

Impact Of Programme For Rural Listeners On Farmers In Phek District (Improving Livelihood Of Farmers Through Broadcasting)

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India is one of the world's fastest growing economies, nevertheless it is a developing country that needs holistic policies and programmes to cater its diverse segment of socio-economic population. In the process of rapid economic development, it is imperative to view development from the perspective of improving livelihood, especially the majority of population inhabiting in rural areas. As agriculture is the largest contributor to India's GDP, the state of Nagaland is predominantly agrarian. Prior studies have shown that empowering the farming community through effective policies and media content have a positive impact. Development communication is an operative way to facilitate development through media that seeks to understand the reality of the audience and frame content accordingly. This planned approach rest upon the responsibility of the media organization, to identify gaps and intensify opportunities that can encourage sustainable development. Radio as an aural medium of communication has far-reaching impact in view of its ability to reach even the remotest places which have partial connectivity by information technology or electricity. The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of programme for rural listeners broadcast by All India Radio as perceived by 50 farmers from two villages in Phek district, Nagaland. Results indicate positive assessment of the programme for improving agriculture production. Broadcast medium- television and radio, are proved to be desirable medium of communication.

Keywords- Radio, Development Communication, Broadcasting, Agriculture, Farmers

1. INTRODUCTION

The planning commission explored to achieve development through the country's natural, industrial and human resources. Development strategies are devised according to the regional needs of the country and the standard pattern for broadcasting has been informing the population about projects, illustrating the advantage of these projects and advocating that they be adopted (Servaes, 2007). Much of the focus on economic growth has been poverty alleviation, employment generation, controlling economic inequality, self-reliance and modernisation. Though the priorities of development could be realised in a proper time frame, much of planning policies is focused on agriculture as the prime moving force of the Indian economy.

World Trade Organisation support that food security can be achieved with the increase in agriculture surplus, in turn generate exports in the globalising world. Every economy is vexed with the challenge of poverty alleviation which can be solved to a great extent with emphasis

on agriculture as a higher income generating occupation to induce growth in the rural economy, through which gainful employment can also be generated.

The process of modernising traditional agriculture through communication takes a long time because it requires the cultivators from shifting ancient practices and strong held beliefs to teaching new skills and adopt new attitude in farming (Schramm, 1964). Media plays an important role as development communicator, to explain the development process to the common people in such a way that it is adopted. It takes understanding the process of development and communication, knowing the audience and disseminating development message in a way that they are received and understood, accepted and applied. Accordingly propagation of welfare policies, programmes and ideas through media to drive social, economic and technological change are devised as per the strata of society. Diffusion research has shown that social structure functions in many ways, whereby the social structure determines the rate at which an innovation gets adopted over time. An individual is seen as the unit of adoption depending on the perception of the media channels in rural sociology, public health and marketing. There appears to be a growing interest in research about the social structure in which adopting units are linked, also the time it takes for innovations to get adopted (Katz et al 1963).

The rate of adopting policies, welfare programmes, innovations and ideas goes through the stages underlined in the diffusion of innovation theory. Over time an idea or product gains momentum and diffuses (or spread) through a specific population or social system-acceptance over time, of some specific idea or practices by individual group or other adopting units linked, to specific channel of communication to a social structure of a given values or culture (Rogers, 1983).

Development communication and diffusion of innovation theory

Development communication can facilitate dynamic flow of communication through its two-way mode of communication- information dissemination, behaviour change, social mobilization and community participation. Nora C. Quebral termed "Development Communication" in 1972, in her paper "Development Communication in the Agricultural Context". She defined

Development communication is the art and science of human communication applied to the speedy transformation of a country from poverty to a dynamic state of economic growth that makes possible greater economic and social equality and the larger fulfilment of human potential.

Development communication is required to address the communication needs- informing and motivating the masses and audience needs- seeking solutions for development problems (Kumar, 2011). The points to consider for an effective development communication are- to identify the most effective tool of communication, how communication tools are used to inform or educate and engagement of the receivers of the intended message.

In order to attain development communication by the government or private organization through media, the diffusion of innovation can be a basis, as it seeks to identify the adoption of innovations by media consumers. In the theory, Everett Rogers, 1961 enunciate four key components-innovations, communication channel, time and social system. An innovation is described as a new method, idea or product, diffused through media channels overtime into a social system to achieve development. He identified that getting a new idea adopted is difficult, as there is wide gap in what is known and what is actually put into use, vis-à-vis to the time innovations become available to the time it gets adopted. The diffusion process is happening faster as technology advances; therefore, understanding and utilizing diffusion networks can support system-wide change (Orr, 2003). The need arises to study social-

structural approach on, how innovations are integrated into decision making and pragmatic practices through media channels.

Radio for development

Many studies on the role of media in decision making has identified that different media are suitable to achieve different purpose (Katz et al 1963). Radio has emerged as one of the prominent medium of mass communication for development with its diverse segments of programs and languages having considerable penetration in urban and rural areas. Advancement in technology may have brought out broad range of communication medium, yet in terms of accessibility for population that lacks access to information technologies, radio coverage is omnipresent. Democratization of radio around the world through ownership- public, private and community have facilitated horizontal type of communication. This unique ownership helps in understanding the local need of the area, which makes up for disseminating a more effective development centric communication.

Radio is still the dominant mass medium in India with the widest geographical reach. Established in 1936, All India Radio (AIR) known as Akashvani since 1956 is the national public radio broadcaster of India. It is the largest public service broadcaster that reaches nearly 92% of the country's area and 99.19% of the total population. Keeping into view the hierarchy and diversity of socio-economic, multi-culture and multi-lingual structure of the population, AIR has three-tier system of broadcasting. National broadcast- national programmes relayed from the country's capital, New Delhi of talks, features, drama in Hindi and English, regional broadcasting- regional station is present in 29 states and 6 union territories that design programmes catering to the regional language and need of the population, local broadcasting- local radio stations or community radio serves as a mouthpiece of a community, showcasing local culture and broadcast area specific programmes.

In a country like India inhibited by rural population of 68.84% and urban population of 31.16%, the geographical reach of radio is beneficial for reaching even the most remote areas. AIR with its diverse programmes is serving the utility as a credible information channel, as well as development and cultural activist. The audience research wing and other field survey create a suitable climate to determine the listening habits and preference of the audience as to formulate effective programmes for listeners.

Studies of Radio in development

(Rao, 1966) made a monographic study of two Indian villages south India Kothuru (a new village) and Pathuru (an old village) based on the anthropological approach. The villages were at contrasting stages of development due to the radio broadcasting. One was becoming industrialized, whereas the other still clung to the agrarian economy. The findings found out that radio helped them in securing livelihood, improve social economic status, and raise information level and awareness of government programs.

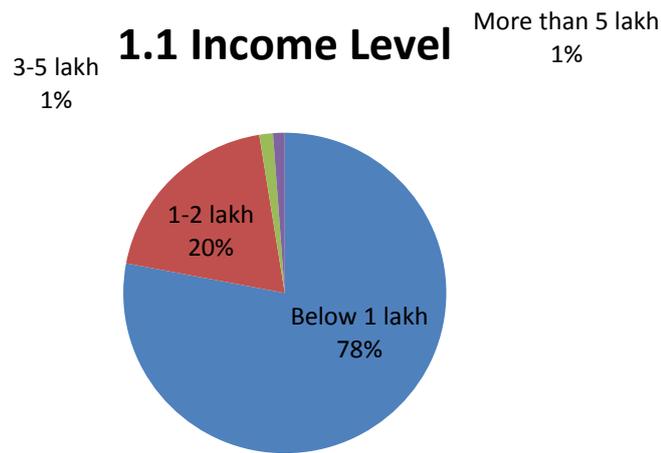
(Joshi, 2002) conducted a study that radio has played noteworthy role in development especially in the agriculture sector. The farm and home units of Akashvani started in 1966 to support the IADP, the high-yielding Rice-ADT 27 popularized by radio came to be known to the farmers of Tanjore district as 'Radio Rice'. (Mogambi, 2015) conducted a study on the impact of radio Serian in Northern Kenya among pastoral communities and found that there was improvement in awareness and knowledge to solutions of community challenges and women issues in particular.

The Ministry of Agriculture Government of India in collaboration with All India Radio aired special broadcast 'Kisanvani' in 96 radio transmitters and production centres across the country on 2004. The Audience Research Unit of AIR made assessment of the impact on

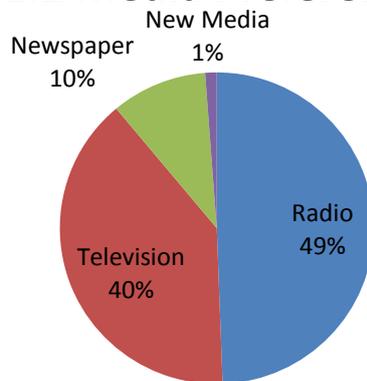
Kisanvani. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to study the impact on the listeners and several success stories were documented. Based on cultural settings AIR has over the years concentrated farming related programs such as ‘Maz Ghar Maz Wawar’ and Gram Panchayat of AIR Nagpur, Krishiranga of AIR Bangalore, ‘Unnat Kheti’ of Jalandhar All India Radio etc (Kujur et al, 2009).

Community based radio such as Anna FM 90.4 from Kotturpuram, Chennai is focused on improving the agriculture sector, environment and rural development (Abrol, 2011), while Sangham Radio from Medak district in Andhra Pradesh is a successful community based radio focused on rural development and women empowerment (Menon, 2010).

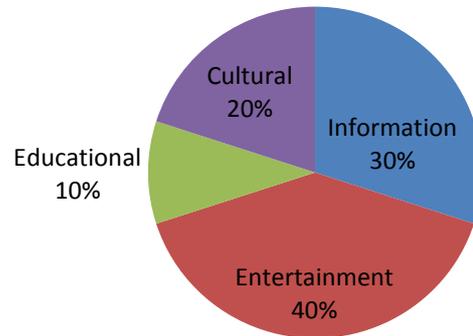
Influence of programme for rural listeners on farmers in Phek district



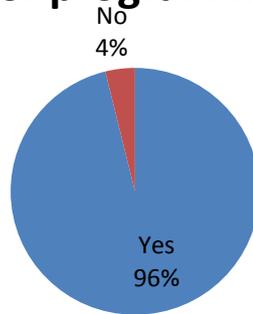
1.2 Media Preference



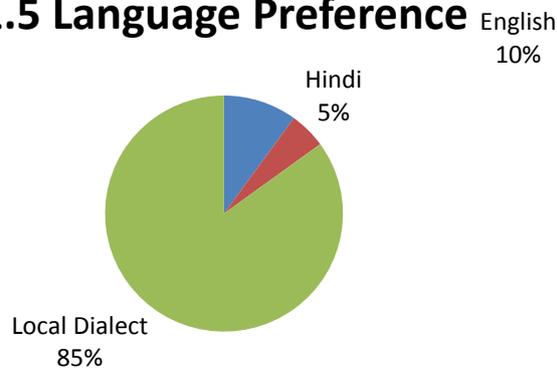
1.3 Program Preference



1.4 Awareness of program for rural listeners

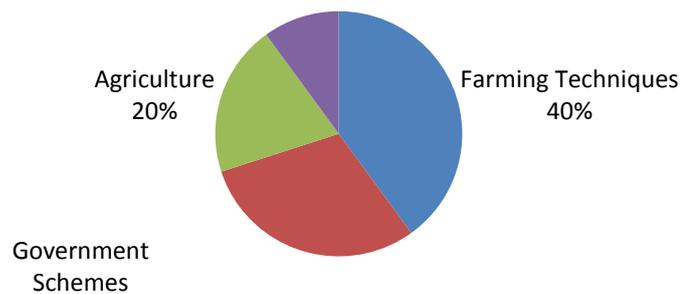


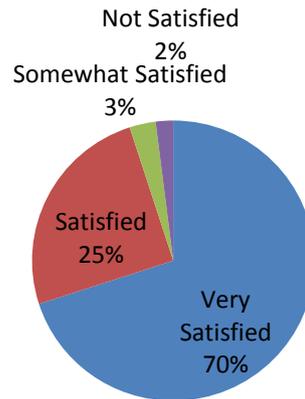
1.5 Language Preference



Health Hygiene and
Nutrition
10%

1.6 Topic Preference





1.7 Satisfaction Level of Program for Rural Listeners

2. CONCLUSION

The rapid change in media consumption has posed a challenge to identify which medium of communication could be more effective in ushering developmental impact. In Nagaland, radio has a wider coverage with 10 radio stations located across the state and programmes in 14 local dialects.

All India Radio produce special audience program-farm and home unit, for rural listeners that caters to the seasonal needs of the farming community. The programmes are broadcasted in Hindi and regional dialects from more than 188 radio stations.

These program create awareness about the ways and means to improve the agricultural productivity and quality of the country's farming community. The program is targeted for rural farmers, women, children and youth, which broadcast daily on an average duration of 60 to 100 minutes per day. The unit provide diffusion of innovation in the form of disseminating composite programmes with equal segments of rural development scheme, agricultural programmes and also programmes on employment schemes, loan, sanitation, health and nutrition etc.

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of program for rural listeners broadcast by All India Radio as perceived by 50 farmers from two villages (Lekromi and Pfutsero) in Phek district, Nagaland.

- 1.1 Majority (78%) of the farmers had the income level of below 1 lakh, most of whom were recipients of schemes provided to Below Poverty Line.
- 1.2 The media preference of the farmers was broadcast mediums- radio (49%) and television (40%).
- 1.3 The farmers use media for entertainment (40%), Information (30%), cultural programmes (20%) and educational programmes (10%).
- 1.4 Majority (96%) of the farmers were aware and listened to the programme for rural listeners by All India Radio.
- 1.5 The preferred language of listening to the programme for rural listeners was in local dialect (85%), followed by English (10%) and Hindi (5%).
- 1.6 The preferred topics on the programme for rural listeners was farming techniques (40%), government schemes (30%), agriculture (20%) and health, hygiene and nutrition (10%).
- 1.7 Majority (70%) of the farmers were satisfied with the content of the programme for rural listeners by All India Radio.

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