

USE OF MASS MEDIA AND PUBLIC LIBRARY BY THE RURAL COMMUNITY: A STUDY

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Studies the use pattern and extent of utilisation of mass media particularly newspaper, radio, television and public library by the rural community.

INTRODUCTION

The technological and other devices of mass media used to send messages over some distance includes books, pamphlets, magazines, newspapers, radio, television, motion pictures, video tapes, computer networks and so on. Along with these, public libraries are also being considered as one of the mass media. Today, mass media which have become an integral part of the society, are being extensively utilised for obtaining necessary information on varied needs of the individuals. Since the types of mass media in the direction of communication differs from one another, the purposes and the extent of utilisation of these media by the users also differs. Hence, it is felt necessary to study the utilisation of mass media and their usefulness from the point of view of its users. Also it is essential to ascertain the reasons, if any, for the under utilisation so as to suggest remedies for making public library equally effective and competitive with other media.

OBJECTIVES

The present study was undertaken to assess the utilization of mass media (viz. newspapers, radio and television) and public library by the people of Singanamane Gram Panchayat area of Shimoga district in Karnataka.

METHODOLOGY AND SURVEY SAMPLE

To obtain the necessary data for the study the questionnaire method was used. The sample was drawn on the basis of random sampling taking the literates as sample from the households of the selected areas of Singanamane Gram Panchayat.

A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 140 (90.66%) were received. Of the total respondents, 72 (51.43%) were male and 68 (48.57%) were female.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

MASS MEDIA

Out of the total respondents, 33.57% subscribe to newspapers at their homes, 92.14% possess radio and 79.28% of them are having television in their homes (Table 1).

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Table 1

Mass media possessed

Mass Media	Male N = 72 (percentage)	Female N = 68 (percentage)	Total N = 140 (percentage)
Newspapers	31 (43.05)	16 (23.53)	47 (33.57)
Radio	66 (91.66)	63 (92.65)	129 (92.14)
Television	57 (79.16)	54 (79.14)	111 (79.28)

Note: Percentage is more than 100 because of multiple choices.

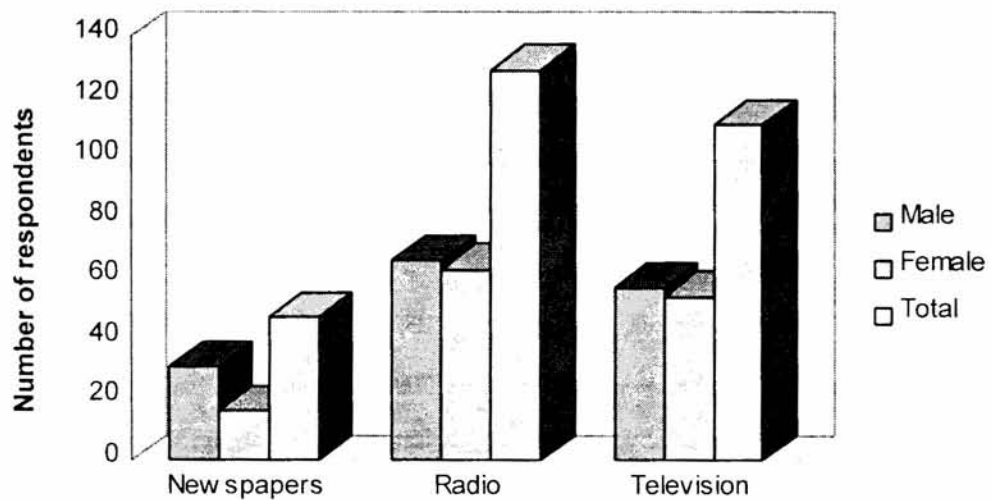


Fig. 1 : Mass media possessed

INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM DIFFERENT MEDIA

It may be observed that 96.43% of respondents

depend on mass media for obtaining information relating to their needs whereas only 13.57% of them obtain required information from library (Table 2).

Table 2

Information obtained from different media

Media	Male N=72 (percentage)	Female N=68 (percentage)	Total N=140 (percentage)
Library	15 (20.83)	04 (05.88)	19 (13.57)
Friends	23 (31.94)	04 (05.88)	27 (19.28)
Neighbours	13 (18.05)	18 (26.47)	31 (22.14)
Hotels & Shops	28 (38.88)	02 (02.94)	30 (21.43)
Gossip	08 (11.11)	01 (01.47)	09 (06.42)
Mass Media	70 (97.22)	65 (95.59)	135 (96.43)
No response	03 (04.17)	02 (02.94)	05 (03.57)

Note: Percentage is more than 100 because of multiple choices.

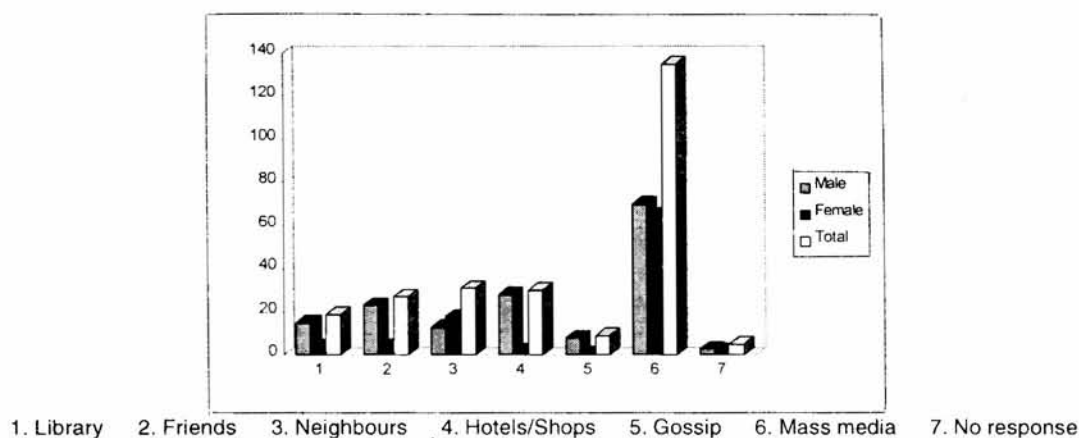


Fig. 2 : Information obtained from different media

UTILISATION OF MASS MEDIA

The opinion of respondents regarding the utilisation of news papers, radio and television are given in the following tables.

Table 3 indicates that out of total, 47.86% of respondents read newspapers, 97.86% listen to radio programmes and 98.57% watch the television programmes.

Table 3

Use of media

Media	Yes (percentage)	No (percentage)
Newspaper reading	67 (47.86)	73 (52.14)
Radio listening	137 (97.86)	03 (02.14)
Television watched	138 (98.57)	02 (01.43)

Place(s) of Media Utilisation

Table 4 shows that out of 67, majority of respondents (70.15%) read newspaper at their home. The other places of newspaper reading which in-

cludes public libraries and offices are 28.36% readers.

Among the total respondents of radio listening and television watching, 94.16% and 80.43% listen to radio and watch television at their home respectively.

Table 4

Places of media utilisation

Place(s)	Newspaper reading N=67 (percentage)	Radio listening N=137 (percentage)	Television watching N=138 (percentage)
Home	47 (70.15)	129 (94.16)	111 (80.43)
Friends house	13 (19.40)	12 (08.76)	34 (24.64)
Relatives/ neighbour's house	10 (14.93)	16 (11.68)	44 (31.88)

contd.

Table 4 (contn.)

Place(s)	Newspaper reading N=67 (percentage)	Radio listening N=137 (percentage)	Television watching N=138 (percentage)
Hotels/shops/ clubs	18 (26.86)	13 (09.49)	18 (13.04)
Others	19 (28.36)	-	-

Note: Percentage is more than 100 because of multiple choice

Time Spent for Utilising Medias

The respondents were asked to indicate the average time, they normally devote in a day for reading newspaper, listening to radio programmes and watching television programmes (Table 5).

Table 5 reveals that majority of the respondents

(46.27%) spend 30 minutes to 1 hour for reading newspapers. Out of 137 radio listeners, 35.76% spend 30 minutes to one hour per day for listening radio programme. But compared to these two medias, out of 138, 37.68% of respondents indicated that they spent more than 2 hours per day for watching television programmes.

Table 5

Time Spent for Utilising Media

Time	Newspaper reading N=67 (percentage)	Radio listening N=137 (percentage)	Television watching N=138 (percentage)
Less than 30 minutes	28 (41.79)	46 (33.58)	11 (07.97)
30 minutes to 1 hour	31 (46.27)	49 (35.76)	35 (25.36)
1 - 2 hours	07 (10.44)	32 (23.36)	40 (28.98)
More than 2 hours	01 (01.49)	10 (07.29)	52 (37.68)

Language Preference

The study reveals that most of the respondents prefer news papers (91.04%), radio programmes (99.27%) and television programmes (100%) in the regional language i.e. Kannada.

Extent of Usefulness

The usefulness of newspapers in meeting the needs, tastes and interests of the readers and degree or extent of usefulness of radio and television programmes reveals that out of total, major-

Table 6

Usefulness of Media

Response	Newspapers N=140 (percentage)	Radio Programme N=140 (percentage)	Television Programme N=140 (percentage)
Much useful	50 (35.71)	76 (54.29)	68 (48.57)
Moderately useful	32 (22.86)	52 (37.14)	59 (42.14)
Less useful	13 (09.28)	-	02 (01.43)
No response	45 (32.14)	12 (08.57)	11 (07.86)

ity of the respondents have opined that the newspapers (35.71%), radio programmes (54.29%) and television programmes (48.57%) are 'much useful' (Table 6). No one has said that radio programmes are 'less useful'.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

A public library which does possess several characteristic features similar to that of mass media was considered as one such mass media. In this study in the views of villagers, the effectiveness of Singanamane Gram Panchayat Public Library and the extent of its utilisation by them were assessed. Out of the total 140 respondents, 73.57%

felt the need of a public library and 82.69% visited the public library for reading newspapers and magazines. 44.23% respondents indicated that they visit library daily and 36.54% of them spent less than 30 minutes for reading in the library. 24.29% opined that library collection was adequate whereas 69.29% were of negative opinion about it and 6.42% did not mention anything.

Usefulness of Public Library

Usefulness of public library mainly depends on its collection and services. The study revealed that out of 140 respondents, 15.71% felt that public library was 'much useful', followed by 39.28% re-

spondents who indicated 'moderately useful' and 22.14% 'less useful'. 22.86% of respondents did not respond.

Opinion about Public Library

The study revealed that out of total respondents, 53.57% felt that library hours were not suitable, and the present library hours is not sufficient (60%). It is also indicated that the location of the library is not convenient (58.57%).

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Based on the findings above, the following suggestions are made:

- i) Awareness should be created among the public about the importance of public library through user education programmes.
- ii) To optimise the utilisation of public library resources, library collection should be improved both in quality and quantity.
- iii) To attract the public towards the public library, film and picture shows should be arranged and

a television set needs to be installed in the public library.

- iv) Minimum facilities and services should be provided to change the adverse opinion of the public about the library.

If proper initiatives and care are taken, certainly public libraries stand as equally competitive as the other media.

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