

# CONTENT ANALYSIS OF AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION COVERED BY SELECTED INDIAN DAILIES

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## INTRODUCTION

Newspaper is one of the important communication media which provides a climate for national development. It makes the knowledge available where it is needed. It provides a forum for discussion and decision making. It helps to raise the general level of people's aspirations and the process of their modernization. Newspaper provides all sorts of news including that of development activities, agricultural policies, technical knowledge, etc. Newspaper is such a mass media that can provide technical information to agricultural sector at the right time and in the right way within a shortest possible time. Keeping in view the importance of newspaper in providing latest information to the masses, the present study was conducted with the following two objectives:

1. To work out the space provided to agricultural information by some selected newspapers.
2. To analyze the agricultural news into different categories of agricultural information to know the space provided to the news of each category.

## METHODOLOGY

### Selection of newspapers

In order to compare the results between National and Local dailies and between different language newspapers, four

National English dailies namely 'The Hindustan Times', 'The Times of India', 'Indian Express' and 'The Statesman', one local English daily 'The Tribune' and the two local language newspapers 'Punjabi Tribune (Punjabi)' and 'Punjab Kesri (Hindi)' were purposively selected for the present study. The higher quantum of circulation was taken into consideration while selecting the newspapers. Sixty issues of each newspaper were chosen for the study, to find out the continuity of the agricultural information in the selected newspapers.

### Classification of agricultural content

The content of newspaper pertaining to agricultural news was divided into three major categories based on the type of subject-matter, nature of agricultural news, and mode of presentation of agricultural news. Each of these categories was further sub divided in to different classes.

The subject-matter presented in agricultural news has been divided into thirteen categories i.e. crop production, agricultural marketing, transportation and storage of agricultural produce and inputs, agro-industries and farm-machinery, agro-climatic conditions, agricultural situation; agricultural world trade, animal husbandry and allied, rural welfare and development programmes; agricultural price policy, finance, insurance and credit, agricultural science, research, education and extension; agricultural social

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**Table 1: Allocation of space and number of agricultural news published in different newspapers**

Sr. No.	Name of Newspaper	Space allotted to agricultural news	Number of agricultural news
1	The Hindustan Times	0.67	3.00
2	The Times of India	0.64	2.18
3	Indian Express	0.62	1.68
4	The Statesman	0.91	2.53
5	The Tribune	0.90	3.42
6	Punjabi Tribune	1.24	1.93
7	Punjab Kesri	0.18	0.75

policies, irrigation, soil management and fertilizers. Agricultural news were grouped on the basis of nature of news into three classes i.e. information, education and opinion. Keeping in view the mode of presentation, the agricultural news were grouped into five categories i.e. news item, popular articles, editorial, letters to editor and pictorial.

#### Enumeration

Enumeration was done in terms of column centimeter and frequency of agricultural news.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the study have been presented and discussed as under:

##### Allocation of space

The data given in Table 1 reveal that on an average under the category of agricultural news, maximum coverage was given by the Punjabi Tribune (1.24 per cent) followed by The Statesman (0.91 per cent) and The Tribune (0.90 per cent) in one issue. Almost equal coverage was given by other national dailies under study. A negligible coverage was noticed in Punjab Kesri (0.18 per cent).

The data given in Table 1 also reveal that the average number of agricultural news

published per issue was highest in case of The Tribune (3.42). It was followed by The Hindustan Times (3.0), and The Statesman (2.53). Almost equal numbers of agricultural news were published by the rest newspapers except Punjab Kesri which released minimum number of agricultural news (0.75) per issue.

##### Space provided to various categories of agricultural news

The data given in Table 2 present the comparative per cent space provided to various categories of agricultural news by selected newspapers.

A perusal of Table 2 reveals that news regarding crop production received more space in 'The Tribune' (19.63 per cent). More coverage for agricultural marketing (23.41 per cent) and government's price policy; finance, etc. (22.10 per cent); and agricultural social policy, farmers' demands and agitations etc. (31.86 per cent) was provided by 'The Punjab Kesri'.

Allocation of space to the information related to agricultural situation in the country (19.14 per cent) and also to information regarding agricultural world trade (10.60 per cent) was more in 'The Statesman'

More space to agricultural science, research,

**Table 2 : Coverage of different categories of agricultural news**

Sr. No.	Category of Agricultural News	Name of Newspaper (per cent)						
		HT	TOI	IE	SM	TT	PT	PK
1	Crop production	3.65	5.49	-	0.98	19.63	14.08	-
2	Agricultural marketing	7.10	7.32	5.98	8.25	12.27	8.55	23.41
3	Transportation and storage	2.82	0.53	1.43	0.27	1.74	0.55	2.55
4	Agro-industries and farm machinery	8.13	10.85	6.32	4.44	6.54	3.50	2.62
5	Agro-climatic conditions	2.93	2.41	-	3.19	1.70	5.74	5.75
6	Agricultural situation	8.78	9.79	4.85	19.14	6.83	5.74	5.75
7	Agricultural world trade	4.30	6.92	9.01	10.60	3.68	0.58	7.89
8	Animal husbandry and allied areas	3.09	2.41	5.50	6.43	6.64	3.91	-
9	Rural welfare and development programmes	1.70	2.64	4.84	2.30	4.83	-	-
10	Government price policy, finance etc.	14.47	15.00	9.94	16.11	8.79	6.07	22.10
11	Agricultural science, research, education and extension	12.09	9.83	6.39	8.40	10.62	3.35	2.12
12	Agricultural social policy, farmers demands etc.	18.76	17.70	12.80	10.24	7.99	16.80	31.86
13	Irrigation, soil management and fertilizers	12.16	6.70	32.93	9.66	8.71	5.29	1.2

education and extension was provided by 'The Hindustan Times' (12.09 per cent). Similarly, more room for news related to irrigation, soil management and fertilizers was provided by 'Indian Express' (32.93 per cent). Similarly, the agro-industries and farm machinery hold maximum span in 'The Times of India' (10.85 per cent).

No much space was allocated for transportation and storage, agro-climatic conditions, animal husbandry and allied areas, and for rural welfare and development programmes by any of the newspapers under study.

### CONCLUSION

The findings of the present study show that almost all Indian newspapers barely spare space for agricultural news. National newspapers like The Hindustan Times, Indian Express and The Times of India are found allotting only 0.64 per cent space for agricultural information. Regional language newspapers are apathetic towards agricultural news as they cover only 4.25

per cent space. However, national dailies are found to be releasing a good number of agricultural news.

As regards coverage of different fields of agricultural information is concerned, most of the national dailies provide more coverage to the policies of government pertaining to price, finance, irrigation, fertilizers and soil management. The findings of this study made it amply clear that almost all Indian newspapers are lethargic and insufficient in the coverage of agricultural information. The pressing need for Indian newspapers therefore is to spare more space and release more number of agricultural news.

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