# PROFILE OF FARMERS AND THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARDS MASS INFORMATION SOURCES

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**Abstract :** The people normally accept new idea, practices, and innovations after several exposures with different media and information sources. The fast changing agricultural technology demands for more information to be transmitted to our increasing volume of clientele. Butt (2002) professed that emphasis should be laid upon the most modern agricultural techniques which is possible by dissemination of agricultural information among the farmers. Mass media including both the electronic as well as print media if effectively utilised can be very important instrument in provision of agricultural information. A research was undertaken to study the farmer's attitude towards use of information sources relevant to agricultural extension. Hundred farmers were randomly chosen from nine villages of Aarang and Dharsiwa blocks of Raipur district of Chhattisgarh, and personally interviewed with the help of structured interview schedule to collect the primary data. Linkert type attitude scale as suggested by Ray and Mondal (2011) was used to measure the attitude of the farmers towards use of information sources. The results of the study revealed that most of the farmers were in the age group of 34 to 56 years old, educated upto primary school, belonged to schedule caste with medium sized joint family and had no membership in any rural social organisation indicating very poor social participation. They had small sized land holdings and more than half of them (57.00%) had other sources of irrigation i.e. other then tube well, pond, well, canal *etc*. Majority of them had agriculture and labour as their primary occupation with just below half of them recording their annual income in between Rs. 35,001 to Rs. 60,000/-. Nearly fifty percent of the farmers interviewed sold their agricultural produce in the nearby mandies i.e. agricultural produce market. More than seventy per cent of them had medium overall use of information sources. As regards scientific orientation it was observed that majority of them had medium scientific orientation and moderately favourable attitude towards use of information sources. The variables education, size of land holding, sources of irrigation, annual income, marketing, contact with extension personnel, sources of information, use of information and scientific orientation were found positively and significantly correlated with attitude towards use of information sources. Whereas the variables education, sources of irrigation, contact with extension personnel, sources of information and scientific orientation was found to contribute positively and significantly towards attitude regarding use of information sources and all the fifteen variables jointly explained the variation in attitude towards use of information sources to the extent of 94.00 per cent.

**Keywords :** Attitude, Mass information, ICT, Scientific Orientation, Scio personal, Socio economic Characteristics

## INTRODUCTION

The people normally accept new idea, practices, and innovations after several exposures with different media and information sources. The fast changing agricultural technology demands for more information to be transmitted to our increasing volume of clientele. More than natural resources, more than cheap labour, more than financial capital, knowledge is becoming the key factor of production in agriculture (World Bank, 2000). Access to information and improved communication is a crucial requirement for sustainable agricultural development. Recent advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have changed the many one line, learn and interact. They have transferred the many knowledge is produced, retrieved and transferred between different stakeholders. The innovative ICT application are dominating and driving the development scholarship and thinking in agriculture sector. Butt (2000) professed that emphasis should be laid upon the most modern agricultural techniques which is possible by dissemination of agricultural information among the farmers. It is also important to note that simply the provision of information will not be sufficient but it would be desirable that framers must adopt the most recent agricultural technologies. Dissemination of the required and recent agricultural information to the farmers in scattered villages at the variegated geographical locations in India is a very difficult task. Transfer of technology to farmers is not a one time exercise because new farm technology is being constantly evolved (Mehta, 2003). A continuous flow of technologies in an appropriate manner is vital to provide quick benefit of this development to the farmers. There has been a technological explosion in the field of agriculture. This demands that the farmer has to know all aspects of technology prior to its adoption. Mass media if effectively utilised can be a very potent instrument in provision of Agricultural information (Rita Sharma, 2001).

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

A research was undertaken to study the farmer's attitude towards use of information sources relevant or agricultural extension. Hundred villagers were randomly chosen as respondents from nine villages of Arang and Dharsiva Blocks of Raipur District of Chhattisgarh. The respondents were personally interviewed with the help of structured interview schedule to collect the primary data. Likert type attitude scale as suggested by Ray and Mondal (2011) was used to measure the attitude of farmers towards use of information sources. The scale consisted of 6 statements of which 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 were positive statements and 2 was negative statement. Responses were obtained from the respondents on 5 point continuum and the scores were assigned as follows:

| Statement | Fully agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Fully Disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Positive statement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Negative statement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

The scores for all the six statements were summed up to obtain the total score for each respondent which was used for statistical analysis and the respondents were classified into three categories by using the following formula :

**A.I. = Mean ($\overline{X}$) ± S.D. (Standard Deviation)**

| Categories | |
|---|---|
| 1. Less favourable attitude | (< $\overline{X}$ – S.D.) |
| 2. Moderately favourable attitude | (in between $\overline{X}$ ± S.D.) |
| 3. Highly favourable attitude | (> $\overline{X}$ + S.D.) |

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### (1) Socio-personal characteristics

The results pertaining to socio-personal characteristics are given in Table 1. It is observed that majority of the respondents (68.00%) were middle aged (34 to 56 years) followed by an equal number of respondents (16.00%) who were young (belong 34 years) and old (above 56 years). As regards education of the respondents it was found that just above one fourth of them (26.00%) were educated upto primary school, 22.00 per cent of them were found to be illiterate followed by 21.00, 12.00, 10.00 and 09.00 per cent of them who were educated upto middle school, high school, higher secondary and college &above respectively. So far as the caste of respondents is concerned, the results of the study revealed that three fifth of them (60.00%) belonged to scheduled caste followed by 19.00 per cent of them who belonged to other backward class, 16.00 per cent of them belonged to schedule tribes and only 05.00 per cent respondents belonged to general caste category. Regarding size of family, the study revealed that a considerable majority of the respondents (90.00%) belonged to medium sized family with 3-16 family members, followed by 07.00 per cent of them who had big gamily (more than 16 members) and the remaining 03.00 per cent of the respondents had small sized family of upto 2 members each. With reference to type of family, it was observed that majority of the respondents (69.00%) belonged to joint family whereas, the remaining 31.00 per cent belonged to nuclear family. The data pertaining to social participation revealed that a significant majority of the respondents (81.00%) had no membership in any social organisation indicating no social participation, 16.00 per cent of the respondents had membership in one organisation, 02.00 per cent of them were executive/office bearer in a social organisation while only 01.00 per cent of them had membership in two or more than two social organisations.

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents according to their socio-personal characteristics

n = 100

| S. No. | Characteristics | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | **Age** | | |
| | Young (below 34 years) | 16 | 16.00 |
| | Middle (34 to 56 years) | 68 | 68.00 |
| | Old (above 56 years) | 16 | 16.00 |
| 2. | **Education** | | |
| | Illiterate | 22 | 22.00 |
| | Primary school | 26 | 26.00 |
| | Middle school | 21 | 21.00 |
| | High school | 12 | 12.00 |
| | Higher Secondary | 10 | 10.00 |
| | College and above | 09 | 09.00 |
| 3. | **Caste** | | |
| | Schedule tribes | 16 | 16.00 |
| | Schedule caste | 60 | 60.00 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Other backward class | 19 | 19.00 |
| | General | 05 | 05.00 |
| 4. | **Size of family** | | |
| | Small ( up to 2 members) | 03 | 03.00 |
| | Medium ( 2 to 16 members) | 90 | 90.00 |
| | Big (> 16 members) | 07 | 07.00 |
| 5. | **Type of family** | | |
| | Nuclear | 31 | 31.00 |
| | Joint | 69 | 69.00 |
| 6. | **Social participation** | | |
| | No membership | 81 | 81.00 |
| | Membership in one organization | 16 | 16.00 |
| | Membership in two and more than two organization | 01 | 01.00 |
| | Executive / office bearer | 02 | 02.00 |

**(2) Size of land holding**

From the data given in Table 2, it can be inferred that most of the respondents (38.00%) were small famers with 1-2 ha. Land holding, 30.00 per cent of them were marginal farmers (less than 1 ha. land), while 16.00 per cent respondents each were medium farmers (2.1 to 4 ha. land) and large farmers (above 4 ha. land).

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents according to their size of land holding

n=100

| S. No. | Size of land holding | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Marginal (less than 1 ha) | 30 | 30.00 |
| 2. | Small (1 to 2 ha) | 38 | 38.00 |
| 3. | Medium (2.1 to 4 ha) | 16 | 16.00 |
| 4. | Large (above 4 ha) | 16 | 16.00 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100.00** |

**(3) Sources of irrigation**

Table 3 gives the distribution of the respondents according to sources of irrigation. It is observed that majority of the respondents (57.00%) had other sources of irrigation (other than tube well, pond, well and canal), 18.00 per cent of the respondents had tube wells as a sources of irrigation, 03.00 per cent of them had pond as a sources of irrigation, none of the respondents (0.00%) had well or canal as a sources of irrigation while 37.00 per cent of the respondents had no irrigation facilities.

**Table 3:** Distribution of the respondents according to sources of irrigation

n=100

| S. No. | Sources of irrigation | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Tube well | 18 | 18.00 |
| 2. | Pond | 03 | 03.00 |
| 3. | Well | 00 | 00.00 |
| 4. | Canal | 00 | 00.00 |
| 5. | Others | 57 | 57.00 |
| 6. | No source of irrigation | 37 | 37.00 |

*Frequency based on multiple responses

**(4) Occupation**

As far as occupation (Table 4) of the respondents in concerned, majority of them (58.00%) had agriculture + labour as their main occupation, 24.00 per cent of them had agriculture alone as their principal occupation, whereas, 10.00, 04.00, 03.00 and 01.00 per cent of them had Agriculture + business, Agriculture + Animal husbandry, Agriculture + Service and Agriculture + Other as their principal occupations respectively.

**Table 4:** Distribution of respondents according to their occupation

n=100

| S. No. | Occupation | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Agriculture | 24 | 24.00 |
| 2. | Agriculture + Animal husbandry | 04 | 04.00 |
| 3. | Agriculture + Labour | 58 | 58.00 |
| 4. | Agriculture + Service | 03 | 03.00 |
| 5. | Agriculture + business | 10 | 10.00 |
| 6. | Agriculture + Other | 01 | 01.00 |

**(5) Annual income**

Regarding annual income of the respondents it can be gathered from the data given in Table 5, that just around half of the farmers surveyed (47.00%) had annual income between Rs. 35,001/- to Rs. 60,000/-, 17.00 per cent of the respondents each had annual income upto Rs. 35,000/- and Rs. 60,001/- to Rs. 1,00,000/- whereas, 19.00 per cent of the respondents had annual income above Rs. 1,00,000/-

**Table 5:** Distribution of respondents according to their annual income

n=100

| S. No. | Annual income | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Up to Rs.35,000 | 17 | 17.00 |
| 2. | Rs.35,001 to 60,000 | 47 | 47.00 |
| 3. | Rs.60,001 to 1,00,000 | 17 | 17.00 |
| 4. | Above Rs.1,00,000 | 19 | 19.00 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100.00** |

**(6) Selling place of their farm produce**

The distribution of respondents according to their selling place of their farm produce is given in Table 6, which shows that about half of the respondents (49.00%) sell their farm produce in the Mnadi i.e. APM (Agriculture Produce Market), 30.00 per cent of the farmers do not decide in advance where to sell their farm produce, 20.00 per cent of them sell it to the cooperative society, 01.00 per cent sell it at other places whereas, none of the respondents said that they sell their farm produce to the broker or to the grocery/retail shop.

**Table 6:** Distribution of respondents according to selling place of their farm produce n=100

| S.N. | Selling place | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Broker | 00 | 00.00 |
| 2. | Shop | 00 | 00.00 |
| 3. | Mandi | 49 | 49.00 |
| 4. | Co-operative society | 20 | 20.00 |
| 5. | Other | 01 | 01.00 |
| 6. | Not decided | 30 | 30.00 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100.00** |

**(7) Over all contact with extension personnel**

As regards overall contact with extension personal (Table 7), majority of the respondents (71.00%) had medium level of overall contact with extension personnel, 19.00 per cent of them had low level of overall contact with extension personnel while 10.00 per cent of them had high level of overall contact with extension personnel.

**Table 7:** Distribution of respondents according to over all contact with extension personnel

n=100

| S.N. | Categories | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Low (up to 2 score) | 19 | 19.00 |
| 2. | Medium (2 –6 score) | 71 | 71.00 |
| 3. | High (above 6 score) | 10 | 10.00 |
| | **Total** | **100.00** | **100.00** |
| | $\overline{X}$ **= 4.24** | | S.D. = **1.76** |

**(8) Overall use of Information sources**

So far as overall use of information sources are concerned (Table 8), it was observe that three fourth of the respondents (75.00%) had medium level in overall use of information sources, 18.00 per cent of them had high level in overall use of information sources and 07.00 per cent of them had low level in overall use of information sources.

**Table 8:** Distribution of respondents according to overall use of Information sources n=100

| S.N. | Sources of information | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Low (up to 15 score) | 07 | 07.00 |
| 2. | Medium (15 – 22 score) | 75 | 75.00 |
| 3. | High (above 22 score) | 18 | 18.00 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100.00** |

$\overline{X}$ = **18.85** S.D. = **3.48**

**(9) Scientific orientation**

From Table 9, it can be observed that majority of the respondents (68.00%) had medium level of scientific orientation, 17.00 per cent of them had high level of scientific orientation whereas, 15.00 per cent of the respondents had low level of scientific orientation.

**Table 9:** Distribution of respondents according to their scientific orientation n = 100

| S.N. | Level of scientific orientation | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Low (below 16 score) | 15 | 15.00 |
| 2. | Medium (16 to 26 score) | 68 | 68.00 |
| 3. | High (above 26 score) | 17 | 17.00 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100.00** |

$\overline{X}$= **20.59** S.D.= **4.93**

**(10) Attitude regarding use of different mass information sources**

As far as attitude of respondents towards use of different mass information sources are concerned it was found that (Table 10), majority of the respondents (66.00%) had moderately favourable attitude towards use of different mass information sources, 20.00 per cent of them had highly favourable attitude towards use of different mass information and 14.00 per cent of the respondents had less favourable attitude towards use of different mass information sources.

**Table 10:** Distribution of respondents according to their attitude regarding use of different mass information sources n = 100

| S.N. | Level of attitude | Frequency | Per cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Less favourable (below 16 score) | 14 | 14.00 |
| 2. | Moderately favourable (16 to 25 score) | 66 | 66.00 |
| 3. | Highly favourable (above 25 score) | 20 | 20.00 |
| | **Total** | **100** | **100.00** |

$\overline{X}$= 20.52 S.D.= 4.58

**(11) Correlation analysis**

Correlation between dependent and independent variables was analysed and found that the variables education, size of land holding, sources of irrigation, annual income, marketing, contact with extension personnel, sources of information, use of information and scientific orientation had positive and significant relation with attitude at 0.01 level of probability. The variables occupation and age had negative and significant correlation with attitude at 0.01 and 0.05 level of probability respectively. While the remaining four variables viz. caste, size of family, type of family and social participation had non significant relation with attitude (Table 11).

**Table 11:** Correlation analysis of independent variables with the attitude

| S.N. | Independent variables | Correlation coefficient “r” value |
|---|---|---|
| 01. | Age | -0.226* |
| 02. | Education | 0.639** |
| 03. | Caste | 0.122 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 04. | Size of family | 0.127 |
| 05. | Type of family | 0.037 |
| 06. | Social participation | 0.133 |
| 07. | Size of land holding | 0.478** |
| 08. | Sources of irrigation | 0.518** |
| 09. | Occupation | -0.535** |
| 10. | Annual income | 0.510** |
| 11. | Marketing | 0.325** |
| 12. | Contact with extension personnel | 0.364** |
| 13. | Sources of information | 0.707** |
| 14. | Use of information | 0.698** |
| 15. | Scientific orientation | 0.961** |

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability
* Significant at 0.05 level of probability

**(12) Multiple regression analysis**

Multiple regression analysis was also done to ascertain the contribution or different independent variables towards attitude (Table 12). The results shows that the variables education, sources of irrigation, contact with extension personnel and sources of information were found to positively and significantly contribute towards attitude at 0.05 level of probability, whereas, variable scientific orientation was found to positively and significantly contribution towards attitude at 0.01 level of probability. While the variable occupation contributed negatively and significantly towards attitude whereas, the remaining variables viz. age, caste, size of family, type of family, social participation, size of land holding, annual income, marketing and use of information had non significant contribution towards attitude. All the 15 variables jointly explained the variation in attitude to the extent of 94.00 per cent.

**Table 12:** Multiple regression analysis of independent variables with the attitude

| S.N. | Independent variables | Correlation coefficient "b" value | "t" Value |
|---|---|---|---|
| 01. | Age | -0.021 | -1.619 |
| 02. | Education | 0.110 | 2.017 |
| 03. | Caste | 0.240* | 1.293 |
| 04. | Size of family | 0.001 | -0.016 |
| 05. | Type of family | 0.038 | 0.222 |
| 06. | Social participation | 0.135 | 0.514 |
| 07. | Size of land holding | -0.019 | -0.524 |
| 08. | Sources of irrigation | 0.549* | 2.312 |
| 09. | Occupation | -0.793* | -2.081 |
| 10. | Annual income | -0.001 | -0.334 |
| 11. | Marketing | -0.044 | -0.483 |
| 12. | Contact with extension personnel | 0.146* | 2.240 |
| 13. | Sources of information | 0.125* | 2.313 |
| 14. | Use of information | 0.012 | -0.338 |
| 15. | Scientific orientation | 0.817** | 16.334 |

** Significant at 0.01 level of probability $R^2$= 0.94
* Significant at 0.05 level of probability F= 84.16

## CONCLUSION

Although the results of the research revealed that 86.00 per cent of the respondents had moderately favourable to highly favourable attitude towards use of mass information sources and only 14.00 per cent of them had less favourable attitude, there is scope for the extension personnel to convert the less favourable and moderately favourable attitude to highly favourable attitude towards use of mass information sources. As stated above, the variables education, size of land holding, annual income, contact with extension personnel, use of information sources *etc.* play a positive and significant role in formation of favourable attitude towards use of information sources. Thus if the respondent farmers are enrolled for formal education it will go a long way in building favourable attitude of the farmers towards use of mass information sources. Similarly if the farmers are persuaded to adopt mixed farming system/integrated farming then their resources such as land, labour, water etc. would be utilised optimally which would help in increasing their annual income thereby leading to the development of positive attitude towards use of mass information sources. Regular visit by extension personnel to farmer's field and home and counselling them to use information sources would also aid in developing a favourable attitude towards use of mass information sources by the farmers.

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