

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FORMATS AND READABILITY OF ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN A NEWS PAPER AND A FARM MAGAZINE

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In India there are several media disseminating the recent agricultural technologies to farmers. Among them, print media play a vital role in disseminating the recent technologies to literate farmers. Agricultural Journalism in India came into existence just five decades ago. It is now gaining importance, particularly after the establishment of State Agricultural Universities (SAUs), the technical information needs to be provided to the farmers at the right time in a right way, so that the productivity can be increased.

According to a report of Government of India (1987) there were 88 daily news papers on roll in Tamil Nadu. Out of this, five dailies have a circulation of over one lakh copies. There were above 28 farm magazines published from various organizations. As pointed out by Karippai and Menon (1987), only very few attempts have been made on readability, formats or impact of these columns. The absence of such evidence limits, the scope of critical discussion on the effectiveness of agricultural columns and way to improve them. In this background, the present study was designed with the following objectives.

1. To compare the formats of presentation on different subject matter areas in Newspaper and Farm Magazine.
2. To compare the readability of agricultural articles published in News paper and Farm Magazine.

Methodology :

'Dinamaler' Newspaper and 'Valarum Velanmai' Magazine were the farm periodicals selected for the study. These two periodicals are being published in Tamil language.

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All the 52 issues of 'Dinamalar' Newspaper of the year 1998 were considered as sample for the study. There were 139 articles in the Newspaper during the period. Similarly, all the twelve issues of 'valarum velanmai' Magazine of the year 1998 were considered as sample for the study. There were 147 articles in the Farm Magazine.

Different categories of formats were found to be used to present the information to the readers by the Newspaper and the Farm Magazine. The formats were categorized into I) Popular articles ii) Success stories iii) Poems iv) Interview v) Proverbs vi) Scientific Articles and vii) Question and Answer.

Readability Measurement : The readability index developed by aliver (1985) was used in the study. The formula for readability index is, given below.

$$\text{Readability index (RI)} = \frac{1.027275}{X_1} + \frac{4.110678}{X_2} + \frac{0.416117}{X_3}$$

- Where
- X_1 = Average sentence length
 - X_2 = Syllables per 100 words
 - X_3 = Percentage of compound words

The average sentence length (X_1) was calculated by dividing number of words by number of sentences. The average syllables per 100 words (X_2) were calculated by using the formula below.

$$\text{Syllables per 100 word} = \frac{\text{Total number of syllables}}{\text{Total number of words}} \times 100$$

The percentage of compound words (X_2) were calculated by the formula below.

$$\text{Percentage of compound words} = \frac{\text{Number of compound words}}{\text{Total number of words}} \times 100$$

Range of readability index :

Sl.No	Category	Readability From	Index range To
1	Very easy	0.129735	And above
2	Fairly easy	0.119588	0.139735
3	Standard	0.105806	0.119588
4	Fairly hard	0.093421	0.105806
5	Very hard	0.93421	And below

Findings and discussion**Table 1 : Formats of presentation of articles in the newspaper and the Farm magazine.**

Sl.No	Category	Newspaper		Magazine		Critical ratio (CR)
		No.	%	No.	%	
1	Population articles by scientists	47	33.81	55	37.41	0.37 NS
2	Population articles by extension personnel	32	23.02	27	18.37	0.44NS
3	Success stories	14	10.07	11	07.48	0.23 NS
4	Poems	3	2.16	5	3.40	0.10 NS
5	Interview	0	0.00	2	1.36	1.38 NS
6	Proverbs	4	2.88	0	0.00	1.94 NS
7	Scientific articles	18	12.95	31	21.09	0.71 NS
8	Question and answer	21	15.11	16	10.88	0.38 NS
Total		139	100.0	147	100.0	

The table indicates that nearly fifty percent of the articles publishes in both newspaper and magazine were found to be popular articles, written by scientists and extension personnel. This was followed by question and answer and scientific articles. Other formats were used on a limited scale.

If further reveals that there was no significant difference between the newspaper and the magazine with regard to formats of articles presented. The popular articles were used extensively because they could be easily read and understood by the readers.

Table 2 : Distribution of articles published in the newspaper and the magazine based on readability index

Sl.No	Format	Newspaper articles		Magazine articles		Critical ratio (CR)
		No.	%	No.	%	
1	Very easy	55	33.81	63	34.69	0.10 NS
2	Fairly easy	27	25.18	37	33.33	0.70 NS
3	Standard	28	26.14	20	13.61	2.66 **
4	Fairly hard	9	6.47	13	8.84	1.05 NS
5	Very hard	20	14.39	14	9.52	0.20 NS
Total		139	100.0	147	100.0	

The table reveals that one third of the articles came under very easy category in both the periodicals. It was followed by standard category and fairly easy category. There was no significant difference between the newspaper and the magazine with regard to proportion of article falling under very easy fairly easy and very hard categories. But there was significant difference with regard to standard category. This is because of the editorial policy and the style of presentation of contributors of those articles

Summary and conclusion :

1. The popular articles format was the most commonly used format in both the periodicals. Other formats like question and answer scientific article and success stories were also used in both the newspaper and the magazine.

2. One third of the articles published in both the newspaper and the farm magazine fell under very easy category of readability.

Implications

1. Popular articles written by scientists were more predominant in both the newspaper and the magazine than the proportion of articles by extension personnel, hence, extension personnel directly involved in transfer of technology popular articles by extension personnel may be given the top position in future.
2. The review of literature revealed that success stories and question and answer were preferred by farmers. But the study reveals that success stories and question and answer formats were utilized little by both the periodicals. The periodicals may be impressed on the value of success stores and question and answer in transfer of technology.
3. Regarding readability, few article fell in standard category and many articles fell in very easy and fairly easy category. For making farmers more educative, more number of articles will be given under very easy category.

Reference :

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