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Utilisation behaviour of information sources by rice exporters of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states

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Abstract

Rice exporters to be competitive, to make wiser decisions, and maintain their place in global markets, they must have access to timely and accurate export information. This study explores how rice exporters in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh access and use different sources of information. A total of 80 exporters (40 from each state) were selected and studied using an ex post facto research design. The results show that more than half of the exporters (55.00%) fall under the medium level of information utilisation behaviour, while 30.00% demonstrate high utilisation and 15.00% remain at a low level. The findings reveal that exporters largely depend on practical and experience-based sources. Among personal localite sources, fellow exporters are the most trusted and frequently consulted (62.50% in Telangana and 70.00% in Andhra Pradesh), highlighting the strength of peer networks in sharing real-world insights. In the personal cosmopolite category, officials from APEDA and banks play a key role, as many exporters regularly approach them for guidance related to certification, documentation, and financial matters. Digital platforms have emerged as the most preferred mass media source, with mobile and internet services being widely used (77.50% in Telangana and 82.50% in Andhra Pradesh), indicating a clear shift toward quick and technology-driven information access. In contrast, traditional media such as television and magazines are used less frequently.

Overall, the study suggests that while exporters are moderately engaged with available information sources, there is still room to strengthen their information-seeking behaviour. Organising capacity-building programmes, improving coordination between exporters and institutional agencies, promoting digital literacy, and encouraging greater participation in exporters' associations can significantly enhance their performance. A balanced approach that combines peer learning, institutional support, and digital communication can help rice exporters respond more effectively to global market changes and achieve sustainable growth.

Keywords: Rice, exporters, information sources

Introduction

In today's era of globalization, exporters operate in an environment that is more competitive and fast-changing than ever before. International markets are shaped by shifting trade policies, strict quality standards, volatile prices, and rapid technological developments. In such a dynamic setting, access to timely, reliable, and relevant information is no longer optional—it is essential for survival and growth. For exporters, the way they search for, interpret, and use information plays a decisive role in shaping their decisions, managing risks, and maintaining competitiveness in global markets (Leonidou, Katsikeas, & Coudounaris, 2010) ^[2].

Export-related information flows through multiple channels. Exporters often rely on personal localite sources such as fellow exporters, traders, and local consultants who provide practical, experience-based insights. They also depend on personal cosmopolite sources, including government agencies, customs officials, export promotion councils, and

financial institutions that offer regulatory guidance and procedural support. In addition, mass media and digital platforms—ranging from trade exhibitions to online portals and mobile applications—have become increasingly important in delivering up-to-date market intelligence and policy updates. Rogers (2003) ^[4] emphasized that effective information-seeking behaviour enhances innovation adoption and strengthens organizational performance. Firms embedded in diverse information networks tend to exhibit stronger export market orientation and superior performance outcomes.

In the Indian context, especially in major rice-exporting states such as Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, institutional agencies play a central role in facilitating export activities. Organizations such as the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), customs departments, the banking sector, and exporters' associations provide crucial support in certification, compliance, documentation, and financial transactions. Empirical studies

suggest that exporters who actively engage with institutional bodies and digital information platforms demonstrate better export performance and greater strategic adaptability. Moreover, the rapid pace of digital transformation has fundamentally changed how information is disseminated and accessed, with internet-based and mobile platforms emerging as dominant channels for trade-related communication (OECD, 2019; World Bank, 2020) ^[3, 5].

However, despite the availability of multiple information sources, exporters differ significantly in how they access and utilize them. Such variations in utilisation behaviour can influence their market responsiveness, competitiveness, and long-term growth prospects. Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to examine both the overall and category-wise utilisation behaviour of information sources among rice exporters in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. By understanding these behavioural patterns, policymakers and support institutions can design more effective extension strategies, strengthen institutional support mechanisms, and promote sustainable and efficient export development in the region.

Objective of the study: To study the utilisation behaviour of information sources by rice exporters of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states.

Methodology

Research design: Ex post - facto research design was

adopted for the investigation.

Locale of the study: This study was conducted in the Nizamabad and Nalgonda districts of Telangana, East Godavari and West Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh in rice export regions, which are among the top rice exporting districts of their respective states, two states were selected to study the difference in utilisation behaviour of information sources of the rice exporters of both states.

Sampling procedure

40 exporters from each state were selected purposively, with good experience in rice exports, making a total of 160 exporters from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states.

Data collection method: The data collection was done with the use of a well-structured interview schedule and Questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

From the results indicated in Table 1 and Fig. 1, it is clear that most of the respondents (62.50%) of Telangana state had medium utilisation behaviour of information sources followed by high (25.00%) and low (12.50%). In case of Andhra Pradesh state, majority of the respondents (47.50%) also had medium utilisation behaviour of information sources followed by high (35.00%) and low (17.50%).

Table 1: Distribution of exporters according to overall utilisation behaviour of information sources

S. No.	Category	Class Interval	Respondents (n = 80)					
			Telangana Exporters (n = 40)		Andhra Pradesh Exporters (n = 40)		Total	
			f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Low	10-18	05	12.50	07	17.50	12	15.00
2	Medium	18-26	25	62.50	19	47.50	44	55.00
3	High	26-34	10	25.00	14	35.00	24	30.00
Total			40	100.00	40	100.00	80	100.00

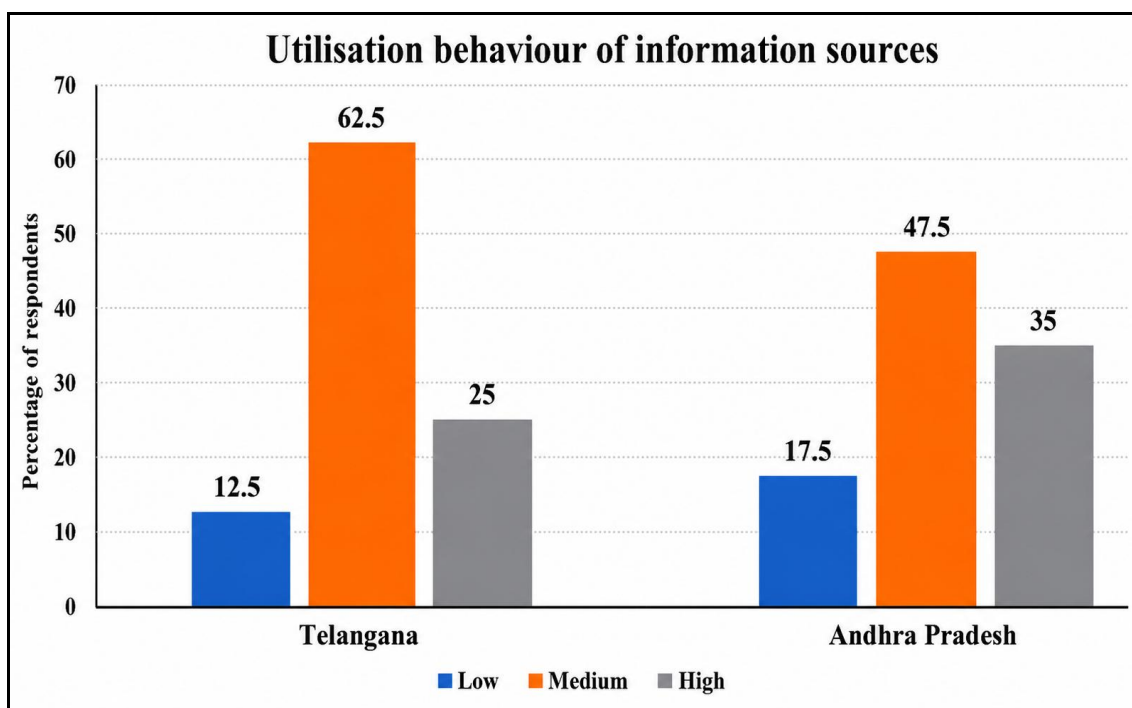


Fig 1: Distribution of exporters according to overall utilisation behaviour of information sources

From the above results, it is evident that the majority (55.00%) of respondents of both states had medium utilisation behaviour of information sources, followed by high (30.00%) and low (15.00%) utilisation behaviour of information sources.

The findings are in accordance with Anusha *et al.* (2017)^[1] Exporters with medium to high utilization of information sources tend to rely on mass media, government agencies

like APEDA and digital platforms like farmer connect portal, Agri exchange portal. On the other hand, those with low utilization may be missing opportunities for growth due to a lack of exposure to market trends, policy updates and technological advancements. Hence training this category by personnel from APEDA or Ministry of Commerce or All India Rice Exporter Associations (AIREA) is very important for their better performance in exports.

Table 2: Distribution of exporters according to category wise utilisation behaviour of information sources

S. No.	Information Source	Respondents (n = 80)											
		Telangana exporters (n = 40)						Andhra Pradesh exporters (n = 40)					
		Regularly		Occasionally		Never		Regularly		Occasionally		Never	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Personal Localite													
1	Exporters	25	62.50	12	30.00	03	07.50	28	70.00	12	30.00	00	0
2	Local Experts/Consultants	08	20.00	25	62.50	07	17.50	08	20.00	22	55.00	10	25.00
3	Friends	02	05.00	22	55.00	16	40.00	11	27.50	20	50.00	09	22.50
Personal cosmopolite													
5	APEDA officials	22	55.00	15	37.50	03	07.50	18	45.00	17	42.50	05	12.50
6	Customs officials	14	35.00	18	45.00	08	20.00	18	45.00	18	45.00	04	10.00
7	Rice Exporters Associations	05	12.50	28	70.00	07	17.50	29	72.50	10	25.00	01	02.50
8	Bank officials	26	65.00	12	30.00	02	05.00	23	57.50	14	35.00	03	07.50
Mass media													
9	Newspaper	8	20.00	10	25.00	22	55.00	12	30.00	14	35.00	14	35.00
10	TV	0	0	15	37.50	25	62.50	0	0	17	42.50	23	57.50
11	Mobile/ Internet services	31	77.50	07	17.50	02	05.00	33	82.50	06	15.00	01	02.50
12	Magazines	03	07.50	26	65.00	11	27.50	06	15.00	27	67.50	07	17.50
13	Kisan mela/Exhibition	24	60.00	12	30.00	04	10.00	18	45.00	14	35.00	08	20.00
14	Market Research Firms	11	27.50	18	45.00	11	27.50	05	12.50	12	30.00	23	57.50

From Table 2 it can be interpreted that, in the Personal Localite category, exporters rely most frequently on other exporters for information, with 62.50% in Telangana and 70.00% in Andhra Pradesh using them regularly. This indicates that peer networks within the export community play a crucial role in knowledge-sharing. Followed by, Local experts or consultants are the next most used source with 20.00% in both states engaging with them regularly. Friends are a lesser-used source, with only 5.00% in Telangana and 27.50% in Andhra Pradesh relying on them. This suggests that unlike general business practices where informal connections may play a strong role, export-related information is more structured and depends on professional sources.

In the Personal Cosmopolite category, APEDA officials are the most frequently consulted source, with 55.00% of exporters in Telangana and 45.00% in Andhra Pradesh engaging with them. Their role in export regulation and certification makes them a crucial source of information. Customs officials are also widely used with 35.00% in Telangana and 45.00% in Andhra Pradesh highlighting the importance of regulatory bodies in the export process. The Rice Exporters Associations show a big difference between both the states, only 12.50% of exporters in Telangana regularly engage with them while 72.50% in Andhra Pradesh do. This indicates a stronger industry network and association engagement in Andhra Pradesh. Bank officials are another vital source, with 65.00% in Telangana and 57.50% in Andhra Pradesh reflecting the necessity of financial assistance in export operations.

In the Mass Media category, mobile and internet-based

services emerge as the most dominant sources of export-related information used by 77.50% of exporters in Telangana and an even higher 82.50% in Andhra Pradesh. This highlights a shift towards digital information-seeking behaviour. Kisan Melas and exhibitions follow, with 60.00% of exporters in Telangana and 45.00% in Andhra Pradesh attending them regularly indicating a preference for interactive hands-on learning. Newspapers still play a role, with 20.00% in Telangana and 30.00% in Andhra Pradesh using them though their influence is moderate. Television however is completely ignored as a source of export-related information while farm magazines are used by 7.50% of exporters in Telangana and 15.00% in Andhra Pradesh. Market research firms have a limited role, with only 27.50% of exporters in Telangana and 12.50% in Andhra Pradesh using them regularly. This suggests that while digital and institutional sources are gaining ground there is still a gap in awareness and access to structured market research.

Key Implications

The study shows that more than half of the exporters (55.00%) fall under the medium level of information utilisation behaviour, while 30.00% demonstrate high utilisation and 15.00% remain in the low category. This distribution clearly suggests that although many exporters are moderately engaged with available information sources, there is still substantial scope to strengthen their access to and effective use of relevant export information. Improving information utilisation can directly enhance decision-making quality, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability in international markets.

Need for Capacity Building Programmes

Exporters with low levels of information utilisation may not be fully aware of emerging market opportunities, evolving export regulations, quality standards, or technological advancements. Without adequate exposure, they may face higher risks and reduced competitiveness. In this context, structured training, workshops, and orientation programmes conducted by institutions such as the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), the Ministry of Commerce, and the All-India Rice Exporters Association (AIREA) can play a transformative role. Such initiatives can build exporters' confidence, update their knowledge base, and equip them with practical skills to navigate global markets effectively.

Strengthening Institutional Linkages

The findings indicate that exporters heavily rely on officials from APEDA, customs departments, and banking institutions for guidance and procedural support. This dependence highlights the importance of strong institutional linkages. Enhancing coordination between exporters and these agencies can help simplify documentation, reduce compliance delays, and ensure smoother export transactions. Regular interaction forums, helpdesks, and digital grievance redressal systems can further improve trust and operational efficiency.

Promotion of Digital Platforms

The widespread use of mobile phones and internet services in both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh reflects a clear shift toward digital modes of information access. Exporters increasingly prefer real-time updates and online communication channels. Policymakers should capitalize on this trend by strengthening digital infrastructure, promoting digital literacy, and expanding user-friendly export portals. Timely dissemination of market intelligence, price trends, and regulatory updates through digital platforms can significantly enhance exporters' responsiveness and strategic planning.

Enhancing Association Participation

The observed variation in association engagement between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana points to the need for greater involvement of exporters—particularly in Telangana—in professional associations. Active participation in exporters' associations fosters networking, knowledge sharing, and collective representation. It also strengthens bargaining power and provides a platform for addressing common challenges. Encouraging regular meetings, collaborative initiatives, and awareness campaigns can improve membership participation and overall sectoral cohesion.

Encouraging use of Structured Market Research

The relatively low reliance on professional market research agencies suggests that many exporters may be making decisions based primarily on informal or limited information sources. While experiential knowledge is valuable, structured market research provides deeper insights into consumer preferences, competitor strategies, and emerging global trends. Promoting awareness about the benefits of professional research services can support more informed strategic decisions and long-term export growth.

Conclusion

The study concludes that most rice exporters in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh demonstrate a medium level of information utilisation behaviour. This suggests that while exporters are reasonably engaged with available information sources, there is still room to deepen and refine how they access and apply export-related knowledge. The frequent use of peer networks, APEDA officials, bank officials, and mobile and internet services reflects a practical and balanced approach—combining institutional guidance with the speed and convenience of digital communication. Notably, digital platforms have become central to exporters' information-seeking practices. The growing reliance on mobile phones and internet-based services signals a broader shift in communication patterns, where real-time updates and online interactions are shaping export decisions. This digital transformation presents new opportunities for faster market intelligence, smoother coordination, and improved strategic planning. At the same time, the existence of exporters with low levels of information utilisation highlights an important gap. These exporters may face limitations in awareness, exposure, or technical skills, which can restrict their competitiveness. Addressing this gap through structured training programmes, targeted awareness campaigns, and continuous capacity-building initiatives is essential. By strengthening institutional support systems, improving digital literacy, encouraging active participation in exporters' associations, and promoting access to structured market research, policymakers and support agencies can significantly enhance exporters' performance. Ultimately, fostering stronger information utilisation behaviour is not just about accessing more data—it is about empowering exporters to make informed decisions, adapt to changing global markets, and achieve sustainable growth in the rice export sector.

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