

ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION COVERED BY NATIONAL DAILIES OF NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

Transfer of technology from research stations to farming community is essential for agricultural growth and development. In this context the role of mass media is also important to disseminate technology to the rural farmers on time. With the view of analyzing agriculture news coverage, its potent, subject areas of agriculture covered and other variables the four major dailies viz. The Gorkhapatra, The Himalaya Times, The Kantipur, and The Nepal Samacharpatra were purposively selected for the study. The Himalaya Times covered maximum agricultural information followed by The Kantipur, The Gorkhapatra, and The Samacharpatra respectively. The Kantipur daily had given more importance to agricultural news with reference to news value. Maximum agriculture news and editorial was covered by The Himalaya Times whereas, maximum popular article, pictorial news and advertisement on agriculture was published in The Gorkhapatra daily. Majority of the national dailies were covered agriculture news followed by pictorial, popular article, advertisement and editorial on agriculture issues respectively. Informative type of agriculture information was covered maximum followed by opinion and editorial. Similarly, maximum agriculture information was covered in the Himalaya Times on sixth page, The Gorkhapatra and The Nepal Samacharpatra on ninth page and in The Kantipur on tenth page. Maximum headline was of 6-9 words followed by <5 words. Maximum headline was of 24 to 36 points font size and maximum headline was of single line followed by two and three lines, respectively. Similarly, three column agriculture information was maximum followed by two columns, four columns, and one column, respectively.

Key words: *Transfer of technology, Nepal Samacharpatra, Himalaya Times,*

INTRODUCTION

Effective communication of farm information to the farmers is key to socio-economic transformation of a nation, particularly when the bulk of population depend on farming. In Nepal where farming communities live in less accessible and isolated villages both on hills and tarai, effective communication is all more difficult. Mass media are expected to cater the new technology according to the need of the farmers to a great extent. The mass media now a days are playing an important role in rural development as well as modernization of rural community. Among the mass media, print media occupy a key position (Kaur and Mathur, 1979). It is the cheapest and also fast medium. It has also the unique value of preservation. It provides information in more depth and in much greater detail than to the broadcast media. The print media because of their ability to go into detail and to explain complex issues may have more influence and public opinion than radio and television.

During the last few years, the press in Nepal has considerably improved, both qualitatively as well as quantitatively. The vernacular press especially has recorded a spectacular upsurge in growth in terms of both the numbers of newspapers and their combined circulation. The rapid growth of the vernacular press is probably due to the increasing level of literacy rate and the print medium is being considered as one of the effective means of communication (Thakur and Thakur, 2004). With the increasing literacy levels in rural areas, the print media have been showing tremendous impact in changing the agriculture scenario. It is believed that print

media demands for active and creative participation on the part of the rural readers than it is demanded by the audience of the other media. This is so because, communication is less structured and readers are forced to participate creatively in more impersonal type of communication. The information communicated through print media is definitely well organized and easily understandable.

Jain (1984) stressed the need of rural press for maximum coverage of farm information. A large number of daily newspapers are published from the capital and circulated to the distant places through out the country. Among these, some of the newspapers are providing some space for agriculture information. Considering the importance of newspaper in transfer of technology among the farmers, the present study was undertaken to find out the coverage pattern of agricultural information by the national dailies.

METHODOLOGY

Four national dailies viz. The Gorkhapatra, The Kantipur, The Nepal Samacharpatra and The Himalaya Times were selected randomly, on the basis of readers' feedback who came to library of Nepal Agricultural Research Council. The readers' views were collected and it was found that agriculture information often covered on those above mentioned newspapers. These newspapers have wider circulation as well as the access to the rural readers. A whole year round issues paper was undertaken for the purpose of study. All the necessary data were collected systematically and analyzed by

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using appropriate statistical tool.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Space provided to agriculture information by different national dailies: The Himalaya Times daily provided the maximum space (3.44%) to agriculture information followed by The Kantipur (1.88%), The Gorkhapatra daily (1.05%) and The Nepal Samacharpatra (0.85%) respectively. The average score of four national dailies for providing space to agriculture information was 1.58% (Table 1).

Page wise distribution of Agricultural information: Agriculture information was covered maximum (3.63%) by The Kantipur daily on the first page while The Himalaya Times covered 2.00%, The Gorkhapatra covered 1.66% and The Nepal Samacharpatra covered 1.56% agriculture information on the first page in the respective newspaper. Table 2 (a) indicates that maximum agriculture information (94.08%) was covered on the inner page, 2.18% covered on inner first page, 2.10% covered on first page, and minimum (1.64%) covered on last page.

Table 2 (b) shows that maximum agriculture information (39.98%) was covered on 6th page of the newspaper followed by 9th page (26.50%), 10th page (13.29%) and 7th page (6.08%) respectively. In respect of individual newspaper, The Gorkhapatra covered maximum (42.52%) agriculture information on its ninth page, The Nepal Samacharpatra on its ninth page (79.11%), The Himalaya Times on its sixth page (84.92%) and The Kantipur daily on its tenth page (75.06%).

Place of agriculture information within a page of a Newspaper: In all four national dailies, average maximum agriculture information (55.18%) was published on upper half of the newspaper whereas 44.82% of the agriculture information was published on lower half of the newspaper.

The Himalaya Times published maximum agriculture information (59.22%) to lower half of the newspaper while The Kantipur published maximum (72.88%) agriculture information to the upper half of the page followed by The Gorkhapatra (66.28%), and The Nepal Samacharpatra (59.33%) respectively (Table 3).

Types of agricultural information coverage: Regarding the types of agriculture information covered in four national dailies, it is clearly indicated in Table 4 that maximum agricultural information coverage (71.90%) was news story, followed by pictorial news (11.73%), popular news article (11.50%), advertisement (3.47%), and editorial (1.40%) respectively.

The Gorkhapatra covered 62.29% of news story, 16.28% of pictorial news, 13.62% of popular articles, 7.64% of advertisement and very less (0.17%) of editorial news in agriculture. The Nepal Samacharpatra covered 69.78% of news, 15.11% of pictorial, 13.56% of popular article, advertisement 1.33% and editorial 0.22% of agriculture information. The Himalaya Times covered 78.93% news story, 7.99% pictorial, 7.36% popular, 3.00% editorial, and 2.72% advertisement of agriculture information. Similarly, The Kantipur daily covered 69.49% news, 17.19% popular article, 11.38% pictorial news,

1.69% advertisement and editorial 0.24% of agriculture information.

Nature of Agricultural news coverage in the national dailies: Maximum agriculture information (94.61%) published in the daily newspapers were informative in nature followed by opinion (3.99%), and editorial (1.40%). Editorial (3.00%) and Informative (95.73%) nature of agriculture information was published maximum in The Himalaya Times, while opinion nature of agriculture information was published highest (8.22%) in The Nepal Samacharpatra (Table 5). Karande and Riswadkar (1987) also supported this results.

Subject areas of agriculture covered by daily newspapers: The information on crop science (crop production) was covered maximum (29.22%) in national dailies followed by miscellaneous agriculture activities (17.93%), agri-economics (17.23%), livestock (10.43%), new agriculture technology (9.90%), dairy (6.53%), market price (6.43%), and weather (2.34%). With respect to individual newspaper, the Samacharpatra covered maximum information (31.33%) on agri-economics whereas The Gorkhapatra, The Himalaya Times, and The Kantipur daily covered maximum agriculture information on crop science 31.89%, 32.33% and 25.83% respectively (Table 6).

Sources of agriculture information in the Newspapers: News reporters and news writers were the main source (76.81%) of agricultural information for newspapers. The scientists/officials were found very poor (0.51%) source of agriculture information for newspapers and news agencies found intermediate source of agriculture information (22.68%). The Gorkhapatra daily covered 34.55% of The agriculture information by the news agencies while the Samacharpatra, The Himalaya Times, and The Kantipur covered 1.11%, 29.79%, 9.93% respectively. The Gorkhapatra daily covered more (1.66%) agriculture information collected from scientists / officials than other three newspapers (Table 7).

Headline style of agriculture news: Maximum headline (41.00%) style was ribbon type followed by cross-line (18.04%), column centered (17.73%), and pyramid (11.26%). Some headline style was designed as rectangular (5.57%), flushed left (2.22%), box line (1.95%), tag (1.68%), and flushed right (0.55%). Column centered headline was maximum (37.21%) in The Gorkhapatra. Ribbon type was maximum (59.56%) in The Samacharpatra and The Kantipur. Crossline type headline was maximum (36.97%) in The Himalaya Times (Table 8).

CONCLUSION

Maximum space was provided for agriculture information by Himalaya Times followed by Kantipur and Gorkhapatra. Agriculture information was given more importance by Kantipur with reference to news value. Maximum agriculture news item and editorial was covered by The Himalaya Times, maximum popular article, pictorial news and advertisement was published on The Gorkhapatra. Maximum coverage was of agriculture news followed by pictorial, popular article, advertisement and editorial respectively. Regarding the nature

Table 1. Space provided to agricultural information

Space wise coverage (in Sq cm)	Newspapers				Total
	Gorkhapatra	Samacharpatra	Himalaya Times	Kantipur	
Total	8856660	8625636	5400000	2882739	25765035
Covered	92854	73596	185971	54237	406658
%	1.05	0.85	3.44	1.88	1.58

Table 2 (a). Page wise potentials in distribution of agriculture information

Page	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur		Freq.	%
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%		
First	10	1.66	7	1.56	22	2.00	15	3.63	54	2.10
Last	14	2.33	6	1.33	19	1.73	3	0.73	42	1.64
Inner first	9	1.50	1	0.22	38	3.45	8	1.94	56	2.18
Inner	569	94.52	436	96.89	1022	92.82	387	93.70	2414	94.08
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 2 (b). Individual page-wise news distribution of agriculture

Page	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur		Freq.	%
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
1st	10	1.66	7	1.56	22	2.00	15	3.63	54	2.10
2nd	9	1.50	4	0.89	18	1.63	3	0.73	34	1.33
3rd	42	6.98	13	2.89	42	3.81	3	0.73	100	3.90
4th	4	0.66			33	3.00	1	0.24	38	1.48
5th	7	1.16	3	0.67	15	1.36	1	0.24	26	1.01
6th	78	12.96	12	2.67	935	84.92	1	0.24	1026	39.98
7th	124	20.60	20	4.44	12	1.09	-	-	156	6.08
8th	24	3.99	25	5.56	24	2.18	1	0.24	74	2.88
9th	256	42.52	356	79.11	-	-	68	16.46	680	26.50
10th	29	4.82	2	0.44	-	-	310	75.06	341	13.29
11th			4	0.89	-	-	9	2.18	13	0.51
12th	12	1.99	3	0.67					15	0.58
13th	4	0.66	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	0.16
14th	3	0.50	-	-	-	-	1	0.24	4	0.16
16th	-	-	1	0.22	-	-	-	-	1	0.04
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 3. Agriculture news value within a page

Page	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur		Freq.	%
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
Upper half	399	66.28	267	59.33	449	40.78	301	72.88	1416	55.18
Lower half	203	33.72	183	40.67	652	59.22	112	27.12	1150	44.82
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 4. Types of agricultural news

News Item	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur		Freq.	%
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
News	375	62.29	314	69.78	869	78.93	287	69.49	1845	71.90
Popular	82	13.62	61	13.56	81	7.36	71	17.19	295	11.50
Advertisement	46	7.64	6	1.33	30	2.72	7	1.69	89	3.47
Editorial	1	0.17	1	0.22	33	3.00	1	0.24	36	1.40
Pictorial	98	16.28	68	15.11	88	7.99	47	11.38	301	11.73
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 5. Nature of agricultural news published

Nature	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur		Freq.	%
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%			
Editorial	1	0.17	1	0.22	33	3.00	1	0.24	36	1.40
Opiniory	30	4.98	37	8.22	14	1.27	21	5.17	102	3.99
Informative	571	94.85	412	91.56	1054	95.73	391	94.59	2428	94.61
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 6. Subject area covered

News Item	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur			
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Market price	69	11.46	19	4.22	38	3.45	39	9.44	165	6.43
Weather	33	5.48	7	1.56	16	1.45	4	0.97	60	2.34
Technology	53	8.80	18	4.00	91	8.27	92	22.28	254	9.90
Livestock	59	9.80	81	18.00	109	9.90	19	4.52	268	10.43
Crop Science	192	31.89	95	21.11	356	32.33	107	25.83	750	29.22
Agrieconomics	89	14.78	141	31.33	117	10.63	95	23.00	442	17.23
Dairy	71	11.79	42	9.33	48	4.36	7	1.61	168	6.53
Miscellaneous	36	5.98	47	10.44	326	29.61	51	12.35	460	17.93
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 7. Sources of information

Sources of information	Newspapers								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur			
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Scientists/Officials	10	1.66	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	0.73	13	0.51
News agencies	208	34.55	5	1.11	328	29.79	41	9.93	582	22.68
Reporters/writers	384	63.79	445	98.89	773	70.21	369	89.35	1971	76.81
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

Table 8. Headline style

Headline	Newspaper								Total	
	Gorkhapatra		Samacharpatra		Himalaya Times		Kantipur			
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Ribbon	140	23.26	268	59.56	398	36.15	246	59.56	1052	41.00
Cross-line	53	8.80	3	0.67	407	36.97	-	-	463	18.04
Column centered	224	37.21	37	8.22	112	10.17	82	19.85	455	17.73
Pyramid	58	9.63	53	11.78	109	9.90	69	16.71	289	11.26
Rectangular	78	12.96	2	0.44	60	5.45	3	0.73	143	5.57
Flushed left	42	6.98	8	1.78	2	0.18	5	1.21	57	2.22
Box-line	-	-	45	10.00	5	0.45	-	-	50	1.95
Tag or Dub	-	-	33	7.33	6	0.54	4	0.97	43	1.68
Flushed right	7	1.16	1	0.22	2	0.18	4	0.97	14	0.55
Total	602	100	450	100	1101	100	413	100	2566	100

of agriculture information covered by four national dailies, informative type was maximum followed by opinion and editorial. Similarly, maximum agriculture information got coverage on sixth page in Himalaya Times, on ninth page in Gorkhapatra and Nepal Samacharpatra while in Kantipur it was

on tenth page. Maximum headline was of 6-9 words followed by <5 words. Maximum headline was of 24 to 36 font size. Regarding the number of lines, maximum headline was of single line followed by two and three respectively. Similarly, three column agriculture information was maximum followed by two columns, four columns, and one column respectively.

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