



POWER OF MASS MEDIA ON KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE (KAP) LEVELS OF RURAL WOMEN

Santhi Sri KV^{1*}, Anitha G² and Sivannarayana G³

¹Asst. Professor, Dept. of Foods and Nutritional Sciences, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur 522510, Andhra Pradesh, India.

²Asst. Professor, Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur 522510, Andhra Pradesh, India.

³Professor, Department of Extension, Agricultural College, Bapatla, Andhra Pradesh 522101, India.

ABSTRACT

It is well known that the triad of knowledge, attitudes and practices in combination governs all aspects of life in human societies. Knowledge is the capacity to acquire, retain and use information; a mixture of comprehension, experience, discernment and skill, whereas, Attitudes refer to inclinations to react in a certain way to certain situations; to see and interpret events according to certain predispositions; or to organize opinions into coherent and interrelated structures and Practices mean the application of rules and knowledge that leads to action. Good practice is an art that is linked to the progress of knowledge and technology and is executed in an ethical manner. The purpose of this study was to conduct an assessment of knowledge, attitudes and practices related to Health and Nutrition among families with exposure to mass media like news papers radio, television, video films, and film shows etc. A total of 90 rural women from 3 villages in Darsi mandal, Prakasam district were interviewed in their local language in order to understand their knowledge, attitudes and practices. A questionnaire with 30 items comprising of health and nutrition components was executed for the study. Data were analyzed and the results expressed that mass media has brought positive and drastic changes in the livelihoods of rural women, with regard to all three strands knowledge, attitude and practice. Owing to health and nutrition programmes being telecasted from television, broadcasted from radio as well as health and nutrition aspects from news papers there was much upliftment in the nutrition and health of rural families.

Keywords: Knowledge, 3 villages, Health and Nutrition Components.

INTRODUCTION

During the past two decades the purposeful application of media and communication support has assumed an increasingly important role in many facets of rural development. Much of it has been subsumed under the larger movement normally referred to as Development Support Communication (DSC), or more recently, Development Communication. Broadly defined by the U.S. AID, the process refers to "The application of existing communication technologies and media to the problems of development" [1]. FAO more precisely delimits DSC as "The systematic utilization of appropriate communication channels and techniques to Increase

people's participation In development and to Inform, motivate, and train rural populations, mainly at the grassroots level" [2]. Nowadays in rural development, it is common to talk about media categories which are taken to include broadcast (television and especially radio), group (video, tape-slides, sound film-strips, audio-cassettes, overhead projections, flip-charts, posters, pamphlets, and leaflets; as well, traditional folk media such as puppets and live-theatre may be included), and Interpersonal channels (community leaders, contact farmers, extension workers). And Development Support Communication (DSC) delivery strategies have been hierarchically ranked, in terms of complexity, from interpersonal

communication through radio and television broadcasting, these aspects, the present study was carried out to see the power of mass media on health and nutritional knowledge of rural women.

METHODOLOGY

Three villages namely Lonkojanapalli, Ramachandra puram, Ganeswarapuram were selected purposively in Darsi mandal. From each village 30 women were selected. Thirty questions were framed in a questionnaire to assess their knowledge pertaining to health and nutrition. Answers were given scores. Positive answer was given with score one and negative answer with zero. Based on the scores obtained the assessment was made and analyzed statistically.

RESULTS

While there is no proven formula for selecting media for rural development, certain guidelines have emerged from practice. We know for instance that radio is particularly good at reaching a mass audience, quickly, with simple messages; print media like posters and pamphlets are good reminders or reinforcers of broadcasts, and interpersonal sources who provide opportunities for discussing information inputs are most useful for adding credibility to media content, shifting attitudes and prompting behavioral practice changes. Group media combinations have proven strikingly productive at the grassroots level. The advantage of this strategy is the establishment of a two-way flow of information with an audience and the possibility for immediate feedback as the presentation unfolds. Central points can be reemphasized, remedial information provided where needed, and

discussions started with a view toward putting the recommended changes into practice. Particularly effective use has been made of small format video combined with simple, well illustrated pamphlets and field worker support for direct training of farmers and participatory community development [3,4]. In the present study rural women were exposed to television, radio and news papers for both entertainment and knowledge gaining. The results of the present study are displayed and these indicate how effective the mass media is in inspiring, training, educating the rural populations.

It is apparent from the table 1, that the scores obtained regarding knowledge, majority of the women have given correct answers against 10 questions related to knowledge. The 1st, 2nd, 7th and 8th questions were answered positively by maximum number (28) of women.

It is obvious from the table 2, that the scores obtained regarding attitude, majority of the women have given correct answers against 10 questions related to knowledge. The 10th question was answered positively by maximum number (28) of women.

It is evident from the table 3, that the scores obtained regarding practice, majority of the women have given correct answers against 10 questions related to knowledge. The 3rd question was answered positively by maximum number (28) of women.

Table 4 revealed that Ganeswarapuram (village 3) has shown better KAP levels compared with other villages though all the three villages were good at KAP levels. In all the 3 villages on an average out of 30, 19 women were with positive answers pertaining to knowledge, similarly 24 with attitude and 23 with practice. This shows a remarkable impact of mass media.

Table 1. Scores of Knowledge

S.No.	Assessment of Knowledge	Village 1 (n=30)	Village 2 (n=30)	Village 3 (n=30)
1	Leafy vegetables are good for health.	27	28	27
2	Carrot is good for eye sight.	26	28	21
3	Anaemia occurs due to iron deficiency.	25	26	26
4	Calcium is essential for the development of bones and teeth	25	25	26
5	Scars at the angles of the mouth are due to B-complex deficiency	24	23	24
6	Nightblindness occurs due to Vit A deficiency	25	26	26
7	Health is wealth. Isn't it?	27	28	28
8	Prevention is better than cure. Do you accept it?	28	27	26
9	Every day at least one seasonal fruit should be taken.	26	26	27
10	Junk funds should not be eaten in excess.	25	26	25

Village-1 Lonkojanapalli Village-2 Ramachandra puram Village-3 Ganeswarapuram

Table 2. Scores of Attitude

S.No.	Assessment of Attitude	Village 1 (n=30)	Village 2 (n=30)	Village 3 (n=30)
1	Pregnant lady should eat papaya	23	24	24
2	Gogu doesn't cause muscle cramps	25	25	26
3	Egg doesn't cause heat	24	24	24
4	Colostrum shouldn't be discarded	25	25	24

5	New born baby should be exposed to sunlight early in the morning.	23	24	23
6	Citrus fruits don't cause cold.	24	23	24
7	Vaccination is essential for children.	23	23	24
8	Lactating mother should be taken additional diet to increase the milk production	25	26	25
9	Fluorinated water should not be consumed	23	24	24
10	Overeating causes obesity	26	27	28

Village-1 Lonkojanapalli Village-2 Ramachandra puram Village-3 Ganeswarapuram

Table 3. Scores of Practice

S.No.	Assessment of Practice	Village 1 (n=30)	Village 2 (n=30)	Village 3 (n=30)
1	House and surroundings should be kept clean	25	26	25
2	Kanji should not be discarded	24	25	26
3	Hands should be cleaned before taking food	26	28	27
4	Fruits should be washed thoroughly before consumption	23	25	23
5	Lid should be kept while cooking food.	24	23	24
6	Leafy vegetables should be cleaned and washed before cutting	23	22	23
7	Cooked food should be covered properly	24	25	25
8	Feeding bottle should be sterilized by boiling in hot water	23	24	24
9	Diarrhoea should not be neglected.	23	24	23
10	Drinking water should be boiled and cooled before consumption	22	23	23

Village-1 Lonkojanapalli Village-2 Ramachandra puram Village-3 Ganeswarapuram

Table 4. Average scores of KAP in Villages

Factors	Village 1 (n=30)	Village 2 (n=30)	Village 3 (n=30)
Knowledge(K)	19.05±1.23	19.49±1.57	20.80±1.96
Attitude(A)	24.10±1.10	24.50±1.27	24.60±1.43
Practice(P)	23.70±1.16	24.50±1.72	24.30±1.42

Village-1 Lonkojanapalli Village-2 Ramachandra puram Village-3 Ganeswarapuram

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the present study there was positive impact of mass media over nutritional and health aspects. This was achieved by news papers, radio and television. Health and nutrition programmes from these media have influenced rural women a lot. Mostly health campaigns telecasted from television has shown much influence. The following literature can support the present study.

Among the best documented campaign examples were those launched in Tanzania during the 70's, namely, the 1973 health campaign, Man is Health, which ran for a 12 week period, and the 1975 nutrition campaign, Food Is Life, which extended over an 18 week period A number of successful campaigns have also been undertaken in agriculture. Adhikarya and Posamentier [5] for example, documented a rat control campaign in Bangladesh during 1983 which raised the adoption of rat control practices among targeted wheat farmers from 10 to 32%, resulting in an average harvest gain of 54 kg/hectare in treated fields. Perhaps the best known campaign, however, was that associated with the "Masagana 99" project in the

Philippines during 1973 which catapulted the country toward adopting high yielding rice cultivation. "Masagana" translates as bountiful harvest with "99" referring to the project objective of achieving 99 sacks (50 kilos per sack) of unmilled rice per hectare [6].

FAO supported campaign carried out in Sierra Leone during 1984 [7]. Following a baseline survey which assessed information levels, perceived information needs, and media access among a sampling of the intended farmer target audience, an information campaign was built around the urgent priority to expand rice production through increased cultivation of swamp farms. The two month campaign, which was carried out by the Agricultural Communication Unit, involved a mix of dedicated radio broadcasts and village based slide-tape presentations, supplemented by posters and pamphlets.

The idea of using media to assist Third-World development grew out of relatively consistent research findings demonstrating that focused, receiver oriented communication strategies could play a significant role in accelerating the rate of technology transfer, whether it be

process or product - or both. Thus, as communication technologies improved, became easier to use, and costs lowered, broadcasting and a variety of "small media" were increasingly harnessed to reach people at the village level. Prior to this, the main vehicle for linking scientific advances in agriculture, health and nutrition between researchers and rural adopters was the extension worker. Historically, however, their singular efforts have been limited by the thin spread of front line agents available in relation to the volume of people requiring information and training. Transportation difficulties have also tended to impede their outreach. In addition, effective

communication with predominantly illiterate farmers was hampered by poor training in face-to-face communication techniques. Against this background, the use of media could accelerate awareness of, and adoption rates toward, recommended technologies through targeted information, motivational messages and training [8]. In the present study also the influence of media was more in motivating, guiding and educating people. It was really a good change in the rural populations, for being watching useful programmes like health and nutrition programmes, besides the most attracting social films, songs, serials etc.

REFERENCES

1. AID-Agency for International Development. Development Communications, Policy Determination Paper # 10. Washington, AID, 1984.
2. Coldevin Gary Perspectives on Communication for Rural Development. Rome, FAO, 1987.
3. Fraser Colin. Pioneering a new approach to communication in rural areas: The Peruvian experience with video for training at the grassroots Level. Rome: FAO, 1987.
4. Fraser Colin. A rural communication system for development in Mexico's Tropical Lowlands. Rome: FAO, 1987.
5. Adhikarya R and Posamentier H Motivating Farmers for Action: How a Strategic Multi-Media Campaign Can Help. Frankfurt: GTZ, 1987.
6. Sison Obdulia F. Factors associated with the successful transfer of rice technology in the Philippines Masagana 99 Programme. Rome: FAO, 1985.
7. Coldevin Gary. Evaluation in rural development communications - A case study from West Africa. *Media in Education and Development*, 19(3), 1986, 112-118.
8. Ministry of Agriculture. Lesotho Agricultural Situation Report: 1976/77 - 1985/86. Maseru: Agricultural Planning Department, 1987.