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Content Analysis of Megha Sandesha Programme Broadcast through All India (AIR), Kalaburagi

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Abstract

The present study was carried out during 2021–22 in four districts of Kalyana Karnataka namely Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Vijayapura and Koppal to analyse the content of the Megha Sandesha Programme (MSP) broadcast through All India Radio, Kalaburagi. An ex-post facto research design was employed for the study. A purposive sampling procedure was followed for the selection of districts, taluks and villages, while 120 regular listeners of MSP were selected as respondents through simple random sampling. The findings revealed that nearly half of the messages (49.72%) broadcast through MSP were related to weather and weather-related information, followed by emergency advisory tips (9.40%), crop production (8.67%), plant protection (7.95%) and harvesting and post-harvest management (6.87%). A large majority of the respondents preferred weather and weather-related information (80.00%), followed by emergency advisory tips (68.00%) and crop production information (56.66%). Regarding credibility, most respondents perceived the use of local and simple language (87.50%) and accuracy of information (86.66%) as highly credible. Further, a majority of the respondents reported that the information broadcast through MSP was relevant to their farming needs (77.50%), complete (75.00%) and timely (76.60%), while 66.60 per cent rated the audio quality as good. The study concluded that MSP is an effective and credible weather-based agricultural communication programme that provides timely and need-based information to farmers.

Keywords: Content analysis, Megha Sandesha Programme, Radio, Weather-based advisory

Introduction

Agriculture in India is highly dependent on weather conditions such as rainfall, temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and the occurrence of extreme weather events. Weather variability directly influences farmers' decisions regarding land preparation, sowing, selection of crops and varieties, irrigation scheduling, fertilizer application, plant protection measures, harvesting, storage and marketing of agricultural produce. In rainfed regions such as Kalyana Karnataka, timely and location-specific weather information is especially important because farmers are highly vulnerable to delayed monsoon, prolonged dry spells, heavy rainfall, drought and other climatic uncertainties. Therefore, dissemination of reliable weather-based agro-advisory information is essential for reducing production risks and improving farm decision-making. Among the various mass media channels, radio continues to be an effective and accessible medium for communicating agricultural information to rural farmers. It can reach farmers living in remote areas irrespective of their literacy level and enables them to receive information while carrying out their routine

farm and household activities. Agricultural radio programmes serve as an important link between scientists, extension personnel, developmental departments and farming communities by providing timely information on crop production, crop protection, livestock management, government schemes, markets and weather conditions. Goudappa *et al.* (2017) [6].

Megha Sandesha is a special weather-based agricultural programme broadcast by All India Radio Kalaburagi since 4 May 2009. The programme is broadcast every Tuesday evening and mainly focuses on weather forecasts, weather-related agricultural advisories and climate-related issues. It covers listeners in the districts of Kalaburagi, Bidar, Yadgir, Raichur, Koppal and Ballari of Kalyana Karnataka along with adjoining areas such as Vijayapura, Bagalkot and Solapur. The programme includes information from experts from the meteorological department, agricultural universities, the agriculture department, progressive farmers and other specialists. It provides weather forecasts and advisory messages to help farmers take appropriate decisions related to sowing, irrigation, fertilizer application,

pest and disease management, harvesting, drying, storage and transportation of agricultural produce. The usefulness of such a programme depends not only on its reach but also on the relevance, adequacy, clarity, scientific accuracy and timeliness of the content broadcast. Hence, systematic content analysis is necessary to identify the major themes covered, the emphasis given to different agricultural and weather-related topics, the presentation formats used and the gaps that need improvement. Keeping these aspects in view, the present study was undertaken with the objective to analyze the content of Megha Sandesha programme broadcast over All India Radio Kalaburagi.

Methodology

A list of registered listeners of the Megha Sandesha programme was obtained from All India Radio, Kalaburagi for the year 2021–22. Based on the maximum number of registered listeners, four districts namely Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Vijayapura and Koppal were purposively selected for the study. One taluk from each district was selected based on the highest number of registered listeners in consultation with the Programme Officer, AIR Kalaburagi. Accordingly, Aland, Shahapur, Koppal and Indi taluks were selected from Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Koppal and Vijayapura districts, respectively. From each selected taluk, three villages having the maximum number of Megha Sandesha listeners were selected, making a total of 12 villages. From each village, 10 regular listeners of the programme were selected through simple random sampling. Thus, a total sample of 120 respondents was selected for the study.

Content analysis was carried out to analyse the messages broadcast through the Megha Sandesha programme by following the procedure suggested by Raval (2021) [1]. The analysis included quantitative content analysis, qualitative content analysis and credibility of the programme. For quantitative content analysis, the broadcast messages were classified into weather and weather-related information, emergency advisory tips, crop production, plant protection, harvesting and post-harvest management, fertilizer application, soil and water management, innovative

agricultural technologies, weather-based success stories of progressive farmers and dairy management. The number of messages under each subject area was recorded and expressed in frequency and percentage. Qualitative content analysis was carried out based on listeners' perception regarding relevancy, completeness of information, timeliness, usefulness of content and audio quality of messages. Each component consisted of three statements, making a total of 15 statements. The credibility of Megha Sandesha programme was assessed using five statements on a three-point continuum of most credible, credible and least credible with scores of 3, 2 and 1, respectively. The collected data were analysed and presented using frequency and percentage.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 reveals that nearly half of the messages (49.72%) broadcast through the Megha Sandesha Programme (MSP) were related to weather and weather-related information. This was followed by emergency advisory tips (9.40%), crop production information (8.67%), plant protection messages (7.95%) and harvesting and post-harvest management information (6.87%). Further, 4.88 per cent of the messages focused on fertilizer application, while soil and water management accounted for 4.33 per cent. Weather-based success stories of progressive farmers constituted 2.71 per cent of the total messages and dairy management received the least coverage with 1.98 per cent of messages.

The findings indicate that AIR Kalaburagi gave greater emphasis to weather and weather-related information in the Megha Sandesha Programme, followed by emergency advisory tips. This may be due to the primary objective of the programme, which is to provide timely weather forecasts and weather-based agricultural advisories to farmers for planning their farm operations and minimizing losses caused by adverse weather conditions. The findings are in line with those reported by Singh *et al.* (2015) [2] and Bishta *et al.* (2014) [9],

Table 1: Distribution of different subject wise information broadcasted through MSP (n=120)

Sl. No.	Subject wise information	Number of message broadcasted(F)	%
1	Weather- and weather-related information	275	49.72
2	Emergency advisory tips	52	9.40
3	Crop production	48	8.67
4	Plant protection	44	7.95
5	Harvesting and Post-harvest management	38	6.87
6	Fertilizer application	27	4.88
7	Soil and water management	24	4.33
8	Information on innovative technologies in agriculture	19	3.43
9	Weather based success stories of progressive farmer	15	2.71
10.	Dairy management	11	1.98

The results presented in Table 2 shows that a large majority of the respondents (80.00%) preferred weather and weather-related information broadcast through the Megha Sandesha Programme (MSP). This was followed by emergency advisory tips (68.00%) and crop production information (56.66%). Further, 45.83 per cent of the respondents preferred information on harvesting and post-harvest management, while 40.00 per cent preferred fertilizer

application information. Information related to soil and water management was preferred by 33.50 per cent of the respondents. A relatively smaller proportion of respondents preferred information on innovative agricultural technologies (20.83%), weather-based success stories of progressive farmers (16.00%) and dairy management (15.00%).

The data imply that farmers gave greater preference to

weather and weather-related information, followed by emergency advisory tips and crop production information. This may be because timely weather forecasts and advisories enable farmers to plan farm operations such as sowing, irrigation, fertilizer application, plant protection, harvesting and storage more effectively. Such information

helps farmers minimize crop losses caused by unfavourable weather conditions and improve the benefits from agricultural production. The findings are in conformity with those reported by Madhu (2010) ^[5], Garg *et al.* (2017) ^[10] and Adamides *et al.* (2018) ^[11].

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to their preference of farm information broadcasted through MSP (n =120)

Sl. No	Subject Matter	Responses		Rank
		F	%	
1	Weather- and weather-related information	96	80.00	I
2	Emergency advisory tips	82	68.33	II
3	Crop protection	68	56.66	III
4	Plant protection	59	49.16	IV
5	Harvesting and Post-harvest management	55	45.83	V
6	Fertilizer application	48	40.00	VI
7	Soil and water management	27	22.50	VII
8	Information on innovative technologies in agriculture	25	20.83	VIII
9	Weather based success stories of progressive farmer	20	16.00	IX
10.	Dairy management	18	15.66	X

Note: Multiple responses are recorded

F = frequency, % = percentage

It is evident from Table 3 that a large majority of the respondents perceived the technical information broadcast through the Megha Sandesha Programme (MSP) in local and simple language as most credible (87.50%), followed by accurate information (86.66%). Further, 63.33 per cent of the respondents considered the timely presentation of technical know-how for obtaining greater farm benefits as credible, while 56.66 per cent perceived the information as practical. Unbiased information was considered credible by 35.00 per cent of the respondents.

The results highlight that MSP was perceived as a credible

source of agricultural information by the listeners. The use of simple local language, accurate technical content and timely advisories may have enhanced the credibility of the programme among farmers. The programme also provides farmers with useful information on improved crop cultivation practices, new technologies and weather-based farm decisions, which may encourage them to adopt recommended practices for improving productivity. The findings are in conformity with those reported by Talwar (2011) ^[3] and Danjuma *et. al* (2021) ^[7].

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to credibility of the MSP listeners (n =120)

Sl. No.	Credibility	Most Credible	Some what credible	Not credible
1.	Accurate information	104(86.66)	16(13.33)	0(00)
2.	Timely Presents the technical know-how for the larger benefits of the farmers	76(63.33)	44(36.66)	0(00)
3.	Practical information	68(56.66)	52(43.33)	0(00)
4.	Unbiased information	42(35.00)	78(65.00)	0(00)
5.	Technical information in local and simple language	105(87.50)	15(12.50)	0(00)

Note: Figures in the parenthesis indicate percentage

Data presented in Table 4 show that a majority of the respondents (77.50%) opined that the information broadcast through the Megha Sandesha Programme (MSP) was relevant to their farming needs. However, 17.50 per cent of the respondents felt that the information had little relevance, while 5.00 per cent reported that it was not relevant to their needs. With regard to completeness of information, three-fourth of the respondents (75.00%) stated that the information provided through MSP was complete, whereas 15.80 per cent felt that only a few points were covered and 9.10 per cent opined that the information was incomplete. Regarding timeliness, 76.60 per cent of the respondents reported that the messages were broadcast at the appropriate time, while 16.60 per cent felt that the information was

received early and 6.60 per cent reported that it was received late. In terms of audio quality, 66.60 per cent of the respondents perceived the audio quality as good, whereas 27.50 per cent and 5.80 per cent rated it as fair and poor, respectively.

The above observations suggest that the Megha Sandesha Programme provides relevant, complete and timely information in a simple and understandable manner. This may help farmers plan and undertake their farm operations at the appropriate time based on prevailing and anticipated weather conditions. The findings are in conformity with those reported by Patil and Patel (2018) ^[4], Kakade (2013) ^[8] and Haidar (2014) ^[12].

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to different dimension of Megha Sandesha Programme (n =120)

Sl. No.	Statements	F	%
1.	Relevancy of information		
	Content has relevancy to the needs of the farmers	93	77.50
	Content has very little relevancy to the needs of the farmers	21	17.50
	Content has no relevancy to the needs of the farmers	06	5.00
2.	Completeness of information		
	Complete information	90	75.00
	Only few points are covered	19	15.80
	Not related with points	11	9.10
3.	Timeliness of the message		
	Early	20	16.60
	Timely	92	76.60
	Late	08	6.60
4.	Content usefulness		
	Most useful	85	70.80
	Useful	27	22.50
	Not useful	08	6.60
5.	Audio quality		
	a) Good	80	66.60
	b) Fair	33	27.50
	c) Poor	07	5.80

Conclusion

The present study on content analysis of the Megha Sandesha Programme broadcast through All India Radio Kalaburagi clearly established that the programme serves as an effective weather-based agricultural communication platform for farmers of Kalyana Karnataka. The analysis of broadcast messages showed that the programme predominantly focused on weather and weather-related information, followed by emergency advisory tips, crop production, plant protection and harvesting and post-harvest management. This pattern of content was in accordance with the major objective of the programme, namely to provide timely weather forecasts and need-based advisories for reducing weather-related risks in agriculture. The preference pattern of respondents also confirmed that farmers mainly required weather-related information, emergency advisories and crop production guidance, indicating a close match between the content broadcast and the information needs of the listeners.

The findings further revealed that the programme was considered credible because it disseminated accurate technical information in simple local language and provided timely advisories that were useful for farm decision-making. A majority of the respondents perceived the content as relevant and complete, while the audio quality was also rated as good by most of the listeners. Thus, Megha Sandesha Programme has emerged as a useful medium for strengthening farmers' weather awareness and supporting timely agricultural operations. However, the programme may further enhance its usefulness by increasing coverage of soil and water management, innovative agricultural technologies, dairy management and weather-based success stories of progressive farmers. Such improvements would make the programme more comprehensive and enable it to address the diverse information requirements of the farming community.

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