

## Television Viewing Habits Among Farmers in Pakistan

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### ABSTRACT

Information and communication technology play a vital role in enhancement of the capacity building in health, education and agricultural development of countries. Due to lack of use of information and communication technology, farmers are facing hard to overcome their field problems so there is a need of developing agro based information technology facilities to support farmers to augment their agriculture produce, ultimately boosting economy of countries. The main objective of this study was to analyze the television viewing habits among farmers in Sindh, Pakistan. Quantitative approach by means of survey questionnaire was adopted to generate the primary data of the study where a total of 300 farmers, all male, from the district Jamshoro, Sindh province in Pakistan were selected as the main respondents of the study. The demographic attributes of the respondents showed that the majority of the respondents were illiterate (56.7%) or low educated (15.3) and fall mainly in the age group of 30-49 years. The main findings of the study revealed that general habit of the majority (85.3%) of the respondents was to spend 2-3 hours daily to view combined television programs, out of which only 18% of the respondent preferred to watch agriculture related programs exclusively. About 52% of the respondents were not satisfied to consider it as an effective source of disseminating agricultural information and 87.7% of respondents have their own television sets. Findings of the study further showed that farmers with no education or low education level took more interest in agricultural related programs being the only option to get updated knowledge as compared to other groups of educated farmers. The study recommends that television programs may further be furnished with modern and latest information and broadcast time should be adjusted according to farmer's convenience and free timings.

**KEYWORDS:** Television, agricultural development, Sindh, Pakistan.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays Television plays very important role in dissemination information regarding education, knowledge in the social life similarly human development and inclination to growth. Knowledge, information and awareness are the most vital factors in success of human development (WSIS, 2005). A study indicated that communication technology tools such as radio, television and video were the main source of dissemination information and knowledge for the farmers of a country (Arokoyo 2003).

Radio and television is playing very important role for disseminating the systematic, technical and scientific information to people. In different development countries level of education is very low especially in remote areas. The choice of mass media is of vital significance for mass communication. The spread of modern technology about agricultural information in short time can bring change in their life (Nazari and Hasbullah, 2008).

According to Hussain, (2005) mass communication is one of the most important methods in transferring of agricultural technology like radio, television, documentary film and print media. There is need of using the new farming technologies to enhance the productivity of agriculture in Pakistan. Such technologies are beneficial for farmers to increase their produce and can achieve good market prices.

Sher (2001) described that significance of television in Pakistan for rural communities and development of agriculture cannot be denied. Television produces many agriculture programs for the rural communities in their local languages. TV producers invite agriculture experts to suggest on new techniques and methods of sowing, ploughing, harvesting and seeding the crop.

Khan (2002) explained that in Pakistan per hectare yield of almost all crops is far below than other countries. There is need to increase farmers access to adopt ICT in the field of agriculture. Under such condition farmers need sufficient information exposure to the latest technologies.

Media play an important role in spreading information and enable the remote areas people to make decision regarding their farm activities. Such thing usually has been observed in developing countries. (Lwoga, 2010, Hassan et al., 2009) revealed that in rural areas mostly farmers still depend on television, newspaper and radio regarding the information about agriculture in rural areas. Print and electronic media still is the main source of getting agriculture information among the farmers in the rural areas.

The mass media has increased the knowledge and information among farming community which has provided good output in recent years. The main reason of the popularity of television among masses is that people choose the easiest way for getting information and learning the simplest way. Most of the educational programs through television can be found in the field of health, education and agriculture (Buren, 2000).

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Mass media offer powerful channels for communicating agricultural messages and related information which can enhance the capacity building of farmers. Broadcast media have the ability to disseminate information to large audiences efficiently; and television can be a particularly most famous channel among farmers (Nazari & Hassan, 2011).

The first television station was established in 1964 and the aim of the introducing television in Pakistan was to develop the nation generally, socially and culturally. As Pakistan got independence on 14th of August 1947 and was new state and under-developed, it was assumed that media specially television could bring the changes and support in achieving progress in the country by diffusion of information and knowledge about education, health and agriculture. Hereafter Pakistan television started broadcasting a first black and white small pilot television station at Lahore on November 26, 1964.

Almost farmers have requirement information about the agriculture productivity and initiative for which farmers could use different sources for getting the information regarding agriculture development. Radio, television and print media are the main sources of information (Farooq, et al. 2007).

Primarily television centre was set up with the help of UNESCO, Colombo plan and Japanese government. First of all government of Pakistan established private company with collaboration of Japanese Nippon Electrical Company (NEC) and Britain World known Thomas Television International which initially started television programming in 1964.

Pakistan Television has now five stations in the country including Karachi, Rawalpindi which was established in 1967 while Peshawar and Quetta were established in 1975. After fast growing the first colour transmission were switched over in 1976. Furthermore the Pakistan television (PTV) started PTV world channel in 1991 which provide latest information about country which are watched by Pakistanis who live in Middle East and in European countries (Zia, 2007).

### Statement of Research problem

The farmers are facing many problems in rural areas where they could not get proper knowledge and information regarding agricultural related problem. Due to lack of awareness and lack of resources, farmers have no knowledge to sell their product in the market. Illiteracy is also a big problem among farmers. They could not have knowledge about the use of pesticide, fertilizers and techniques of new technology in farming. Mass media is spreading very fast. But non-availability of infrastructure and electricity is one of the big problems in rural areas where people could not know how to use these technologies in proper way.

It is expected that latest technology accessibility could be possible by dissemination of agricultural Information among the farmers (Butt, 2002). Farmers need to be informed and educated about enhanced agricultural practices to enable them grow their production and income. Several channels can be used such as extension agents, individuals' contacts, and farmer-to-farmer transfer the information regarding agriculture related problems to Supplement mass media. Electronic media radio, television, film, slides and film strips have been widely used to disseminate information to farmers in rural areas but due to non- availability of electricity farmers still are facing many problems to get the information about agriculture (van den Ban and Hawkins, 1992; Olowu and Oyedokun, 2000).

FAO (2001) reported that television is the most important medium for communicating information among rural people of developing countries.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was based on primary data using the quantitative approach whereby the respondents of the study belonged to district Jamshoro, Sindh, Pakistan. Respondents were interviewed based on the questions using survey method. A total of 300 respondents were selected for this study. The Data was obtained from respondents about perceptions and views about dissemination of agricultural related information on television channel in Sindh, Pakistan. A purposive sample was used and major agro-based areas (Talukas') Sehwan Sharif and Kotri were selected for data collection. The quantitative data thus collected were analyzed by using the SPSS version 18th in this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section of the article presents the results and discussion on the main findings of the study, which is based on the data collected through the survey questionnaire on the following main points: i) respondents demographic information, ii) respondents television viewing habits.

### Respondents Demography

Table1 shows that the distribution of the respondents gender, marital status, age group and level of education. This demographic information is seen to be very essential and major. Demographic variables indicate that there is a significant relationship with dissemination of information about agricultural related knowledge and television viewing habits among the respondents of the study.

**Table 1 Respondents Demographic variables**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	300	100.0
Female	Zero	Zero
Total	300	100.0

The data presented in Table 1 clearly indicated that the respondents of the study were comprised of mainly male respondents. Because farming practice is commonly doing the people in Sindh, Pakistan therefore it would be related to include only male respondents as the main subject of the study.

Table 2 shows the age distribution of the respondents under study. Majority of the respondents' age ranged between 30 to 39 (46%) years while 94 (31.3%) respondents age was 40 to 49 years. Furthermore 49 (16.4%) respondents age was 20 to 29 years old. Only 19 (6.3%) respondents age was 51 to 59 years. It is clear from afore mentioned data that majority (71.3%) of the farmers belong to age of 30 to 49 years. Mean 2.28 (SD= .807). This age group is considered to be mature minded having more capacity to work physically in the field as compare to other age group. Furthermore a few (16.3%) farmers fall in the age category of 20 to 29 years. These young farmers mostly prefer to join governmental and private jobs on regular and daily basis. These farmers could probably be unemployed young men working on the field as farmers after getting no chance to work as government or private servant.

**Table 2 Respondents age group**

Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Age Group		
<b>20- 29</b>	49	16.3
<b>30- 39</b>	138	46.0
<b>40-49</b>	94	31.3
<b>50- 59</b>	19	6.3

The table 3 shows the level of education among farmers in the research area. Findings presented show that a majority of the respondents were illiterate comprising of 170 individuals (56.7%). Out of the remaining respondents 68 (22.7%) respondents were matriculate, 46 (15.3%) respondent had primary level education, 11 (3.7%) respondents were intermediate. The only 5 (1.7%) respondents was bachelor. It is clear from the information discussed earlier regarding the knowledge level of the respondents that majority (72%) of the respondents are either illiterate or low educated. Remaining 28% of the respondents were considered as educated with maximum education till B.A level. So it is assumed that any source of knowledge designed to boost up the knowledge level of illiterate people could be the only option for the diffusion of agriculture technology among the farmers in the research area.

**Table 3 Level of education**

Years of Schooling	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Illiterate (0)</b>	170	56.7
<b>1-5</b>	46	15.3
<b>6-10</b>	68	22.7
<b>11-12</b>	11	3.7
<b>13-14</b>	5	1.7
<b>16 and above</b>	300	100.0

Table 4 shows about ownership of television basis among the respondent's results of the study as indicate that a majority of the respondents (87.7%) revealed that they own the television set at home, however a small number of the respondents, comprising of 37 respondents (12.3%) had no television set at their homes.

**Table 4 Ownership of television set**

Television Ownership	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Yes</b>	263	87.7
<b>No</b>	37	12.3
<b>Total</b>	300	100.0

Table 5 shows the respondents' daily television watching habits. Most of the respondents of the study 184 (61.3%) spent watching television 3 – 4 hours per day, 72 respondents (24.0%) 1- 2 hours daily and 44 respondents (14.7%) said that they watch television daily 5 – 6 hours in the study district.

**Table 5 Television viewing Habits**

Daily hours watching television	Frequency	Percentage %
<b>1- 2 hours</b>	72	24.0
<b>3-4 hours</b>	184	61.3
<b>5- 6 hours</b>	44	14.7
<b>Total</b>	300	100.0

In the terms of satisfaction regarding television programs farmers' response expressed in table 6. It indicated that 157 (52.3%) of the respondent said that television did not broadcast satisfactory information regarding agriculture related information. while 91 (30.3%) of the respondents understand that television provide satisfactory knowledge about agriculture development. However 52 (17.3%) of the respondents understand that some time television broadcast satisfactory information about agriculture fertilizer and use of pesticide in farming.

**Table 6 programs satisfaction**

Satisfied with Television telecast		
Satisfied	91	30.3
Not satisfied	157	52.3
Partially satisfied	52	17.3
Total	300	100.0

The respondents were also asked about their habits to watch their preferred television programs (table 7). About 88 (29.3%) respondents said that they prefer to watch drama on television because after finishing work in evening time dramas give them entertainment, while 85 (28.3%) of the respondents watch news on television because they want to know information about their areas and country that what is happening over there, 54 (18%) of the respondents prefer to watch agriculture related program. Remaining 37 (12.3%) of respondents watch television for education and supports purpose. The result shows that most of the respondents prefer to watch drama and current news programs because these programs provide latest information about politics, economics and weather updates. Previous studies show that it is general trend that majority of people in a community tend to watch entertainment programs and listen latest news. The same trend is observed here where 29% and 28% of the respondents watch dramas and news respectively (Khan *et al.*, 2010). Also revealed that only 28% of respondent were aware about agriculture program majority of respondents have no idea of agriculture programs which telecasted on television Our study shows that (18%) respondents have their preference to watch agricultural related program. Similar study indicates that (48%) of the respondents watched television rarely furthermore (16%) of respondents watched TV occasionally (0.9%) of respondents watched agricultural- related program regularly. Majority of the respondents never watched television for obtaining agricultural information. It may imply that a large majority of the respondents was getting very less information through about agriculture by television (Irfan *et al.*, 2006). The farmers' low trend to watch agricultural related programs on television may be due to non-availability of television set, electricity problems and farmers engagements in farm activities which is also supported by (Khan *et al.*, 2010).

**Table 7 preferences watching programs**

Preferred TV programs		
Education	28	9.3
Drama	88	29.3
Entertainment	34	11.3
Agricultural related program	54	18.0
News	85	28.3
Sport	9	3.0
Total	300	100.0

## Conclusion

Results indicated that majority (87.7%) of the respondents have their own television sets. While only 18% of the respondents prefer to watch the agricultural related programs on television. About 86% of the respondents had the habit to watch television around 2-3 hours daily. Agricultural related programs were watched by the respondents' as the next priority after news and drama. The contribution of television towards the dissemination of information about agriculture related programs revealed that the role of television is low in the study area. This low trend towards viewing agricultural related programs may be due to low access to television sets, electricity problems and non-compatibility of timing of agricultural related programs with farmers' busy schedule at their farms.

In relation to the government and television stations should capitalize on this point and should therefore focus more on introducing more agricultural-related development programs on television with basic farming seasonal practices broadcasted at evening to help farmers to participate at maximum.

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