education* is the process of receiving or giving systematic instruction, especially at a primary, secondary and higher level. In this study found out 17.03% farmers qualified on primary or middle school levels, 26.76 % populations qualified on intermediates levels, nearest 1/3rd (31.38%) farmers were illiterates and a small numbers of farmers qualified on higher level.

Types of information required by Farmers.

The Knowledge and information needs varied across the surveyed communities of different farmers of rural areas, at different district of Bundelkhand region. The information and knowledge needs categories in to general and special (regarding agriculture).

Table-4Basic /General information and knowledge required.

SL. No	General information required	No.	%
1	News & general knowledge	214	52.06
2	Carrier guidance/ job oriented information	65	15.81
3	Education	179	43.55
4	Health	257	62.53
5	Any others	46	11.19

The above table 4 indicates about the general information and knowledge requirements/needs of rural farmers, it was related to News & general Knowledge, carrier guidance / job employment, entertainment, health and any others whatever required by them,

the study found out that's maximum respondents of farmers 62.53 % generally required information about health, followed by news & general knowledge (52.06%) and education (43.55%). While, 15.81% of respondent required generally Carrier guidance/ job employment information and 11.19% respondent said to any others information that's they were required in his/ her day to day life.

Table- 5 Information Required Regarding to Agriculture.

SL. No	Information Required to Agriculture	No.	%
1.	Regarding to Modern Cultivation System	185	45.01
2.	Regarding to Seeds and Plants	355	86.37
3.	Regarding to Diseases and Pest Management	267	64.96
4.	Regarding to Manure and Fertilizer Management	193	46.95
5.	Regarding to Weather information	207	50.36
6.	Regarding to Soil and water Conservation	183	44.52
7.	Regarding to Government Schemes on Agriculture	222	54.01
8.	Regarding to Market price on crops	119	28.95
9.	Regarding to Storage of Crops	205	49.87
10.	Any others	20	4.86

The above table 5 shows that type of their information needs on agriculture, varied across the surveyed communities of rural area at different districts of Bundelkhand region. The study examined that a highest majority of respondents (86.37%) required information on Seeds and planting, a good majority of respondents required on diseases and pest management (64.96%). While, 54.01% respondents required information on Government Schemes, followed by weather information (50.36) and crop storage (49.87%). Less than half majority of respondent required information on Manure and Fertilizer (46.95%), Modern Cultivation System (45.01%) and a very short majority of respondent (4.86%) said that they needs to others information regarding to agriculture.

Type of information sources Preferred by farmers.

The study investigated the various sources of agriculture information that are accessed by farmers of Bundelkhand region U.P. The sources categorized in tow category government and personal.

Table- 6 Government sources preferred

SL. No.	Sources	No.	%
1.	Kishan sevakendra	290	70.55
2.	Manufacture technical Specialist	131	31.87
3.	Public Information centres	165	40.14
4.	Library	141	34.30
5.	Professional colleges / university	152	36.98
6.	Agriculture scientist	138	33.57
7.	Farmer meeting	221	53.77

8.	Kishan Mitra	139	33.81
9.	Demonstration	53	12.89
10.	Kishan Call Centre	174	42.33
11.	Extensions agents bank / NGOs	153	37.22
12.	Any other	113	27.49

In above table the result reveals that of the various sources used for information access by the farmers of rural areas of Bundelkhand region. the study reveals highest majority of respondents preferred also Kishan Sevakendra (70.55%) followed by farmer meeting (53.77%). While less than half majority of respondents preferred to Kishan call centre (42.33%), public information centre (40.14%). The study further reveals that above one third majority respondent preferred to extension agent of Bank/ NGOs/ and Ag. office (37.22%), professional college and university (36.98%), library (34.30%), and Kishan mitra (33.81%). while, only 12.75 % respondent were preferred to demonstration for access information.

Table- 7 Personal Sources preferred by farmers for information access in districts (Bundelkhand Region, U.P.)

SL. No.	Sources	No.	%
1.	Books	210	51.09
2.	Newspaper	249	60.58
3.	Magazine	159	38.68
4.	Leaf Let Brochures/ Poster	213	51.82
5.	Neighbours Farmers /Friends	339	82.48
6.	T.V	231	56.20
7.	Local Dealer , Sales and Technical People	232	56.44
8.	Mobile and cell Phone	148	36.
9.	Radio	127	30.9
10.	Community leader	184	44.76
11.	Any other (please specify).....	125	30.41

At Mahoba District the study found out Neighbours Farmers /Friends (82.48%) source were highly used to agricultural information, followed by newspaper (60.58%), Local Dealer, Sales and Technical Peoples (56.44%) and T.V (56.20%). While, a good majority of respondents were using leaflet brochures/ posters (51.82%), books (51.09%) and very short majority respondents were using magazine (38.68%), mobile / cell phone (36%), radio (30.9%) and 30.41% respondents were indicating to others sources like relatives, doctors teachers etc.

Table-8 Farmers updated themselves with the help of different media.

SL. No	Sources	No.	%
1.	Newspaper	296	72.01
2.	Radio	116	28.22
3.	T.V.	261	63.50
4.	Library	42	10.21
5.	Kishan Seva Kendra	143	34.79
6.	Public Information centre	117	28.46
7.	Any other	37	9.

Update means the latest information about something, the time to time various update information comes in agriculture field, in this study try to know, how was the rural farmers keep update himself, the study also found out high respondent were updated to newspaper (72.01) and T.V. (63.50%), while respondents were moderately updated to Kishan sevakendra (34.79%) public information centre (28.46%) and Radio (28.22%). A low respondents were updated to library (10.21%) and 9% respondent said to others.

Table-9 Nature of information Preferred by the farmers.

SL. No.	Nature of Information	No.	%
1.	Print	193	46.95
2.	Audio	353	85.88
3.	Video	117	28.46
4.	Verbal	172	41.84
5.	Any others	27	6.56

The above table-9 discussed about the nature of information preferred by rural farmers, now a day's information published in various forms/ nature and communicate through various channels in society. The study also examined high respondents (85.86%) wished information in audio form, followed by print (46.95%). While 28.46% respondent preferred to Video form and a few respondents (6.56%) preferred to others form of information.

Table-10 Purpose of information gathering of Farmers

SL. No.	Purposes	No.	%
1.	For advancement of primary production of agriculture	360	87.59
2.	To produce Quality product and Product planning	250	60.82
3.	To develop community education	89	21.65
4.	To achieve Sustainable Agriculture	94	22.87
5.	To facing natural disaster problems	209	50.85
6.	For marketing agriculture product	202	49.14
7.	To control pest	251	61.07
8.	To know the Government scheme and policies	95	23.11
9.	Any other (please specify)	33	8.02

The table-10 showed that about various Purposes of Information need and gathering habits among farmers at rural area of different districts. In this study, it was observed that highly respondent of the farmers 87.59% were need information for advancement of primary production of agriculture, followed by control pest (61.07%) and produce Quality product and Product planning (60.82%). While, few majority respondents were gathered information to achieve Sustainable Agriculture (22.87%), develop community education (21.65%) and 8.02 % of the respondent said to other purposes.

Table-11 Problems Faced by the farmers during information search and gathering.

SL. No	Problems	No.	%
1.	Inability to access formal channel and sources	299	72.74
2.	Inadequate transport facility	133	32.36
3.	Regular Inaccessibility of NGOs at rural area	214	52.06
4.	Poor availability and unreliability of information	163	39.65
5.	Ignorance of Govt. responsibility	241	58.63
6.	Lack of proper electricity	95	23.11
7.	Information Telecast on radio and TV always on odd hour	200	48.66
8.	Any others	30	7.29

However these rural farmers have been facing many problems and challenges during information search from various sources and channels at different district of Bundelkhand region up. Which lead to low output in production and sustainability? These include, but are not limited to, the study observed that. high majority of respondent 72.74% were facing, inability to access formal channels, followed by ignorance of Govt. responsibility (58.63%), the study further found 32.36% of respondent were facing Inadequate transport facility and a least majority of respondent 23.11 were facing lack of proper electricity at the rural area .

Table-12 Factors affected during information gathering

SL No.	Factors	No.	%
1.	Long distance to the Information centres	236	57.42
2.	Low education level and illiteracy	153	37.22
3.	Lack of awareness about New communication technology	308	74.93
4.	Lack of Library and Diff. information centres	270	65.69
5.	Weak/ poor Govt. policy about information dissemination	169	41.11
6.	Lack of awareness about new sources of information	214	52.06
7.	Lack of proper guide line	288	70.07
8.	Information gap between farmers and information officers	160	38.92
9.	Any others	18	4.37

The table identify to the factors affect to the farmers when gathering information to various sources, the respondents were asked to state the factors they encountered while gather information and the factors were stated as follows; most of respondent 74.93% were also facing to Lack of awareness of New communication technology, followed by lack of proper guide line (70.07%) and lack of library and information centre (65.69%). While, 37.22 % of respondents were affecting to the low education level and illiteracy in rural areas.

Taable-13 Farmers Attitudes towards the information accessed from various sources

Attitudes	Stron gly agree	%	Somew hat agree	%	Neut ral	%	Disag ree	%
Hard to decide where to look info.	205	49.87	65	15.81	112	27.25	29	7.05
Selecting sources is difficult	76	18.49	166	40.38	139	33.81	30	7.29
Search lots of Information	62	15.08	197	47.93	110	26.76	39	9.48
Little access to information	191	46.47	110	26.76	45	10.94	65	15.81
Need assistance to intermediary	44	10.70	199	48.41	120	29.19	47	11.43
Take lots of effort in searching information	72	17.51	178	43.30	117	28.46	44	10.70
Compare information from Different Sources	91	22.14	100	24.33	131	31.87	89	21.65

The table-13 shows to Farmers Attitudes towards the information accessed from various sources at rural areas of above districts. Attitude is a settled way of thinking or feeling, opinion about something. In this study farmers had various opinions towards the information. The study examined a good majority of farmers 49.87% were strongly agree with statement hard to decide where look to info. and little access information (46.74%), while farmers were also somewhat agreed toned assistance from intermediary (48.41%) and search lot of information (47.93%). The study further examined at Mahoba district one third respondent of the farmers 33.81% were neutral on Selecting sources is difficult and Need assistance from (29.19%), while few respondent also disagree with Little access to information (15.81%) and need assistant to intermediary

Table-14 Satisfaction level of farmers in terms of getting information.

SL. No	Satisfaction Level	No.	%
1.	Satisfied	57	13.86
2.	Partially Satisfied	120	29.19
3.	Moderately Satisfied	95	23.11
4.	Not satisfied	139	33.81

The table indicates .to satisfaction level of farmers in terms of getting information from various sources. The satisfaction level majored in satisfied, partially satisfied, moderately satisfied and not satisfied. The study examined that majority of respondents 33.81% didn't satisfy to the getting information, followed by partially satisfied (29.19%) and few respondents were observed satisfy with the getting information.

Conclusions & Recommendations

The study has shown that male farmers community devoted to farming, while female were indirectly involved higher education status were very low due to inability of higher institution

and one third majority of farmers Community was illiterate. Generally farmers need information about health, education and news & general knowledge and few farmers need job oriented information. Mainly farmers required information regarding to seeds & plants, diseases & pest managements, weather, government scheme & policies, how to storage crops and modern cultivation systems. Kishan seva Kendra, farmers meeting public information centre Kishan call centre extensions agents, newspaper, Neighbours Farmers /Friends, T.V were main sources while magazines, mobile radio were very less used as a sources for information accessed at rural area. Farmers were wished to audio form of information. Inability to access formal channel and sources, Ignorance of Govt. responsibility, Regular Inaccessibility of NGOs at rural area problems were faced by farmers and Lack of awareness about New communication technology Lack of proper guide line, Lack of Library and different information centres, Low education level and illiteracy factors were also affected to them, that's by mostly farmers were not satisfied and partially satisfied.

Information is important to every sector of a nation's economy. Therefore, the study recommends. There is the need for extension programme to be revitalized in Bundelkhand region, U.P. with the aim of addressing the common needs of farmers on economically important crops such as season. More awareness creation and training of both farmers and extension agents on the effective and efficient use of ICT facilities be intensified by the governments through extension agency Governments should establish library and information centres in the rural areas to enhance information dissemination. Boat mobile libraries will serve the purpose well.

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