

READERS' PERCEPTION ABOUT THE *ANDISHA* SCIENTIFIC MAGAZINE OF HERAT UNIVERSITY OF AFGHANISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Information and communication revolution has brought radical changes in the life style of users. Print media has broken the geographical barriers and also have become more so common with them. During the last few decades, the educational world has begun to appreciate the enormous potential of information and communication technology, which influences our future lives. Improved communication and information access is related to social and economic development. Print media provides an opportunity to bridge the gap between information rich and information poor. Audience research beside the media research is one of the stages which the study was undertaken, under this stage the data were collected from a sample of 80 subscribers from Herat University campus, using personal interview method with the help of well structured pre-tested interview schedule. The study revealed that most of the readers rated the magazine as moderately effective. Ease in reading, attractiveness of the title and design of the cover page, among cover page components; readability, accuracy, clarity, usefulness, relevancy and adequacy of information among content components and letter size and number of pages per article and magazine among format components received the highest perception score.

Keywords: audience research, communication, media research, print media, readers' perception

INTRODUCTION

Universities are recognized as one of the centers of science production in the world. University professors play a significant role in this production through scientific research. The results and findings of researches are published in magazines and journals and are available to the readers, to use the degree of completeness of their information which finally leads to the development and progress of the country. Thus it is important to know the perception of readers who are using the Magazine for educational and informational purposes. Keeping in view the importance of print media in providing the information effectively, the present study is modulated with the objective of Readers' perception about the *Andisha* Magazine of Herat University.

OBJECTIVES

- (1) To know the perception of readers about the magazine
- (2) To study the readers' preferences towards content and format components of the magazine

METHODOLOGY

The *Andisha* magazine of Herat University, published since 2002, is a quarterly Magazine. All the 80 subscribers who were taken up for the investigation were

university lecturers, and randomly selected from subscribers' list. The data was collected with the help of a well structured pre-tested interview schedule and was subjected to the appropriate statistical analysis. The respondents were requested to give their perception about the cover page, content, and format components of the magazine. The salient findings of the study are summarized here under:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overall perception of readers about the *Andisha* magazine

Regarding overall perception of readers about *Andisha* Magazine, it is observed from Table-1, that majority of the respondents (45.75%) perceived the Magazine as moderately effective followed by high (31.25%) and low (23.00%). This finding indicated the scope for further improvements in the effectiveness of many of the components of Magazine and it is in line with is in that of Siddaramaiah *et al.* (1976), Sohal *et al.* (1977), Sharma (1983), Ramadasamurthy *et al.* (1990), Nataraju (1991), Prakash (2002), Soni (2005), Umale and Kubde (2010), Patel (2012), Dedhaniya (2018), Nagariya (2018), Nagaraja (2019), Krushnpalsinh and Vinaya (2020).

Table 1: Overall perception of readers about the andisha magazine

(n=80)

Sr. No.	Category	Score	Number	Per cent
1	Low	Below 85	20	23.00
2	Medium	Between 85 to 99	35	45.75
3	High	Above 99	25	31.25
Mean=91.87				SD=14.94

Readers' perception about the cover page components of the magazine

Readers' perception about the cover page components provided in Table-2, shows that, ease in reading, attractiveness of the title and attractiveness of the design of the cover page were accorded, first, second and third ranks respectively based on the perception scores. The other components rated high by readers were nature of cover page (shiny or ordinary), thickness of cover page, ease in understanding, attractiveness of illustrations, letter size, number of illustration and colour

of illustrations, in that order. It is implicit from the results that cover pages of Magazine was of art paper quality and was printed with horizontal straight title on top portion of cover page, messages were given on either sides of cover pages. This might have influenced the readers to derive moderate satisfaction from the cover page components. This finding is in conformity with that of Nijalingappa (1983), Nataraju (1991) and Prakash (2012) who found that majority of the farm magazine readers satisfied with thickness, attractiveness and appropriateness of cover page.

Table 2: Readers' perception about the cover page components of the magazine

(n=80)

Sr. No.	Components	Score	Rank
1	Ease in reading	194	I
2	Attractiveness of the title	192	II
3	Attractiveness of the design of the cover page	191	III
4	Nature of cover page (shiny or ordinary)	191	III
5	Thickness of cover page	191	III
6	Ease in understanding	174	IV
7	Attractiveness of illustrations	174	IV
8	Letter size	172	V
9	Number of illustration	171	VI
10	Colour of illustrations	142	VII

Readers' perception about the content components of magazine

Table-3, explains the readers' perception about the content components of the Magazine. The results revealed that majority of the readers attributed readability of the information as first rank. Accuracy of the information and clarity of the information ranked second and usefulness (utility) of information followed by relevancy of information and adequacy of the information obtained second and third ranks. The fourth rank went in favour of method of presentation, followed by quoting references. Regarding content components, more than two-thirds of the readers felt moderate to high satisfaction about all the contents components. Whereas a little over one-fourth of the magazine reads expressed least satisfaction in the case of components like relevancy of message to the region (31.0%) and market orientation (30.0%), utility value (29.5%) and profitability (28 %) of the message. Aspects like readability and clarity of the message were more satisfactory to little over one-fourth

of magazine readers (26.5% and 26.0% respectively).

The finding of the present study is agreement with the previous studies undertaken with regard to effectiveness of publication by various researchers.

Oliver (1971) observed that timeliness, subject matter coverage, practicability, readability, accuracy and terminology of scientific news articles were highly satisfying to majority of the readers. Kayal (1975) revealed that for the majority of the readers the contents in Bengali farm magazine was "partly need based". Khandekar (1975) found that contents of farm magazine was somewhat need based, too scientific and helped in finding solution to most of its readers. Sohal *et al.* (1977) opined that a content of Dairy Samachar magazine was need based useful and adequate. Krishnakumar (1982) reported that Tamil magazines were perceived as most useful by its readers. While studying the effectiveness of **Valarum Velanmai**, Balasubramanian (1983) revealed that articles were short, practical, useful and

conveyed latest technology. Likewise, Nijalingappa (1983) found that articles of Reshmekrishi were useful, easy to read, adequate and understandable. Readers of Annadata magazine felt its content as accurate partly need based, and applicable (Thirupataiah, 1983). Nataraju (1991) also observed similar findings with Krishi Vignana and Krishiloka readers.

Table 3: Readers' Perception about the Content Components of the Magazine

(n=80)

Sr. No.	Components	Score	Rank
1	Readability of the information	187	I
2	Accuracy of the information	182	II
3	Clarity of the information	182	II
4	Usefulness (utility) of the information	182	II
5	Relevancy of the information	180	III
6	Adequacy of the information	180	III
7	Method of presentation	173	IV
8	Quoting references	160	V

Readers' perception about the format components of the magazine**Table 4: Readers' perception about the format components of the magazine**

(n=80)

Sr.No.	Components	Score	Rank
1	Letter size of text	198	I
2	Number of pages per article	196	II
3	Number of pages in the magazine	195	III
4	Letter size of title	194	IV
5	Adequacy of sub heads	192	V
6	Colour of the paper	191	VI
7	Adequacy of tables and graphs	190	VII
8	Size of the paper (length and breadth)	190	VII
9	Attractiveness of the title	189	VIII
10	Sequence of presentation of tables and graph	187	IX
11	Thickness of the paper	187	IX
12	Appropriateness of sub heads	185	X
13	Length of the title	184	XI
14	Quality of the paper	183	XII
15	Appropriateness of tables and graphs	181	XIII
16	Types of graphs and tables	181	XIII
17	Typographical errorlessness	181	XIII
18	Periodicity of publication	181	XIII
19	Ease in understanding of the title	179	XIV
20	Synchronization of title with content	177	XV
21	Column arrangement	176	XVI
22	Timely receipt of the magazine	166	XVII

From the result of Table-4, it could be seen that, majority of readers gave higher rank to letter size of text followed by number of pages per article, number of pages in the Magazine, letter size of title and adequacy of sub heads. The least rated components were column arrangement and timely receipt of the Magazine. The study of Sawant *et al.*

(1989) revealed that for majority of the readers of Shri Sugi magazine, type size used and size of the magazine were appropriate. Similar results reported by Jayaram (1980) and Ramadasamurthy *et al.* (1990) lends support for the above findings. It is implied that much effort is needed on the part of the publishers to make the format characteristics more

effective and attractive so that it sustains the interests of the readers and make them to read. As stated by Kaur and Mathur (1981), it is an attractive format that holds and sustains the interests of the readers, makes the reading easier and distinguishes the magazine among a host of others.

Thus, it could be inferred that though effective cover page is necessary for good magazine, the content of magazine is by far the most important determinant of its success and only attractive cover page and format would not help, if the content components are not timely, adequate, relevant and need based. Pondering on the same subject, Murphy (1962) emphatically stated “every thing else aside, a university Journal is brought or read for the relevant contents than any other reasons, namely better get-up, cover page colour, glossy paper etc.,” Commenting on the same line, Leagans (1961) said “A good message must be in line with the objectives to be attained: clear-understandable by the audience; in line with the mental, social, economic and physical capabilities of the audience; significant-economically, socially, aesthetically to the needs, interest; material simply stated ; accurate : timely-especially when seasonal factors are important and issues current ; supported by factual material appropriate to the channel selected, having utility, immediate use, applicable audience can apply recommendations; adequate-combining principles and practices in effective proportion and manageable can be handled by the communicator with high professional skill and within the limits imposed by time”. He further said that “selecting and packaging” messages so that they have a good chance of being understood, accepted and acted upon when received, is a crucial step in communication process and a key to success in efforts to influence people to change their ways of thinking and doing.

CONCLUSION

Most of the readers rated the magazine as moderately effective. Ease in reading, attractiveness of the title and design of the cover page, among cover page components; readability, accuracy, clarity, usefulness, relevancy and adequacy of information among content components and letter size and number of pages per article and magazine among format components received the highest perception score.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest

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