

A study on perception of usefulness of Kannada farm magazines, preference for style of writing and sources of articles by Kannada farm magazine readers*

Now a days, a large number of agencies, both private and government, are engaged in production and designing/layout of farm journals. Out of the total 10,000 private publishers in India, only two dozen or few more are producing farm journals. In the public sector, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), National Book Trust (NBT), State Agriculture Universities (SAUs), Text Book Board, State Departments of Agriculture, State Information Departments and other Social organizations are producing farm books and farm journals. Their combined effect has made possible the production of over more than 800 periodicals of different types in various regional languages. There are about 300 non-periodic publications like monographs, reports, bulletins, etc. on agriculture and allied subjects. Considering the quality and dimension of research in all branches of agriculture, animal sciences and fishery sciences in the country, these are really disappointing statistics. However, some of our farm publications are of international standards, although the numbers are very few. More than 80.00 percent of these publications are disappointingly poor in quality in all respects in layouts/designs, type setting, page make-up and other production qualities.

Layout or design of farm journals is a most important segment of production of the printed matter. It is an artistic job, always made by skilled and intellectual exercise of the editor/sub-editors that possesses sufficient experience in this line for many days. Layout is an integral part of the plan process for production of any printed matter, whether farm journals or newspaper published as daily, weekly or fortnightly, monthly, bimonthly, quarterly and yearly. For having a nice get up of the printed matter pleasing to the eye of the readers, the farm journals are now being designed by the experts and printed in multicolored offset process for a smart and good looking in appearance. Layout of the farm journals should attract specific interest of the readers.

Recognizing the importance of farm publications, as in every state in India, in Karnataka also there is a mushrooming of farm magazines, many of them finding out a short period of time to carry out a host of dogmas across the society. Of all the things, content, subject matter being covered and readability of the magazine play an important role in their wide circulation or popularity among the audience. At the same time, the success of the farm magazines goes with the taste, and preference of readers towards farm magazines and its components. Further, very few studies have been conducted to measure readability dimensions. This dimension plays an important role in the reading habits of the readers. The writing is readable; it means it is not only easy to read but also to understand for effective knowledge gain. Therefore, by considering all the above dimensions and to know the perception of usefulness of Kannada farm magazines readers about the various subject matter areas of the Kannada farm magazines and preference for style of writing and sources of articles by Kannada farm magazine readers, a comprehensive study was designed on the use of three widely circulated farm magazines viz., Krishimunnade, Sirisambuddhi and Krishimitra with the specific objectives of the study to study the perception of usefulness of Kannada farm magazines readers about the various subject matter areas of the Kannada farm magazines

and To know the preference for style of writing and sources of articles by Kannada farm magazine readers

The study was undertaken in sixteen selected districts of Karnataka state. They were Bagalkot, Bangalore, Belgaum, Bellary, Bijapur, Chitradurga, Dharwad, Davanagere, Gadag, Hasan, Haveri, Koppal, Mysore, Raichur, Shimoga and Tumkur districts. These districts were chosen according to the availability of the strength of the farm magazine readers obtained from the publishers of the respective farm magazines.

In Karnataka nearly 30 farm magazines are being published by the government organizations, private organizations and non government organizations. Among these, three farm magazines namely Krishimunnade- the one most popular farm magazine from the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, under government organizations. Sirisambuddhi - the one most popular farm magazine from non government organizations and Krishimitra - the one popular farm magazine from private sector were selected for the study, based on the criteria of highest circulation as well as the availability of the subscribers for each farm magazines.

Lists of subscriber farmers for each of the three selected farm magazines i.e., Krishimunnade (485), Sirisambuddhi (591), Krishimitra (380), belonging to selected 16 districts of Karnataka were obtained from the publishers. Among these lists, 375 farmer readers were selected randomly using random number table. To these selected reader farmers, a structured pretested questionnaire was mailed to randomly selected reader farmers for each of the three farm magazines but only 210 subscriber farmers returned the filled in questionnaires. Among these questionnaires, 180 questionnaires which were complete in all respects were considered keeping in view the principles of statistical research and to satisfy the appropriate number of sample size for the study. Overall 60 subscriber farmers from each of the farm magazine were selected making a total sample size of 180 for the study. The data were tabulated and analyzed by using statistical techniques like frequencies, percentages, and chi-square, wherever suitable.

The results presented in table-1 indicated that 46.67 per cent of the respondents expressed that the articles on agriculture were very useful, followed by useful (42.22%), some what useful (6.11%), little useful (2.78%) and not useful (2.22%). The reason might be that among the agriculture subjects, crop production technology being the major determinant involved in cultivation of field crops and hence subscriber farmers might have given first preference as very useful in a hierarchical order on the scale and naturally very less per cent of the respondents expressed as not useful. Also crop husbandry is invariably followed by all the farmers of the study area. Nearly 44.00 percent of the subscriber farmers opined that the articles on horticulture subject as useful followed by very useful (28.33%), some what useful (13.80 %). This trend might be due to the fact that, precipitation of rainfall is erratic and decreasing yearly and hence most of the farmers cultivating field crops decided to cultivate horticulture crops in addition to field crops. Keeping this in view the Indian Government emphasized cultivation of perennial horticulture crops by encouraging drip system and sprinkler systems of irrigation devices by extending subsidy

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Table 1. Distribution of Kannada farm magazine readers according to their perception of usefulness of farm magazines

Subject matter areas	Krishi munnade (n1=60)						Sirisambuddhi (n2=60)					
	Very useful	Useful	Somewhat useful	Little useful	Not useful	Very useful	Useful	Somewhat useful	Little useful	Not useful	n=180	
Agriculture	38 (63.33)	18 (30.00)	3 (5.00)	1 (1.67)	0	24 (40.00)	28 (46.67)	4 (6.67)	2 (3.33)	2 (3.33)		
Horticulture	18 (30.00)	25 (41.67)	8 (13.33)	4 (6.67)	5 (8.33)	15 (25.00)	30 (50.00)	9 (15.00)	4 (6.66)	2 (3.33)		
Veterinary and animal husbandry	15 (25.00)	24 (40.00)	9 (15.00)	5 (8.33)	7 (11.67)	12 (20.00)	31 (51.67)	10 (16.67)	5 (8.33)	2 (3.33)		
Sericulture	11 (18.33)	18 (30.00)	8 (13.33)	3 (5.00)	20 (33.34)	9 (15.00)	23 (38.33)	22 (36.67)	0	6 (10.00)		
Home science												
1. Food and nutrition	10 (16.67)	18 (30.00)	16 (26.67)	6 (10.00)	10 (16.66)	2 (3.33)	3 (5.00)	18 (30.00)	25 (41.67)	12 (20.00)		
2. Home management	6 (10.00)	14 (23.33)	18 (30.00)	7 (11.67)	15 (25.00)	0	6 (10.00)	19 (31.67)	27 (45.00)	8 (13.33)		
3. Family resource management	6 (10.00)	13 (21.67)	22 (36.67)	6 (10.00)	13 (21.66)	0	8 (13.33)	15 (25.00)	26 (43.34)	11 (18.33)		
Fishery	4 (6.66)	10 (16.67)	12 (20.00)	3 (5.00)	28 (46.67)	3 (5.00)	11 (18.33)	18 (30.00)	22 (36.67)	6 (10.00)		
Agricultural engineering	8 (13.33)	10 (16.67)	19 (31.67)	9 (15.00)	14 (23.33)	3 (5.00)	9 (15.00)	16 (26.67)	23 (38.33)	9 (15.00)		
Forestry	10 (16.67)	18 (30.00)	20 (33.33)	4 (6.67)	8 (13.33)	3 (5.00)	10 (16.67)	14 (23.33)	26 (43.33)	7 (11.67)		
Others												
1. Advertisement and others	8 (13.33)	10 (16.67)	12 (20.00)	18 (30.00)	12 (20.00)	0	0	19 (31.67)	17 (28.33)	24 (40.00)		
2. Folk songs	10 (16.67)	15 (25.00)	10 (16.67)	12 (20.00)	13 (21.66)	0	0	10 (16.67)	16 (26.67)	34 (56.66)		
3. Rural development articles	15 (25.00)	18 (30.00)	14 (23.33)	4 (6.67)	9 (15.00)	0	9 (15.00)	15 (25.00)	14 (23.33)	22 (36.67)		
4. Environment articles	10 (16.67)	19 (31.67)	14 (23.33)	9 (15.00)	8 (13.33)	0	4 (6.67)	24 (40.00)	20 (33.33)	12 (20.00)		

Table 1 Contd...

Subject matter areas	Krishimitra(n3=60)						Over all n=(180)			
	Very useful	Useful	Some what useful	Little useful	Not useful	Very useful	Useful	Some what useful	Little useful	Not useful
Agriculture	22 (36.67)	30 (50.00)	4 (6.67)	2 (3.33)	2 (3.33)	84 (46.67)	76 (42.22)	11 (6.11)	5 (2.78)	4 (2.22)
Horticulture	18 (30.00)	24 (40.00)	8 (13.33)	6 (10.00)	4 (6.67)	51 (28.33)	79 (43.89)	25 (13.89)	14 (7.78)	11 (6.11)
Veterinary and animal husbandry	16 (26.67)	22 (36.67)	12 (20.00)	5 (8.33)	5 (8.33)	43 (23.89)	77 (42.78)	31 (17.22)	15 (8.33)	14 (7.78)
Sericulture	10 (16.67)	20 (33.33)	11 (18.33)	7 (11.67)	12 (20.00)	30 (16.67)	61 (33.89)	41 (22.78)	10 (5.55)	38 (21.11)
Home science										
1. Food and nutrition	3 (5.00)	8 (13.33)	19 (31.67)	14 (23.33)	16 (26.67)	15 (8.33)	29 (16.11)	53 (29.45)	45 (25.00)	38 (21.11)
2. Home management	6 (10.00)	12 (20.00)	18 (30.00)	16 (26.67)	8 (13.33)	12 (6.67)	32 (17.78)	55 (30.55)	50 (27.78)	31 (17.22)
3. Family resource management	3 (5.00)	7 (11.66)	22 (36.67)	18 (30.00)	10 (16.67)	9 (5.00)	28 (15.55)	59 (32.78)	50 (27.78)	34 (18.89)
Fishery	3 (5.00)	6 (10.00)	15 (25.00)	22 (36.67)	14 (23.33)	10 (5.55)	27 (15.00)	45 (25.00)	50 (27.78)	48 (26.67)
Agricultural engineering	6 (10.00)	12 (20.00)	12 (20.00)	16 (26.67)	14 (23.33)	17 (9.44)	31 (17.22)	47 (26.11)	48 (26.67)	37 (20.56)
Forestry	3 (5.00)	8 (13.33)	14 (23.33)	17 (28.34)	18 (30.00)	16 (8.89)	36 (20.00)	48 (26.67)	47 (26.11)	33 (18.33)
Others										
1. Advertisement and others	4 (6.67)	16 (26.67)	14 (23.33)	8 (13.33)	18 (30.00)	12 (6.67)	26 (14.44)	45 (25.00)	43 (23.89)	54 (30.00)
2. Folk songs	3 (5.00)	10 (16.67)	12 (20.00)	14 (23.33)	21 (35.00)	13 (7.22)	25 (13.89)	32 (17.78)	42 (23.33)	68 (37.78)
3. Rural development articles	4 (6.67)	6 (10.00)	25 (41.67)	5 (8.33)	20 (33.33)	19 (10.56)	33 (18.33)	54 (30.00)	23 (12.78)	51 (28.33)
4. Environment articles	-	3 (5.00)	16 (26.67)	21 (35.00)	20 (33.33)	10 (5.56)	26 (14.44)	54 (30.00)	50 (27.78)	40 (22.22)

* Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

facility, which reduces water use consumption by the crops and a farmer can get good yield and assured income. Therefore, these factors might have influenced the subscriber farmers to rate the horticulture articles as useful. Further, the results also revealed that very less percentage of the respondents opined these articles as little useful (7.78 %) and not useful (6.11 %).

With respect articles on veterinary and animal husbandry field the respondents rated the articles as useful (42.78 %), very useful (23.89 %), some what useful (17.22 %) little useful (8.33 %) and not useful (7.78 %). This trend of result might be due to the fact that, agriculture is a gamble with nature; farmers are not assured of income from agriculture. Hence, they are being encouraged by the government to take up agro-based subsidiary enterprises like dairy, poultry, goat and sheep rearing, rabbit rearing etc., in order to compensate the income from agriculture through additional income. Therefore, respondents might have rated these articles useful in a hierarchical order. On the other hand very few respondents expressed the articles as little useful and not useful, might be due to their poor knowledge and poor financial background.

The respondents rated the articles on sericulture subject as useful (33.89 %), some what useful (22.78 %) and not useful (21.11 %), very useful (16.61 %) and little useful (5.55 %). The results clearly indicated that majority of them considered articles as some what useful or little useful or not useful. The reason might be that northern district of Karnataka being the study area where major crops like jowar, chilli, groundnut, sugarcane and pulse crops are grown, and very less area is under sericulture, hence the result.

The results also indicated that the articles on home management (30.55 %) food and nutrition (29.45 %), family resource management (36.77 %) were rated by the respondents as some what useful. The reason might be that poor awareness of respondents about these areas and hence they have rated these/articles as some what useful. The articles on fisheries (27.78 %), agriculture engineering (26.67 %) were rated as little useful and forestry (26.67 %) articles were considered as some what useful. However varying percentage of respondents expressed as useful and very useful. This trend of result might be because the respondents considered areas under fisheries and forestry as less important in northern districts of Karnataka and rate as some what useful.

An in depth analysis of each of the selected farm magazine revealed that the articles published in the areas of agriculture/crop production, horticulture, veterinary and animal husbandry and sericulture were rated as very useful, useful and some what useful with varying percentage of respondents of each of the farm magazine followed by little useful and not useful by very less percentage of subscriber farmers. With respect to the articles on food and nutrition, home management, family resource management, fishery, agricultural engineering, forestry areas, varying percentage of respondents rated as some what useful, little useful and not useful. The same trend was observed in all the selected farm magazines. Further, varying percentage of the respondents rated the articles in the areas of advertisements, folksongs/stories, rural development environmental aspects as little useful, not useful and some what useful. The same trend was observed in the entire selected farm magazine.

Studies conducted by various authors on the usefulness of message published through printed media like books, booklets, leaflets/folders, news papers and farm magazines revealed that the articles published through print media were useful to the

farming community. Hence, the findings are in conformity with findings of Natikar (2001).

It was observed from the contents of the table-2 that majority of the respondents (60.56 %) indicated their first preference for interview type, followed by popular articles (58.89 %), research articles (58.33 %), news in brief (57.22 %), question and answer type (56.67 %) and success stories (48.89 %), respectively. Break up analysis reveals similar trend among the respondents of all the three farm magazines. Hence, it can be suggested that interview type, popular articles, research articles, news in brief, question and answer type and success stories may be appropriately included in the farm magazine to suit the readers' taste of varied socio economic and personal characteristics. This finding supports the results of Manjunath and Balasubramanya (2002). The chi square found to be significant in all the three categories of farm magazine readers of selected farm magazines for preference in the style of writing in the farm of success stories and interviews type. This might be because of socio economic factors like education which was also found to be significant in all the three categories of farm magazine readers of selected farm magazines. The style of writing in the farm of success stories in Krishimunnade was quite more understandable, simple, more attractive and scientific in nature compare to other two farm magazines. The coverage of interviews type article was less in Krishimunnade compare to other two magazines. This might have let the respondents to give less preference for interview type of style of writing article in Krishimunnade compare to other two magazines. The similar trend was observed in all the three farm magazines readers' preference for style of writing in the form of popular articles, news in brief, research articles and question and answer type.

Publishing concrete example as to how farmers deal with practical problems and overcome them would convince farmers as Oliver (1971) stated that farmers are conscious and they would be convinced only after seeing the results of the other farmers. Murphy's (1962) feelings on this aspect are worth mentioning ones who says "personalized copy probably goes a little better than copy without quotes and case history". Remember that hero of every article should be the reader.

It is seen from the contents of the table-3 that 62.22 per cent of the respondents indicated their first preference for sources of articles to agriculture university scientists, followed by progressive farmers (60.00 %) and extension workers of the development departments (44.44 %). Break up analysis also revealed the similar trend among the respondents of the farm magazines. This might be due to the fact that the scientists of Agriculture Universities are not only specialized but also the first one to experiment in the field of agriculture. Farmers feel that they can write accurately with needed information and can also provide required supplementary guidance for problems encountered in farming. It could be inferred that the Agriculture University scientists, progressive farmers and extension workers must be requested to contribute more articles as these sources were most preferred by the readers of the farm magazines. Field staffs of various input organizations such as seeds, pesticides and fertilizers are least preferred perhaps due to the fact that they are interested more in sales promotion and concentrate more on marketing of their commodities. The table also revealed that the articles written by UAS scientists was highly preferred and the articles written by RDO's of Banks was least preferred by all the three farm magazines reader categories. Hence, chi square found to be non significant for these two sources of

Table 2. Distribution of farm magazine readers according to their preference for style of writing

Categories / preference	Krishinunnade (n ₁ =60)						Sirisambuddhi (n ₂ =60)						Krishimitra (n ₃ =60)						Overall (n=180)			χ ²
	I			II			I			II			I			II						
	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III				
Popular articles	33 (55.00)	14 (23.33)	13 (21.67)	35 (58.34)	11 (18.33)	14 (23.33)	38 (63.33)	15 (25.00)	7 (11.67)	106 (58.89)	40 (22.22)	34 (18.89)	34 (58.89)	40 (22.22)	34 (18.89)	34 (58.89)	40 (22.22)	34 (18.89)	3.53			
Success stories	38 (63.33)	9 (15.00)	13 (21.67)	18 (30.00)	12 (20.00)	30 (50.00)	32 (53.33)	12 (20.00)	16 (26.67)	88 (48.88)	33 (18.33)	59 (32.78)	88 (48.88)	33 (18.33)	59 (32.78)	88 (48.88)	33 (18.33)	59 (32.78)	NS 16.10*			
News in brief	36 (60.00)	15 (25.00)	9 (15.00)	29 (48.33)	13 (21.67)	18 (30.00)	38 (63.34)	8 (13.33)	14 (23.33)	103 (57.22)	36 (20.00)	41 (22.78)	103 (57.22)	36 (20.00)	41 (22.78)	103 (57.22)	36 (20.00)	41 (22.78)	6.44 NS			
Interviews	31 (51.67)	14 (23.33)	15 (25.00)	39 (65.00)	17 (28.33)	4 (6.67)	39 (65.00)	16 (26.67)	5 (8.33)	109 (60.56)	47 (26.11)	24 (13.33)	109 (60.56)	47 (26.11)	24 (13.33)	109 (60.56)	47 (26.11)	24 (13.33)	10.72* NS			
Research articles	41 (68.34)	17 (28.33)	2 (3.33)	31 (51.67)	18 (30.00)	11 (18.33)	33 (55.00)	17 (28.33)	10 (16.67)	105 (58.33)	52 (28.89)	23 (12.78)	105 (58.33)	52 (28.89)	23 (12.78)	105 (58.33)	52 (28.89)	23 (12.78)	7.98 NS			
Question and answer type	39 (63.33)	13 (21.67)	9 (15.00)	34 (56.67)	16 (26.67)	10 (16.66)	30 (50.00)	21 (35.00)	9 (15.00)	102 (56.67)	50 (27.78)	28 (15.55)	102 (56.67)	50 (27.78)	28 (15.55)	102 (56.67)	50 (27.78)	28 (15.55)	2.97 NS			

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage, NS = Non significant, * = Significant at 1 per cent level

Table 3. Distribution of farm magazine readers according to their preference for source of articles

Categories/ preference	Krishimunnade (n ₁ =60)						Sirisambuddhi (n ₂ =60)						Krishimitra (n ₃ =60)						Overall (n=180)			χ ²
	I			II			I			II			I			II						
	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III	I	II	III				
UAS scientists	42 (70.00)	6 (10.00)	12 (20.00)	36 (60.00)	9 (15.00)	15 (25.00)	34 (56.67)	10 (16.66)	16 (26.67)	112 (62.22)	25 (13.89)	43 (23.89)	112 (62.22)	25 (13.89)	43 (23.89)	112 (62.22)	25 (13.89)	43 (23.89)	2.57	NS		
Extension workers of development departments	15 (25.00)	22 (36.67)	23 (38.33)	41 (68.33)	12 (20.00)	7 (11.67)	24 (40.00)	28 (46.67)	8 (13.33)	80 (44.45)	62 (34.44)	38 (21.11)	80 (44.45)	62 (34.44)	38 (21.11)	80 (44.45)	62 (34.44)	38 (21.11)	32.00***	NS		
Progressive farmers	28 (46.67)	21 (35.00)	11 (18.33)	35 (58.33)	18 (30.00)	7 (11.67)	45 (75.00)	9 (15.00)	6 (10.00)	108 (60.00)	48 (26.67)	24 (13.33)	108 (60.00)	48 (26.67)	24 (13.33)	108 (60.00)	48 (26.67)	24 (13.33)	10.68*	NS		
Workers of input agencies	8 (13.33)	12 (20.00)	40 (66.67)	15 (25.00)	21 (35.00)	24 (40.00)	17 (28.33)	25 (41.67)	18 (30.00)	40 (22.22)	58 (32.22)	82 (45.56)	40 (22.22)	58 (32.22)	82 (45.56)	40 (22.22)	58 (32.22)	82 (45.56)	17.39***	NS		
NGO's agents	7 (11.67)	15 (25.00)	38 (63.33)	16 (26.66)	22 (41.67)	22 (41.67)	14 (23.34)	26 (43.33)	2 (3.33)	37 (20.56)	63 (35.00)	80 (44.44)	37 (20.56)	63 (35.00)	80 (44.44)	37 (20.56)	63 (35.00)	80 (44.44)	36.67***	NS		
RDO's of banks	2 (3.33)	6 (10.00)	52 (86.67)	5 (8.33)	11 (18.33)	44 (73.34)	4 (6.67)	8 (13.33)	48 (80.00)	11 (6.11)	25 (13.89)	144 (80.00)	11 (6.11)	25 (13.89)	144 (80.00)	11 (6.11)	25 (13.89)	144 (80.00)	3.45	NS		

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage, NS = Non significant, * = Significant at 1 per cent level, ** = Significant at 5 per cent level

articles sirisambruddhi farm magazine was published by BAIF organization and were in almost all the articles written by extension workers of the organization who are practically involved in working with rural people at the grass root level. The same situation is observed in case of Krishimitra readers and progressive farmers. This might be the reason for chi square value to be significant for these two sources of articles. The

subscriber readers of Krishimunnade farm magazine least preferred the articles written by the workers of input agencies and NGO agents compare to Sirisambruddhi and Krishimitra farm magazines. Hence, chi square value was found to be significant for these two sources of articles. This finding gets the support of the studies conducted by Manjunath and Balasubramanya (2002).

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