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A Study to Assess the Effectiveness of Radio in Disseminating Agricultural Information in Haryana

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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted to find out the ways and means of making the farm-boradcast more effective by interviewing 200 farmers from two blocks of Hissar district of Haryana state using multistage stratified random sampling method.

Findings of the study revealed that participation of progressive farmers in the *Dehati Programme* (specific farm broadcast for Haryana) should be given preference over that of Haryana Agricultural University specialists. Straight talks followed by discussion has been liked by almost all the nonprogressive and 55 per cent progressive farmers. Simplicity of language and use of common words were prefereed by everyone.

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INTRODUCTION

Agricultural development is a basic need of almost all the developing countries of the world for their growth, therefore, the latest agricultural technology which forms the major input of agricultural development must be put into practice in the farmer's field. But it is very difficult for the extension workers to contact each farmer in a limited time at his disposal. Therefore, to achieve this end, radio may play a vital role in the transfer of latest agricultural information to a large number of farmers in a limited time.

All India Radio has already been broadcasting special programmes for farmers through programmes like *Radio Rural Forums and Farm and Home Units* since 1959 and 1965, respectively. Moreover, recently, in Haryana the net work of communication has been expanded. The state has installed its own radio station at Rohtak from where *Krishi Jagat* programme for farmers is broadcasted. Earlier to it specific programmes for Haryana were being broadcasted from All India Radio, Delhi through *Dehati Programme* which still continues. But how much such programmes have been effective in disseminating agricultural information is to be tested empirically. With this idea in view, an attempt has been made to present the opinion of the farmers regarding their understanding of the contents, duration, personnel to be included in broadcasting and their liking for methods of presentation of the latest agricultural technology in this paper to make *Dehati Programme* more effective and useful for the farmers.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Hissar district of Haryana state and multistage stratified random sampling method was used. Two blocks namely Naranaund being progressive and the other Tohana non-progressive were purposively selected. From each of the two blocks, two villages namely Majra and Dharam Kheri of Narnaund; and Dharsul and Dangra of Tohana block were selected. Thus study was conducted in four vilages. From each village fifty respondents were randomly selected. This constituted a sample of 200 respondents. These selected respondents were interviewed personally on a pretested structured respondent schedule. Data were analysed in terms of the frequency and percentage.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The utility of agricultural information provided through radio depends mainly on how far the farmers understand the contents of the broadcast. In order to know these selected farmers were asked to indicate the degree to which they understand the contents of *Dehati Programme:*

It is evident from Table—1 that 46 per cent of the farmers in progressive and 47 per cent in non-progressive villages understood the content of *Dehati Programme* much. It was understood very much respectivly by 42 per cent and 38 per cent of the farmers in these villages. Only 3 per cent of the farmers in progressive villages understood it little. The remaining farmers of both the blocks understood it somewhat.

TABLE 1

Number of farmers showing the degree of understanding the content of *Dehati-Programme*

(N=200)

Sr. No.	*Degree of understanding*	*Villages*		*Percentage*
		Progressive (n=100)	*Non-progressive* (n=100)	
		Frequency		
1.	Very much	42	38	40.0
2.	Much	46	47	46.5
3.	Somewhat	9	15	12.0
4.	Little	3	0	1.5
5.	Very little	0	0	0.0

The use of technical terms, English words and defective voice in the broadcast were the reasons found for understanding the programme somewhat and little by a few farmers from these villages.

Further, apart from understading the contents, the effective use of the farm broadcast also depends greatly upon who is to provide the latest agriccultural information to the farmers. In a query of this type, it was found that 70 per cent and 64 per cent of the farmers in progressive and non-progressive villages, respectively favoured that

progressive farmers must be included in *Dehati Programme*. The subject matter specialists of Haryana Agricultural University were prefered next to them. However, only one per cent farmers in progressive villages had the feeling that the officials of radio station may be included in the programme. This is in conformity with that of Schmitz (1948).

Liking of the progressive farmers was due to their practical field experience being presented in local dialect. Haryana Agricultural University specialists were favoured next to them because they provide technical information based on factual analysis.

As we know an information can be communicated in various forms. The utility of a particular form depends how well it communicated the information to the intended audience. The opinion of farmers with regard to methods of presentation of agricultural information are presented in Table 2 which revealed that straight talk as method of presentation was liked by 78 per cent and 100 per cent of the farmers in progressive and non-progressive villages respectively, followed by discussion (55) in progressive and interview with farmers (56) in non-progressive villages.

TABLE 2

Number of farmers showing their liking for method of presentation of agricultural information in *Dehati Programme*. (N.200)

Sr. No.	*Methods of presentation*	*Villages* — *Progressive* (n=*100*) *Frequency*	*Non-progressive* (n=*100*) *Frequency*	*Percentage*
1.	Straight talk	78	100	89.0
2.	Discussion	55	53	54.0
3.	Interview with farmers	30	56	43.0
4.	Success stories of farmers	21	28	24.5
5.	Experience of farmers	1	1	1.0

The reasons behind favouring straight talk was that it provides clean, neat and plain information. This finding is inconformity with that of Crile (1955) and Morril & Nesset (1945), Bhatt and Krishnamoorthy (1965) and Kishore (1968).

In addition to the factors discussed so far, the quantum of information at the stretch is also of greater importance, In this direction, Table 3 reveals that 65 per cent of the farmers in progressive and 80 per cent in non-progressive villages liked one hour duration of *Dehati Programme*. As many as 27 per cent and 15 per cent of the farmers in respective villages suggested one and a half hour duration of the programme. A very few farmers in corresponding villages expressed their opinion in favour of two hours duration of the programme.

TABLE 3

Number of farmers giving their opinion about duration of *Dehati Programme* at a stretch.
(N=200)

Sr. No.	Duration of programme	Villages		Percentage
		Progressive (n=100)	Non-progressive (n=100)	
		Frequency		
1.	One hour	65	80	72.5
2.	One and a half hour	27	15	21.0
3.	Two hours	8	5	6.5

Thus, the majority of farmers favoured the present situation with regard to duration of *Dehati Programme* i.e. one hour. The findings find support from that of Singh (1972).

It was found satisfying that maximum percentage of farmers in both progressive and non-progressive villages understood the content of *Dehati programme* much. So as to make it more effective, progressive farmers and Haryana Agricultural Univercity specialists must be included in this programme. Amongst the various methods of presentation, straight talk followed by discussion and interview with farmers were liked most by almost all the farmers from respective villages.

It was also revealed that *Dehati Programme* should be broadcasted once daily in the evening from 7 onwards in summer/rainy season and from 6 onward in winter season. Broadcast should provide timely, simple, clean and well framed information so as to make it understandable to maximum number of farmers if not all.

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