

Climate Change News: Assessing the Awareness of Farmers in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the current state of climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers in Nangarhar province of Afghanistan, with a focus on identifying factors that contribute to or hinder this awareness. Utilizing in-depth interviews due to the qualitative nature of the study and the prevalent illiteracy among Afghan farmers, the research employs purposive sampling to ensure diverse representation. Findings reveal that radio and personal experiences are primary sources of climate change news awareness, with no specific channel dedicated to this purpose. Age and education emerged as significant factors influencing awareness levels, emphasizing the role of education as fundamental. Language and communication skills were identified as serious and important factor, in climate change news awareness. Socio-economic background was acknowledged by 86.6% of farmers as contributing to better awareness. Limitations in media networks, including misuse, lack of information, and unfamiliarity, were identified as hindrances. Face-to-face awareness was preferred over media-based methods, highlighting the importance of personal interactions in effectively delivering climate change messages. The research contributes to existing literature, emphasizing the need for context-specific, culturally sensitive communication strategies to enhance climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers. The findings provide valuable insights for designing targeted awareness campaigns tailored to the specific needs of this demographic, combining traditional communication channels, demographic nuances, and inclusive strategies to build resilience against climate change challenges.

Keywords: Afghan farmers , Climate change, Communication, Public awareness , Mass media

INTRODUCTION

In the mountain landscapes of Afghanistan, where agriculture serves as the lifeblood of communities, the relation between climate change and farming practices unfolded from many years (CIRAD, 2015). As global temperatures rise and weather patterns become increasingly erratic (Adnan, 2023), the resilience of Afghan farmers faces unprecedented challenges. Understanding the awareness levels of these farmers regarding climate change news is not merely an academic pursuit but a crucial step toward informed and targeted interventions. This research embarks on a journey into the heart of Afghan farming communities, seeking to unravel the intricate tapestry of climate change awareness. By engaging in in-depth interviews with the stewards of the land, this study aims to go beyond statistics, capturing the lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges faced by Afghan farmers in their quest to adapt to a changing climate. As the world grapples with the urgent need for sustainable practices (Keny, 2023), this research seeks to shed light on the following pivotal questions: What is the current level of climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers? What factors contribute to or hinder their understanding of this pressing issue? Through a nuanced exploration of these questions, we aspire to pave the way for tailored strategies that empower Afghan farmers in the face of climate uncertainty.

Afghan farmers, the backbone of the nation's agrarian sector, navigate a landscape marked by shifting weather patterns, uncertain growing seasons, and heightened environmental stress. The significance of this research lies in its potential to inform targeted strategies, policies, and communication approaches that empower Afghan farmers to navigate the challenges posed by a changing climate. As the researchers delve into the narratives of resilience and adaptation within Afghanistan's agricultural landscape, this research contributes to the broader discourse on climate change awareness among farmers. By exploring the unique context of Afghan farmers, the researchers aspire to generate insights that not only address immediate challenges but also pave the way for sustainable and informed practices in the face of an evolving climate.

1. Objectives of the Study

- I. To assess the Current smooth of Climate Change News Awareness Among Afghan Farmers.
- II. To identify the Factors Influencing (contribute or hinder) Climate Change News Awareness Among Afghan Farmers.

2. Research Question

RQ1. What is the current smooth of climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers?

RQ2. Which factors contribute to or hinder climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used qualitative research design and in-depth interviews to evaluate farmers' awareness of climate change news in Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan. According to Knott & Aliya the choice of in-depth interviews is grounded in the qualitative nature of the research (Knott & Aliya, 2022). seeking to uncover nuanced perspectives and rich narratives regarding climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers. This method allows for a detailed exploration of individual experiences, beliefs, and practices. On the other hand, most of Afghan former communities are illiterate so that's why, the researchers prefer to choose In-depth interview for this research.

Data Collection and Analysis: The sample size for this study was determined using the data saturation approach. The interview process was extended until no further themes or insights surfaced, guaranteeing that the farmers were thoroughly aware of climate change news. in-depth interviews were conducted with the 15 farmers who were chosen as part of the data collection process. The purpose of the interviews was to gather in-depth information about the participants' knowledge of, sources for, and opinions on climate change news. Fifteen farmers from the Kama District in Nangarhar Province participated in the study. Collecting data from multiple districts provides a broader perspective, while focusing on one district allows for more in-depth analysis. Purposive sampling was used in the selection process to make sure that the participants had the necessary background and understanding of agricultural and climate change news.

Purposive sampling will be employed to ensure representation across diverse demographics, including geographical locations, farming practices, and socio-economic backgrounds (Shari & Dworkin, 2012). The aim is to capture a range of perspectives that reflect the diversity within the target population of Afghan farmers. Initial contact will be established through local community leaders and relevant formers. Participants will be informed about the study's purpose, and their voluntary participation will be sought.

Thematic analysis, made possible by NVivo software, was used to examine the interview data. This approach was selected because to its capacity to methodically locate, arrange, and offer insights on patterns throughout the dataset. Several steps were engaged in the data analysis process see the figure 1:

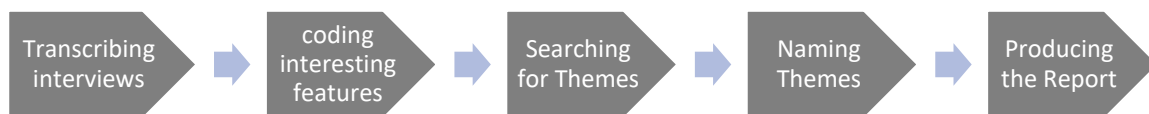


Figure 1: Data analyzing process for this study using NVivo.

To arrange the data, make coding easier, and aid in the visualization of the connections between topics, NVivo software was used throughout this procedure. Because the qualitative data were analyzed in a comprehensive and methodical manner, the findings' validity and dependability were increased.

RESULTS

Considering to our research questions we have categorized the findings of the interviews about awareness of Farmers in Nangarhar Province related to climate change into two general themes see table 1. Based on the first research question our main theme is regarding the current level of climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers. And our second Maine theme is the factors contribute or hinder climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers.

Table 1: Thematic analysis table for this study using NVivo.

Main theme	Sub themes	Sub- sub themes
Current smooth of climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers.	Information sources for awareness	Radio
		TV
		Social media
		Own experiences
	Specific channel for climate change news awareness.	Agree for the importance of specific channels.
		Disagree for the importance of specific channels.
Role of age	Agree for the Role of Age at the level of awareness	
	Disagree for the Role of Age at the level of awareness.	
The factors contribute or hinder climate change news awareness among Afghan farmers	Role of Language and communication in awareness	Language and communication are important in awareness
		Language and communication are not important in awareness
	Socio- Economic Background	Socio- Economic Background is important
		Socio- Economic Background is not important
	Exposure Limitation in media Networks	Misuse of Media
		Lack of Information
	Type of Awareness	Information through Media
Face to face information		

According to our finding for this study, with 40.00% of participants identifying radio as their main source of climate change news, it is clear that radio is the most important information source for raising awareness of the issue. Furthermore, the same proportion of individuals (40.00%) get their information regarding climate change from their personal experiences. TV and social media, on the other hand, are used less frequently; only 13.33% and 6.67% of participants, respectively, mentioned them.

Also, all the participants (100.00%) indicated they did not have access to a dedicated channel for climate change news awareness when asked whether there was one. This suggests that there may be a deficiency in channels specifically intended to inform Afghan farmers about climate change.

Moreover, it seems that age plays a big impact in determining participants' awareness levels. Farmers under 40 showed higher levels of awareness; 66.67% of them said they were knowledgeable about news related to climate change. However, just 33.33% of farmers who were 40 years of age or older reported having the same level of understanding.

Our findings also show that education plays a role in influencing awareness levels. Just 20.00% of individuals with lower education levels showed comparable levels of awareness, compared to 80.00% of participants with higher education levels who reported being more aware of climate change news. The findings show that Afghan farmers' main sources of news on climate change awareness are radio and personal experiences. Furthermore, it appears that age and educational attainment have an impact on awareness levels, with younger and better-educated individuals typically displaying higher awareness levels.

The second primary theme of this study is the factors impacting Afghan farmers' awareness of climate change is the constraints on their exposure to media networks. In addition to media usage, ignorance of exposure limitations, and ambiguity about them, participants listed a number of other variables that contribute to exposure constraints. The difficulties Afghan farmers have in obtaining trustworthy information about climate change via media outlets are highlighted by this issue. The study shows that 20.00% of participants said that their exposure to news on climate change was limited by media abuse. Furthermore, a substantial obstacle to obtaining information on climate change via media networks was cited by 46.67% of participants as a lack of knowledge. Furthermore, a significant proportion of respondents (33.33%) indicated ambiguity or ignorance about exposure restrictions. This implies that some farmers might not be completely aware of the obstacles preventing them from getting information about climate change through media outlets.

DISCUSSION

The predominant reliance on personal experiences and community discussions for climate change awareness among Afghan farmers highlights the significance of localized knowledge-sharing. While media plays a role for some, the community-centric approach suggests the need for tailored strategies that leverage existing community networks for effective information dissemination. This finding aligns with studies emphasizing the importance of contextualized, community-driven approaches to climate communication (Williams & Jacob, 2021). The unanimous opinion that there is no dedicated channel for climate change

information in Afghanistan signifies a critical gap in communication infrastructure. Limited programs with general information imply a lack of targeted content. This underscores the importance of developing dedicated channels and programs that address the specific information needs of Afghan farmers. It aligns with the global discourse on the need for accessible and context-specific climate communication channels (IPCC, Greenhouse gas emissions accelerate despite reduction, 2014). The acknowledgment that education and age play significant roles in climate change awareness aligns with broader literature on the socio-economic determinants of awareness (Razak & Kruse, 2017). Educated farmers exhibit higher levels of awareness, facilitating informed decision-making and planning. Age, reflecting accumulated experience, further underscores the importance of considering demographic factors in designing targeted climate communication strategies. The preference for radio as a reliable source of climate change information resonates with the accessibility and reach of this medium, particularly in rural areas (Merline, Alba, & Ann-Mari, 2015). The limited influence of economic factors on climate change awareness, coupled with the minimal use of social media for informational purposes, underscores the communal approach to information sharing among Afghan farmers. The findings emphasize the need for a multifaceted and community-centric approach to climate change communication among Afghan farmers. Targeted strategies should consider the preference for localized knowledge-sharing, leverage accessible mediums like radio, and address the demographic variations in awareness.

Interventions should prioritize educational programs, recognizing the influence of education and age on awareness. Additionally, efforts to enhance social media's role as an informational platform could tap into its entertainment-oriented use.

This discussion contributes to the broader discourse on climate communication by providing insights into the specific context of Afghan farmers. It underscores the importance of tailoring strategies to the unique socio-economic and cultural landscape, ultimately fostering informed decision-making and adaptive practices within the agricultural community.

CONCLUSION

The findings underscore the significance of community-driven knowledge sharing among Afghan farmers. While there is a reliance on experiential learning, the lack of dedicated channels and the varying impact of education and age highlight areas for targeted interventions. Leveraging accessible mediums like radio, ensuring language-appropriate communication, and addressing the rural-urban divide in awareness are crucial for effective climate change communication strategies among Afghan farmers.

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