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Utilization of Krishi community radio programmes of university of agricultural sciences, Dharwad among the listeners

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Abstract

Community radio has played a transformative role in disseminating information and fostering community participation, particularly in rural areas. This study assesses the utilization of Krishi Community Radio Station (KCRS) programmes in Dharwad taluk, Karnataka, with a focus on agricultural information dissemination among farmers. Established in 2007 by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, KCRS aims to bridge the gap between agricultural experts and farmers through localized content, such as weather forecasts, expert interviews, farming techniques, and market trends. Despite the potential benefits, the study identifies several barriers to effective utilization, including passive listening, limited discussion and implementation of the advice provided, and challenges in accessing detailed information. A multistage sampling method was used to select 120 respondents from eight villages, and data was collected using a pre-tested interview schedule. Results reveal that the majority of respondents listen to KCRS programmes intermittently, with a significant portion engaging in passive listening rather than active discussion or implementation of practices. While agricultural information remains the primary purpose for listening, the study indicates that content relevance and listener engagement are key factors influencing program utilization. The findings suggest that enhancing listener interaction, increasing programme accessibility, and broadcasting during preferred times could improve the overall impact of KCRS. Strategies such as short, impactful broadcasts, incentivizing listener participation, and aligning content with local agricultural needs may enhance programme effectiveness and foster greater rural development.

Keywords: Community radio, utilization, listeners, radio programmes

Introduction

Radio has been disseminating information to the listeners from a century. It has its revolutionary impact during pre-independence time. To improve the effectiveness of specific communities, community radio has been established in India. Anna FM was the first community radio established in India on 1st February, 2004 and then director of its Audio Visual Research centre of the Anna University, Dr. Sreedher Ramamurthy is regarded as the father of community radio in India. As India majorly consists of farming community, there was a need of community radio station for them. Keeping this in view, Krishi community radio station was established in University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad on May 17, 2007. This has been now considered as a lead community radio station from 2022 to 2025 by ministry of information and broadcasting, Government of India.

Krishi community radio programmes are an innovative approach designed to disseminate agricultural information and resources to rural communities. These radio stations serve as a vital communication tool, bridging the gap between agricultural experts and farmers. By broadcasting localized content, including expert interviews, weather

forecasts, farming techniques and market trends, Krishi community radio empower farmers with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions, enhance productivity, and improve their livelihoods. These programmes foster community participation, allowing farmers to share their experiences, challenges, and solutions. The interactive nature of community radio encourages engagement, making it an effective medium for promoting sustainable agricultural practices and supporting rural development.

Despite the potential benefits of Krishi community radio programmes, several challenges hinder their effectiveness. Many farmers lack access to reliable information, leading to poor agricultural practices and low yields. Additionally, there may be gaps in content relevance, as broadcasts may not always align with the specific needs of local communities. The underutilization of these radio programmes can result from limited awareness, low listenership, and inadequate feedback mechanisms, ultimately reducing their impact on rural agricultural development. Thus, the present study was conducted with the objective to assess the utilization of Krishi community radio station programmes among the listeners.

Materials and Methods

Present study was conducted during 2023-24 in eight villages of Dharwad taluk which are selected through multistage sampling method. Selection of respondents was based on purposive random sampling where respondents listening to Krishi community radio in the selected village were considered as the sample. A total of 120 samples were selected among villages selected were namely Chikkamalligwad, Hiremalligwad, Hebballi, Somapur, Kavalgeri, Chandanmatti, Narendra and Mangalgatti. Sample consisted of 15 respondents listening to Krishi Community Radio from each village were selected randomly as the sample. The study was conducted using pre-tested interview schedule and statistical tools like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were applied.

Shree *et al.* (2016) ^[8] conceptualized utilization pattern by considering six aspects of utilization viz., regularity of reading/ listening, pattern of reading, content of the components, understanding of the components, discussion after reading, implementation and number of times components are read. Rudroju (2013) ^[6] considered extent of use and type of information utilised as the components of utilisation pattern. Based on the view of past researchers the Utilization of the Krishi Community Radio programmes is operationally defined as the aggregate of observable responses with references to:

- Regularity of listening to the programmes
- Understandability of the programmes
- Discussion pattern after listening to the programmes
- Implementation of practices after listening to the programmes
- Period of listening to the programmes
- Preferred time of listening to the programmes
- Purpose of listening to the programmes
- Participation in the programmes
- Extent/frequency of use of the programmes

Results and Discussion

a. Regularity

Regularity is defined as the frequency of listening to KCRS radio programmes and results revealed that exact one-third (33.33%) of KCRS radio listeners listen to the KCRS radio programmes occasionally followed by 23.33 per cent and 21.67 per cent of the radio listeners listen to the KCRS programmes daily and once in a month respectively. It was also revealed that 15.83 percentage of the radio listeners listened to KCRS programmes weekly once while, 5.83 per cent of the radio listeners listened to the programmes once in a fortnight as shown in Table 1.

Many of the respondents retorted that they listen to KCRS radio whenever they are free. It was also reported by many of the women listeners that they listen to the radio while doing household works generally. The findings corroborate partially the results of Kumar *et al.* (2023) ^[2] and Mishra and Mishra (2016) ^[3].

Table 1: Regularity of listening to the programmes among KCRS listeners n=120

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	28	23.33
Weekly once	19	15.83
Once in fortnight	7	5.83
Once in a month	26	21.67
Occasionally	40	33.33

Table 2: Understandability of the programmes among KCRS listeners n=120

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Completely understandable	45	37.50
Partially understandable	71	59.17
Cannot understand	4	3.33

b. Understandability of the programmes

Understandability of the programmes refers to the ability of the listener to grasp, understand the programmes and comprehend the information broadcasted through the programmes. The study reported that more than half (59.17%) of the radio listeners were partially understanding the programmes which was due to passive listening followed by more than one-third (37.50%) of the radio listeners understood the programmes completely as projected in Table 2. The reason is that most of the programmes were in regional colloquial lingual. Additionally, many programmes were seasonal and related to their field problems and farmers programmes broadcasted were of their own farming community. Respondents who did not understand the programmes (3.33%) constituted elderly women who felt those programmes were unable to understand and they were just listening radio for folk songs and similar programmes.

c. Discussion pattern after listening to the programmes

Discussion pattern is operationally defined as the frequency of discussion with their friends, family members, relatives, progressive farmers and others. Results disclosed that 48.33 per cent of the radio listeners never discussed about KCRS programmes while, equal percentage (48.33%) of the radio listeners occasionally discussed about the programmes after listening and 3.33 per cent discussed about the programmes regularly. With respect to family members, it was found that two-third (66.67%) of the radio listeners never discussed while, more than one-fourth (30.83%) of the radio listeners discussed occasionally and 2.50 per cent of the radio listeners discussed regularly. The data also depicted that large majority (92.50%) of the radio listeners never discussed about KCRS programmes with relatives while, 7.50 per cent of the radio listeners discussed occasionally with relatives and none of them discussed with relatives regularly. The same trend was seen with respect to discussion pattern of radio listeners with progressive farmers where, 91.67 per cent never discussed followed by 8.33 per cent of the radio listeners discussed occasionally and none of them discussed regularly about the programmes with progressive farmers as shown in Table 3. It was also found that 0.83 per cent of the radio listeners discussed about the KCRS programmes with others.

Table 3: Discussion pattern after listening to the programmes
n=120

Category	Regularly f (%)	Occasionally f (%)	Never f (%)
Friends	4 (3.33)	58 (48.33)	58 (48.33)
Family members	3 (2.50)	37 (30.83)	80 (66.67)
Relatives	0 (0.00)	9 (7.50)	111 (92.50)
Progressive farmers	0 (0.00)	10 (8.33)	110 (91.67)
KCRS staff		1 (0.83)	

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages;

Among the respondents, nearly half of them occasionally discussed about the programmes with friends, specifically male respondents discussed about the programmes with fellow farmers occasionally when they met or used to recall during times of seasons. Since radio is one way communication and messages come from unseen source thus they discussed with fellow farmers about programmes for clarity or knowledge sharing. Another dependable source for the discussion was family members. Little less than one-third of the respondents discussed about the programmes with family members like sons, brothers, father, *etc.*, about the feasibility of practices, farmers interviews based on their experience for the consultation, advice or suggestion. Though, many respondents never discussed about the programmes as they passively hear the programmes. The study partially follows the findings of Talwar (2011)^[9].

d. Implementation of practices after listening to the programmes

Implementation in general refers to the process of putting a decision or plan into effect. It is operationally defined as actions or changes an individual took based on the information, advice or inspiration received from KCRS radio programmes. It was evident that 31.67 per cent of the radio listeners implemented different practices suggested through KCRS radio programmes like Vermicomposting, Jeevamruta and other liquid fertilizers preparation in the field, Summer ploughing, Crop rotation, Recipes of some foods, plant protection (pest or disease management), Folk songs, Dairy practices *etc.*. While, more than two-third (68.33%) of the radio listeners did not implement any of the practices advised through KCRS programmes. According to the listeners feedback it was assessed that many of the suggested practices were not suitable for their fields. Other reason might be that when they want to know more details about the practices respondents found it difficult.

Table 4: Implementation of practices after listening to the programmes n=120

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	31.67
No	82	68.33

Table 5: Period of listening KCRS programmes n=120

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Upto 30 minutes	56	46.67
30 minutes to 1 hour	38	31.67
1 hour to 2 hour	16	13.33
>2 hour	10	8.33

e. Period of listening to the programmes

Period of listening to the programme refers to the duration or length of time a listener spends engaging with a programme in a single session. The radio listeners reported that relatively more per cent (46.67%) of them listened to the radio programmes for only up-to 30 minutes followed by little less than one-third (31.67%) of the respondents listened to radio for 30 minutes to 1 hour. The table also revealed from that 13.33 per cent and 8.33 per cent of the respondents listen to the radio for 1 hour to 2 hour and more than two hour respectively.

Respondents listened to only major agriculture programmes like farmers interview, scientists interview, weather forecast and pakshika salahegalu in major which are of upto 10 minutes and maximum 30 minutes. The respondents generally turn-on the radio for only specific programmes and then turn-off the radio. Few respondents turn-on the radio and carry out their works along with listening to the programmes. Few reported they listen to the radio while going to the farm or working in the farm. It was also reported that many of them found difficult to listen complete 3 hours of the programme due to their daily chores eventhough broadcasted morning and evening (twice a day). Thus, there are less respondents who listen to the programmes for more than two hour. The results are nearly similar to findings of Paliwal (2019)^[4], Mishra and Mishra (2016)^[3].

f. Preferred time of listening to the programmes

Preferred time of listening refers to the specific hours of a day when listeners are most likely to tune in to the KCRS radio. Multiple responses were recorded for this component which reported that during morning time, more than one-third (35.83%) of the radio listeners preferred to listen to the programmes from 7.00 am to 8.00 am followed by more than one-tenth (16.67%) of the radio listeners preferred from 8.00 am to 9.00 am and 9.17 per cent of the radio listeners preferred to listen to the programmes from 6.00 am to 7.00 am. The table also revealed that preferred time during evening in the descending order was from 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm (25.83%), 6.00 pm to 7.00 pm (23.33%) and 8.00 pm to 9.00 pm (10.00%).

Table 6: Preferred time of utilization of KCRS programmes n=120

Category	Time	Frequency	Percentage
Morning	6-7	11	9.17
	7-8	43	35.83
	8-9	20	16.67
Evening	6-7	28	23.33
	7-8	31	25.83
	8-9	12	10.00

Note: *Multiple responses are possible.

According to the survey conducted, many of the KCRS listeners suggested that they were unable to listen to the programmes at early morning 6.00 am as they will be busy in their daily chores as mentioned above and will go to farm during the seasons and will be free during off-season. So they preferred to listen KCRS radio programmes from 7.00 am to 9.00 am. During evening many respondents would be free and used to sit with friends or family and spend time. Hence, they preferred the time according to their schedules

of work preferably from 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm. Rajashekar *et al.* (2022)^[5] also reported the comparable results.

g. Purpose of listening to the programmes

Purpose of listening to the programme refers to the various motives and reasons why an individual tune in to Krishi Community Radio programmes. Purpose for listening to KCRS programmes maybe to get agriculture related information, to listen to voice of their own community, for the mode of its presentation or for entertainment, time pass and others. Multiple responses are collected for this component and it was revealed that majority (58.33%) of them listen to radio to get agriculture related information followed by equal percentage (26.70%) of the radio listeners listened radio for its mode of presentation and for entertainment or time pass. One-fourth (25.00%) of the radio listeners listened to KCRS radio programmes to listen to the voice of theirs or their own community.

Table 7: Purpose of listening to the programmes n=120

Sl. No.	Purpose	Frequency	Percentage
1	To get agricultural information	70	58.33
2	To listen voice of yours or your own community	30	25.00
3	For its mode of presentation	32	26.70
4	Entertainment / information	32	26.70

Note: *Multiple responses are possible.

The sample constituted KCRS listeners with farming background, resulted as obvious more than half of the respondents listened for the purpose to get agricultural information like weather based information, seasonal precautions, cultivation practices, crop related information *etc.*. So, we could find more listeners listened for agricultural information. While, some of the respondents listened to the KCRS radio programmes for its mode of presentation and respondents were interested to listen for their own voice or voice of their own community as it is general human tendency that they like to listen to their own voices. The results follow findings of Sharma (2012)^[7] and partially follows Talwar (2011)^[9].

h. Participation in the programmes

Participation in the programmes is operationally defined as the act of taking part in the programme. Among the radio listeners, it was evident that more than half (53.33%) of the radio listeners participated in broadcasting different programmes through KCRS radio while 46.67 per cent of the radio listeners never participated in KCRS programmes.

Table 8: Participation in the programmes n=120

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	64	53.33
No	56	46.67

More than half of the respondents gave programmes for KCRS radio through different programmes like Farmers interview, Farmers-scientists discussion forums, Phone-in & Phone-out programmes, Yashogathe, Folk songs *etc.* So, we can find more number of respondents participated in giving programmes for KCRS radio.

i. Extent/frequency of use of the programmes

Individual programmes used by the individuals or the topics if considered during their farming decisions after listening to the programmes is defined as the extent of use of the programmes. According to that among the different selected programmes, weather forecast was more regularly used KCRS programme by 14.17 per cent of the respondents. Due to climate change and unpredictable weather, the seasons were varying. So, farmers used to listen more about weather related programmes and use the information in their agricultural activities like planting, irrigation management, fertilizer and chemical application, harvesting and more. It was followed by 9.17 per cent of the respondents used information delivered in farmers interview on a regular basis. Since, radio is one way communication and information comes from unseen source, they believe more in the words of fellow farmers. This resulted in farmers using information of farmers interview. Also, 20.00 per cent of the respondents used farmers interview programmes occasionally. Next regularly used KCRS programme is Adugemaneyannagisi Arogya Kendra as many women listeners try out different food recipes on regular basis. While, 22.50 per cent used Phone-in Phone-out programme occasionally as they found the programme gave farming scenarios out of Dharwad and their experience in different agricultural sectors like horticulture, poultry, rabbit rearing, post-harvest activities motivated the farmers and helped in increasing their knowledge base and useful in making other decisions. And 15.83 per cent of the respondents used Gramadarshana programme occasionally as it shared information about their own village and how to combat some of the problems of village those were used occasionally in Gram panchayats and folk traditions were brought into light which were used by the respondents after knowing why they were practiced.

Table 9: Extent of use of individual programmes by KCRS listeners n=120

Sl. No.	Programmes	Regularly	Occasionally	Never
		f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
1.	Farmers interview	11 (9.17)	24 (20.00)	85 (70.83)
2.	Scientists interview	7 (5.83)	15 (12.50)	98 (81.67)
3.	Season based agriculture program	9 (7.50)	14 (11.67)	97 (80.83)
4.	Season based horticulture program	4 (3.33)	18 (15.00)	98 (81.67)
5.	Season based animal husbandry program	7 (5.83)	14 (11.67)	99 (82.50)
6.	Weather forecast	17 (14.17)	18 (15.00)	85 (70.83)
7.	Pakshika salahe	6 (5.00)	16 (13.33)	98 (81.67)
8.	Varada Basanna	5 (4.17)	12 (10.00)	103 (85.83)
9.	Krishi avishkaragalu/ Yashogathe	1 (0.83)	9 (7.50)	110 (91.67)

10.	Phone-in and Phone-out programmes	6 (5.00)	27 (22.50)	87 (72.50)
11.	Dramatized agricultural programmes	6 (5.00)	14 (11.67)	100 (83.33)
12.	Awareness programmes	9 (7.50)	16 (13.33)	95 (79.17)
13.	Programmes on special days	8 (6.67)	15 (12.50)	97 (80.83)
14.	Gramadarshana	6 (5.00)	19 (15.83)	95 (79.17)
15.	Adugemaneyannagisi arogya kendra	10 (8.33)	16 (13.33)	94 (78.33)
16.	Chinnaraloka	2 (1.67)	18 (15.00)	100 (83.33)
17.	Vachanotsava	2 (1.67)	13 (10.83)	105 (87.50)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages;

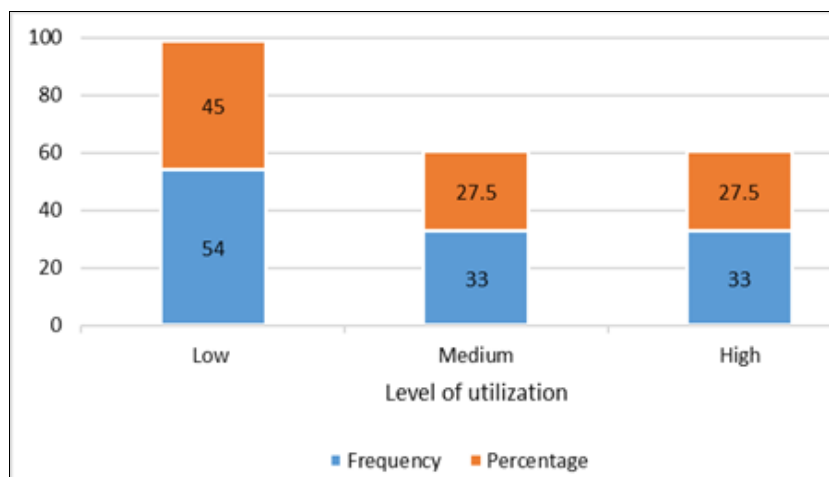


Fig 1: Overall Utilization level of KCRS programmes by the listeners

Overall utilization of KCRS programmes as shown in Fig 1. reports that more than one-third of the respondents had low level of utilization of KCRS programmes. As discussed above, radio is one way communication and when they need more details was not possible through radio resulted in low level of utilization of the programmes. Whereas nearly one-fourth of the respondents had medium and high utilization of KCRS radio programmes who might have found the information useful and might have got details through further discussion and adopted the activities suggested through the KCRS programmes. The findings of the study are partially in line with the results of Anandaraja and Sankri (2022) ^[1].

Conclusion

Relatively more number of KCRS listeners have low utilisation of KCRS programmes. Many of the respondents are passive listeners and thus there is a need to attract the listeners towards active listening which can be done by including quiz, small announcements of winners in the subsequent sessions, motivating listeners through rewards and its distribution in Krishimela. Most of the listeners like to listen to the programmes which are upto 30 minutes and prefer to listen during morning that too after 7 a.m. and evening after 6 p.m.. Thus, preferred programmes and highly used programmes should be broadcasted during this time. Short informative programmes of one to two minutes like swalpa kelri with useful messages can also be broadcasted to increase the frequency of listeners and utilisation of KCRS programmes. More farmer inclusive programmes, discussion forums, field visits may improve listenership among the respondents.

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