It is widely held today that development-support media are only able to create a generally favourable mental set towards change, also called a "climate for modernisation." Modernisation is defined and measured here in terms of the traditional indicators of this general predisposition in the diffusion-of-innovations literature, viz., favourable changes in urban pull, change agency contact, aspirations for oneself and one's children, organisational participation, political efficacy, empathy (role-taking), secularism and fatalism.

The departure from previous researches here, is the focus on the process of change in these indicators related with prior economic advantage in the village system, i.e., the change process is understood in terms of the material objective reality that surrounds the person and not in terms of individual personality characteristics. It is maintained here that it is the material objective conditions that primarily contribute to the variations in such individual abilities, world-view and facilities for action found in a population, and that these are rarely considered.

The general purpose of the present study is to explore if and how the prior economic advantage of the well-off leads to continuous future advantage in non-economic areas, over those with less economic advantage to begin with. More specifically, it looks at whether higher economic strata in a village gained more than lower economic strata groups, in terms of "modernising" socio-psychological effects of one extraordinary year of development-support TV, how and why.
The study is informed by two contrasting paradigms of development and communication that have distinct ways of looking at social change. To distinguish them, the first is called the "Optimistic Approach," and the second is called the "Sobering Approach."

**The Optimistic Approach**

This approach to the role of communication in development was the dominant perspective of the 1950s and '60s. Mass media was credited with the power to change traditional norms that were supposedly "inappropriate for modernisation." The solution to the problems of development was supposed to lie in such transformations. Exactly 20 years ago, Daniel Lerner wrote of media potential in modernising the Middle East:

> The media teach new desires and new satisfactions. They depict situations in which the good things of life are taken for granted. They portray roles in which these richer lives are lived, and provide clues as to how these roles can be enacted by others. Even a little such fantasy...goes a long way. For the mechanism of empathy is thereby engaged. Operating at the level of a person's identity, empathy alters the basic self-imagery by which a person defines what he is and what he may become...A whole new style of life is involved (Lerner, 1958).

A few years later, Lucian Pye wrote, "It was the pressure of communications which brought about the downfall of traditional societies" (Pye, 1963). A year later, Wilbur Schramm's very influential book entitled *Mass Media and National Development* specified exactly how mass media could activate development: The media can widen horizons, focus attention, raise aspirations, create a climate for development, indirectly change strongly held attitudes, feed interpersonal channels, confer status, enforce social norms, form tastes, change lightly held attitudes directly, teach, and train.
At this time, several researches on the communication of innovations were launched in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. A major study in this tradition was Everett M. Rogers' investigation of the impact of communication on modernisation among peasants in Colombia (1969). Modernisation was viewed in terms of the communication of modern ideas and values from an external source. The findings showed that mass media exposure was highly correlated with indicators of individual modernisation, viz., empathy, achievement motivation, aspirations for children, innovativeness, and political knowledge.

Five years later, hopes were kept alive by Inkeles and Smith who wrote:

The wide diffusion of the media of mass communication is one of the best indicators of advanced economic development... measures of per capita income and per capita availability of means of mass communication correlate at .80...We found a fairly regular and strong relation between exposure to mass communication and individual modernity. With few exceptions, the basic pattern was for each increase in mass media contact to be associated with an increase in overall modernity...In most places, the mass media bring men information about many aspects of modern living; they open them up to new ideas, show them new ways of doing things, demonstrate accomplishments which can contribute to a sense of efficacy, reveal and explore diversity of opinion, stimulate and justify heightened aspirations for education and mobility, glorify science and sing the praises of technology--all of which should induce greater modernity in any individual open to influence (Inkeles and Smith, 1974).

The power of the mass media was never in question. More copies of newspapers, more TV sets and more transistor radios were becoming available and it was expected that they would multiply education and modernisation chances. Like rain that fell on the rich and the poor, it was also assumed that mass media were equally available, and that its messages were equally useful to all.
The Sobering Approach

There was disappointment with the nature of economic growth of the 1960s: While gross national product increased in the developing country, unemployment increased much more, due to decreases in the availability of internal resources for productive investment. The many developing countries had to compete with each other to sell their primary products and raw materials cheaply to the few industrialized countries and their multinational corporations. In exchange, they bought consumer and capital goods they needed, at prices that they were in no position to bargain about. In addition to this regular deterioration in the terms of trade for developing countries, it was found that the main effect of large private foreign investment was the outflow of potential capital through the repatriation of profits, royalty payment, and the like, to the foreign investor. Government-to-government loans were increasingly spent on repaying interest and accumulated debts from previous foreign aid. Though the developing countries gained a little, the Gross National Product in the industrialized world was almost five times as much. There were more newspapers, radios and cinema seats in the developing countries, but the poor had little access to them.

Building like ivy on the edifice of neo-classical economics, communications researchers had assumed equality between man and man, and with the economists, missed the reality of differential levels of access to the Good Things of Life, and different opportunities for advancement for different strata in society.

A few research findings from Latin America and Asia, and some sociologically-oriented theoreticians from the U.S. began to indicate the need to consider social structure, context and environment to develop an
adequate theory of mass media use. That individuals act in a social frame of reference yielded by the groups of which they are a part, is a notion undoubtedly ancient. Blair (1960) studied the exposure of different socio-economic status groups to new knowledge in a small town in Brazil. He found that the economic organisation of the community affected the probability of each group's contacts with new knowledge. Information exposure did not occur equally or randomly, but was stratified too, on economic lines. While advocating media as an activator of development, Schramm had simultaneously cautioned, "communication bears a peculiarly organic relation to society...the structure of social communication will reflect the structure and development of society..." (1963), like water that takes the shape of the vessel it is poured into. Duncan (1967) and Thayer (1967) also stressed the need for the study of society, that is, the organised context within which communication happens. Grunig (1968, 1971) reduced the role of communication to a secondary supplementary factor in development, giving primary importance to prior structural changes. In Colombia, he found that when the situation was favourable to development, i.e., opportunities were available, the socio-psychological climate for modernisation could then be created by the media. Stavenshagen (1970) also showed that despite media availability, if the power structure in a country was such that innovations profitted only the landlord, the peasant had no interest in accepting them.

This position is essentially an operant conditioning point of view (Skinner, 1953). The basic postulate is that behaviour is a function of the surrounding social structure, past and present: The great majority of media-triggered effects are established and maintained by means of differential post-performance reinforcements from the environment. To illustrate, if
media advocate that peasants demand the legal minimum wage that is being denied them, and in light of the Emergency, if their first attempt evokes significant government support, it is likely that they will assert themselves again, should such a situation demand it. Conversely, if their response to the media was punished or not rewarded, the chances of repetition under similar conditions would decline, and eventually approach zero. Media recommendations to this effect would be inconsistent with their experience and the local reality, and would therefore be discredited, to reduce dissonance (Festinger, 1957).

The re-thinking on development-communication culminated in 1974 when Rogers synthesized re-considerations of the dominant Optimistic Approach and stressed the importance of studying social structures within which communication happens, since they affect communication effects:

A socio-economic gap exists between subsistence peasants and commercial farmers in most less developed countries. Power lies in the hands of the large landowners...Attempts at change-oriented communication over time tend to widen the gap in effects variables between the audience segments high and low in socio-economic status (Rogers, 1974).

The Research Problem

In colloquial terms, it is frequently said that one's position in society, one's status, one's class, determines how one talks, who one talks to, what one says, what one aspires towards, etc. Economic status, then, should also determine how one responds to media content, particularly with reference to development-support media where development initiatives, responses and actions have a big economic component.

Thus, it is proposed here that position in the economic structure in terms of ownership and operation of productive resources, that determines
differential child rearing, language development and socialisation, will also lead to differential TV access and modernisation-related responses to the first year of TV in the highly differentiated economic structure of this Indian village.

Why this great stress on the economic reference group? In all societies, those who own and control assets determine who eats, who lives, and how well. These questions are more crucial in subsistence and near-subsistence economies with a majority of people living close to poverty levels. To eat, one must work. All other social acts follow from this basic economic life-sustaining activity, and reflect its form and nature.

Land is the basic economic resource in a nation where the majority live on agriculture. Inequality in the Indian rural setting is very closely related to the question of land ownership. Questions related to status, opportunities for growth, power, privilege and authority in rural India can be adequately answered only in terms of strata in the agrarian structure: The extent of ownership, control, and use of land. Over fifty percent of land is owned by less than 10 percent of the people (Economic and Political Weekly, 1977). That the vast bulk of the rural population has no privileges that accrue from such ownership is an accepted reality.

It is not considered unjust that different strata of society do not have the same degree of control over land, and that many have no control at all. The Hindu principle of *karma* reconciles people to their strata. Many Indian villages continue to present good examples of such harmonic social systems (Beteille, 1974). A harmonic social system is one in which there is consistency between the existential order and the normative order: inequalities not only exist in fact, but are also accepted as legitimate.
The present study of the modernising effects of the TV year is rooted in this structural and environmental context: Where children and adults are socialized into an unequal opportunity-and-attainment system that teaches them how to cut their hopes and aspirations according to the cloth permitted them. Norms and life-styles in consonance to these constraints have evolved over the years. Children are taught how to perceive the local frame of reference, what the landlord represents, what the landless are. Realisation of different places for different classes/strata is ensured. Only God or the Government can change this state of affairs, it is frequently heard/said in villages.

While Talcott Parsons was primarily concerned with the role of norms in determining stability, the concern with modernisation here implies change, and possible instability. Therefore, included is consideration of strata that determine discrimination and inequality in access to scarce resources which could cause conflict, instability and change. Thus, following the Galloway (1977) framework, value consensus theorists (Parsons, 1952) and conflict theorists (Rex, 1961) are brought together on middle ground. Meshing together the study of modernisation-related norms from the Optimistic Approach, and the study of economic status from the Sobering structural approach, the present case study focusses on the influence of the context and the environment of change to understand how who changed. Changes are looked at as group responses and not individual scores. The preoccupation is contextual-processual and not causal, for which a large scale field-experiment would be required.
Possible Outcomes

The following two possibilities are listed to provide a framework for theoretical exploration. From the Optimistic Approach, the expectation is that one year of TV would result in a stronger urban pull, higher aspirations, higher secularism, higher perception of political efficacy, less fatalism, higher empathy (role-playing), higher educational aspiration for the children, higher change agency contact, and, higher organisational participation for all strata of villagers, big landowners, small farmers and landless, alike. From the Sobering structural approach, it is predicted that those in higher economic strata (i.e., those who own and control more land, in this case), would gain more on these indicators than those belonging to lower economic strata, in accordance with Rogers' (1974) Communication Effects Gap hypothesis.